DIGITAL INNOVATION FOR SUSTAINABLE GROWTH @ NHH · ORGBRAIN

AI in the Norwegian Boardroom

How Norwegian board members adopt, use, and govern artificial intelligence

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NHH | DIG Digital Innovation for sustainable Growth

DIG - Digital Innovation for sustainable Growth is a research centre based at NHH Norwegian School of Economics. DIG conducts applied and academic research on how digital technologies, including artificial intelligence, transform industries, organizations, and competitive dynamics. The centre bridges academic knowledge and practical relevance, working closely with companies, policymakers, and innovation ecosystems. NHH is Norway's leading business school, and DIG represents its primary hub for research on digitalization and innovation.

Orgbrain

Orgbrain is a leading Norwegian board management platform founded in 2017. With more than 3,000 boards and over 100,000 users, Orgbrain has established itself as a widely adopted solution for board governance in Norway. The platform supports meeting planning, video conferencing, digital voting, document signing, shareholder register management, and general meetings. Orgbrain takes security seriously and is ISO 27001-certified, with all data stored within Europe.

Orgbrain is at the forefront of AI in board governance, with Møte-AI automatically generating transcriptions, draft minutes, and meeting analysis based on recordings. The platform is designed for boards seeking to work more professionally and efficiently and is used across a wide range of organizations, from startups and SMEs to listed companies, foundations, and cooperative entities.

Key Takeaways

FINDING 01

AI is already in the room

AI adoption and practice vary considerably across board types, experience levels, and individual motivations. For some, AI is a daily instrument spanning analysis, preparation, and communication. For others, it remains an occasional experiment or a tool applied to a single narrow task.

FINDING 02

Governance is lagging

More than four in five board members operate without formal organizational AI guidelines, and there is a considerable lack of AI knowledge on Norwegian boards. Most boards have not discussed the topic. Board members are routinely sharing strategic and financial data with AI tools under no organizational framework.

FINDING 03

The decision barrier holds

Across all archetypes, all board types, and all levels of training, comfort with AI as a decision-maker is low and convergent. This reflects a principled position about human judgment in governance — not a knowledge gap that training can close.

FINDING 04

Use concentrates in administration

AI delivers clearest value in preparation and routine task reduction. Use in analytically demanding areas — risk management, strategic planning — remains substantially less common and returns less perceived benefit.

FINDING 05

Institutional legitimacy and training

Board members prioritize secure and approved tools, clear guidelines and training, above legal guidance, or practical examples. The primary demand is for institutional legitimacy and training.

FINDING 06

A widening divergence

Power Users and Professionals expect significant acceleration in AI use. Efficiency Users are consolidating around a stable, narrow role. The gap between the most and least AI-active board members is likely to grow.

> *Individual use is outpacing both personal competence and institutional readiness. The gap between them shows little sign of closing without deliberate intervention from boards, governance associations, and training providers.*

INTRODUCTION

The Board Meets AI

Artificial intelligence is reshaping how organizations operate, make decisions, and manage risk. Boards of directors, as the highest governing body in most organizations, are increasingly confronted with AI both as a strategic topic on their agenda and as a practical tool in their own work. Despite this, systematic knowledge about how Norwegian board members actually use AI, and how they perceive its risks, benefits, and governance implications, remains limited.

This study, conducted by Digital Innovation for sustainable Growth, a research center at NHH Norwegian School of Economics, and Orgbrain, aims to fill that gap. Through a large-scale survey targeting active board members across Norway, we examine the current state of AI adoption in Norwegian boardrooms. The study investigates how board members use AI tools in their board work, what value they derive from such use, what concerns and barriers they face, and how organizations govern AI use at the board level.

Norway provides a particularly relevant empirical context. Norwegian boards operate within a distinct institutional setting characterized by employee representation, a high degree of gender balance regulation, and a large share of state-owned enterprises. Understanding how AI intersects with these structural features has both academic and policy relevance.

> *The question is no longer whether boards will use AI, but whether they will do so with adequate structure, shared norms, and appropriate oversight.*

SEVEN THEMATIC MODULES

- Demographics & AI usage
- Board profiles & roles
- AI use in board work
- Data sharing behavior
- Perceived value & potential
- Governance & policy adherence
- Competence & training

Survey Design & Sampling

The survey comprised 33 questions organized into seven thematic modules, administered between 22 January and 28th of February 2026. It was distributed to members and customers of Orgbrain, Styreforeningen, Styreinstituttet, CORPRT, and ConnectVest, as well as via LinkedIn board member communities. The combined estimated reach was approximately 70,000 individuals. The sampling approach was purposive, aimed at reaching individuals with active board experience in Norway, and the sample should be understood as a convenience sample rather than a probability sample, and findings should be interpreted accordingly. Respondents self-selected into participation, which undoubtedly introduces response bias toward board members with a pre-existing interest in or awareness of AI.

957	777	33	2,100+
individuals entered the survey	usable responses after cleaning	questions across 7 modules	board seats collectively held

Sample Description & Representativeness

The sample was predominantly male (68%), with 31 percent identifying as women. Respondents were heavily concentrated in the 45–64 age bracket (58%). Geographically, Akershus (20%), Oslo (20%), and Vestland (12%) represent over half of the respondents. 56 percent reported 15 or more years of cumulative board experience, and only 7 percent had fewer than three years. The most common primary role was chair (44%), followed by board member (38%). The respondents tend to be avid users of AI, as 57 percent of respondents use it on a daily basis.

The sample can be partially benchmarked against SSB's annual statistics on board composition in Norwegian limited companies. According to SSB, women constituted approximately 20.3 percent of board representatives in Norwegian AS companies in 2024. The gender distribution in the survey sample, 68 percent men and 31 percent women, differs from this figure, with women more represented than in the AS population alone. This discrepancy is likely explained by the broader scope of the sample, which includes boards of non-profit organizations, foundations, and housing cooperatives alongside commercial limited companies. These organizational forms tend to have higher female representation than private commercial firms.

The heavy concentration of respondents in the 45–64 age bracket is consistent with general expectations about board demographics in Norway, where board service typically accumulates with career seniority. Overall, the sample overrepresents experienced, digitally active, and organizationally engaged individuals. Findings on AI adoption and attitudes should therefore be interpreted as indicative of trends among engaged board participants, representing an upper bound on AI adoption rather than a representative snapshot of all Norwegian board members.

AI Use in Board Work

Three in four board members in our sample engage with AI tools in some form: 19% regularly, 38% occasionally, and a further 16% have experimented without settling into a consistent pattern. Just six percent have no plans to adopt AI at all. The large share of occasional and experimental users points to a moment of transition, as many board members are testing the boundaries of AI in their work without yet having settled into established routines. With 21% interested but not yet active, the potential for further growth is clear

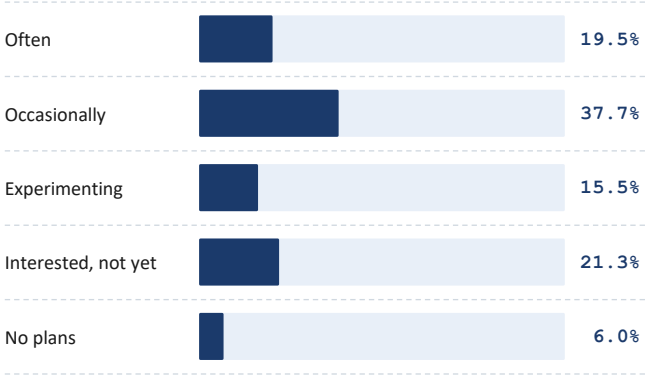
Non-users

Among board members who do not use AI in their board work, the dominant barrier is a lack of knowledge or training (43%), followed by a perceived absence of need (26%) and concerns about security and privacy (20%). A further 18% point to the lack of clear organizational guidelines. This pattern suggests that closing the adoption gap requires both targeted competence-building and robust governance frameworks that address trust and privacy concerns.

What AI is used for

Administration and preparation dominate. The most frequently reported applications are drafting communications (43%), pre-reading and summarizing board materials (40%), and note-taking and documentation (39%). More analytical uses are present but far less common, data analysis (22%), risk assessment (20%), and strategic scenario planning (19%). ESG information gathering (4%) ranks lowest. AI is applied where tasks are bounded and repetitive; use in tasks requiring judgment and discretion is far less frequent.

ADOPTION BREAKDOWN (N=717)



> *AI is applied where tasks are bounded and repetitive. Use in tasks requiring judgment and discretion is far less frequent.*

USE CASES (N=513)

Tools and subscriptions

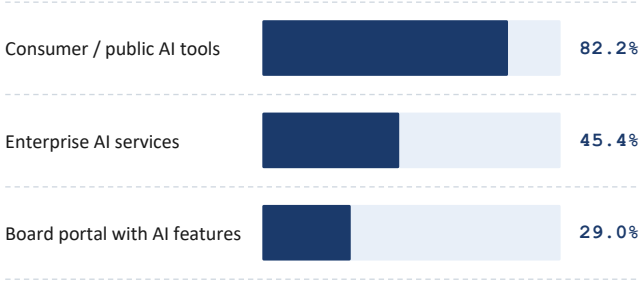
In terms of tool choice, standardized and publicly available services dominate. 82 percent of respondents use tools such as ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, or Copilot. Professional enterprise solutions like Microsoft 365 Copilot and Google Workspace AI are used by 30 percent, while board-specific software with AI functionality, such as Orgbrain or Diligent, is used by 29 percent. Among those who name a specific tool, ChatGPT is the clear frontrunner at 91 percent. Gemini follows at 26 percent, with Perplexity at 12 percent and Claude at four percent.

> *Many board members have actively chosen to invest in better tools rather than settle for what is freely available.*

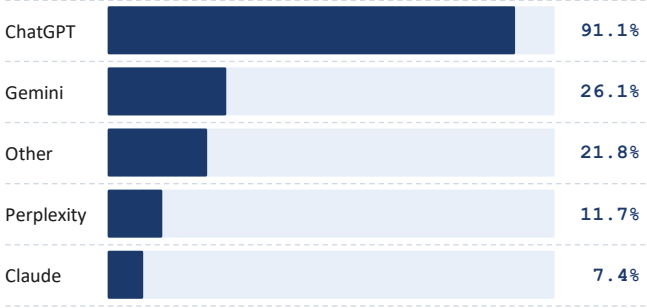
The subscription picture is more balanced than expected. 43 percent pay for individual subscriptions, 40 percent use free tiers, and 18 percent have enterprise access. Many board members have actively chosen to invest in better tools rather than settle for what is freely available.

This matters more than it might first appear. Like free subscriptions, paid individual subscriptions are precisely the category least likely to go through procurement review, data processing agreements, or any formal security assessment. The practical implications become clear when we look at how board members actually share data with these tools.

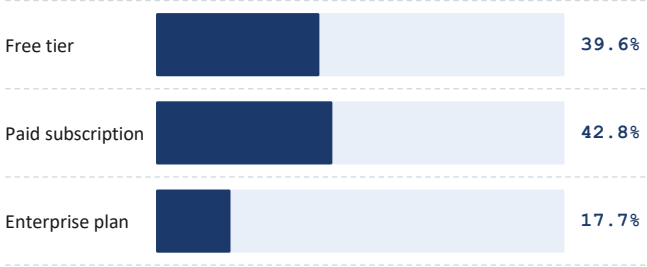
TYPE OF AI TOOL (N=511)



TYPE OF AI-TOOL PROVIDER (N=418)



TYPE OF SUBSCRIPTION PLAN (N=407)



Data Sharing with AI Tools

Among the 487 respondents who addressed this question, a meaningful share reported actively feeding board-sensitive material into AI tools. Financial information is the most commonly shared data type at 18 percent, followed by strategic and business-critical information at 17 percent. Legal and regulatory content is actively shared by 13 percent of respondents, and operational and security-related data by 9 percent.

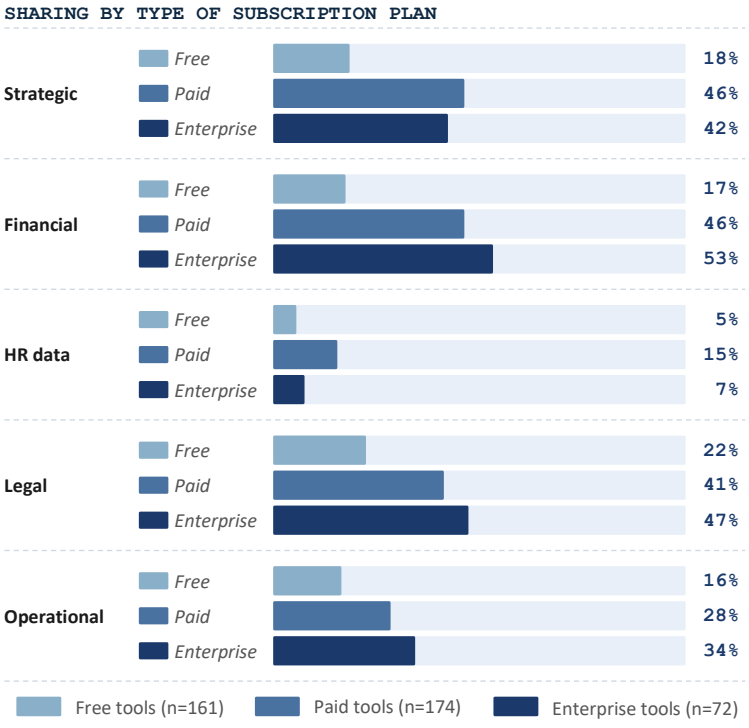
18%	17%	14%	9%	4%
Share financial data	Share strategic information	Share legal data	Share operational and technical data	Share HR / personal data

Personal and HR-related data stands apart: only 4 percent report active sharing, likely reflecting GDPR awareness and the particular sensitivity of personnel matters. Yet the active sharing figures tell only part of the story — when occasional and one-off sharing is included, the broader picture suggests that exposure of sensitive board data to AI tools is more widespread than headline figures imply.

> *Board members are routinely entering financial, strategic, and legal information into AI systems without any organizational framework governing what can be shared, with which tools, or under what conditions.*

A further layer of risk emerges when sharing behaviour is broken down by tool tier. Paid individual subscriptions are associated with the highest levels of sensitive data sharing — broadly on par with enterprise users, and substantially higher than those using free tools.

Unlike enterprise solutions, paid individual subscriptions are the tool category least likely to be subject to procurement review, data processing agreements, or formal security assessment. Enterprise users tend to operate within organisational boundaries that shape what they share, paid individual subscribers often do not, which comes with a heightened risk.



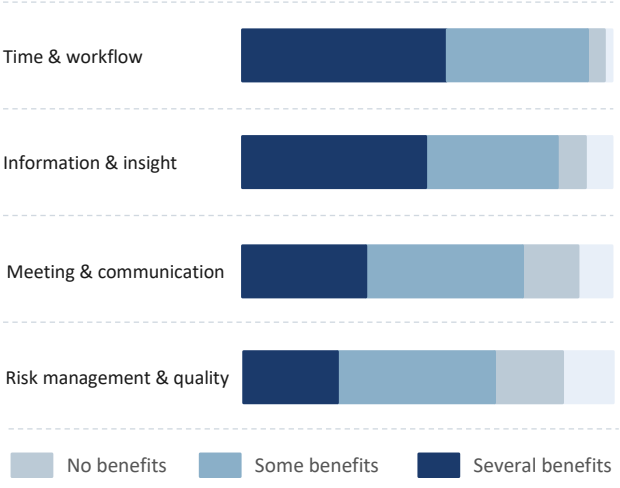
Benefits & Expectations

Expectations for AI use in board work are strongly positive. Among 649 respondents, 30 percent expect their personal AI use to increase significantly over the next twelve months, and 46 percent expect a moderate increase. Nearly eight in ten current AI users believe the technology could deliver moderate or very high additional value beyond their current practice, suggesting that even among those already using AI in board work, the perceived potential remains largely unrealized.

> *Even among those already using AI in board work, the perceived potential remains largely unrealized.*

The perceived benefits reported by current users vary considerably by domain. Time and workflow are where AI delivers most clearly, 55 percent report several benefits, and 38 percent report some, with time savings in preparation and follow-up being the most widely selected gains in the survey. Information and insight follow a similar pattern, with 49 percent reporting several benefits, reflecting AI's role in processing complex material and supporting analytical engagement rather than saving time. Meeting and communication work occupies a middle position, and risk management and quality are where perceived benefit is weakest, and only 25 percent report several benefits. Whether this reflects a genuine ceiling on what AI can contribute to higher-stakes governance tasks, or simply the consequence of tools being applied narrowly, the data cannot determine.

PERCEIVED BENEFITS BY DOMAIN (N=498)



SPECIFIC GAIN TYPES (N=498)

When asked about specific gains, time savings in preparation are the most widely reported gain, cited by four out of five respondents, followed by being better informed about complex issues (56%) and time savings in follow-up work (50%). Together, these three categories account for the most concrete and frequently experienced returns from AI use in board work.

Guidelines & Governance

The governance picture that emerges from the survey is one of widespread AI use operating largely without institutional structure. More than four in five board members are navigating their AI use without an established organizational framework to guide it.

57%	24%	14%	53%
No formal guidelines exist	Discussed but not formalized	Clear guidelines in place	AI never on board agenda

Among those who do have guidelines, compliance is high: 93 percent report using AI only within the boundaries set, with just 7 percent acknowledging occasional use outside them. This is a reassuring figure, but its scope is limited as it applies to the small minority who have guidelines in the first place. For the majority of board members, the question of compliance is largely moot.

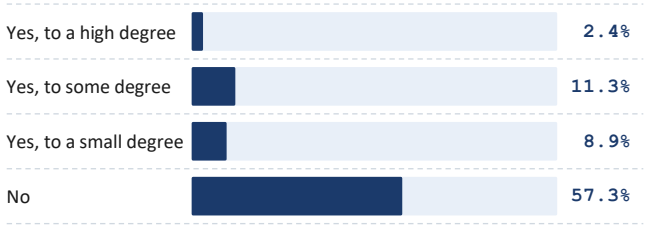
There is, however, less confidence when it comes to responsible use by other board members. Over 2 percent state that they rate irresponsible use high among other board members, 11 percent believe others are using AI irresponsibly to some degree, and a further 9 percent to a limited degree. These figures may understate the actual picture given that most respondents have limited visibility into how their colleagues use AI outside of formal meetings.

> *More than four in five board members are navigating their AI use without an established organizational framework to guide it.*

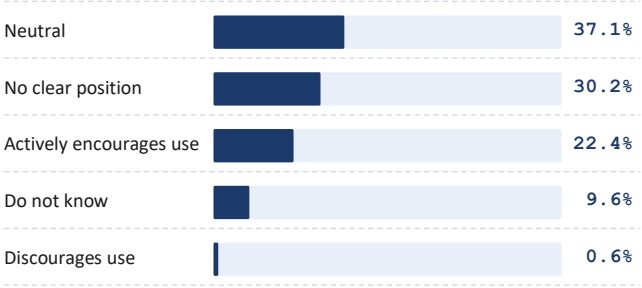
Board-level attitudes toward AI use are predominantly permissive but largely passive. 22 percent of boards actively encourage use, 37 percent are neutral, and 30 percent have no clear position at all. Only one percent actively discourage it. The dominant mode is not prohibition or promotion, but indifference.

Organizationally provided access to AI tools is similarly limited: only 23 percent of respondents report that their organization provides AI tools for board use, while 52 percent say it does not.

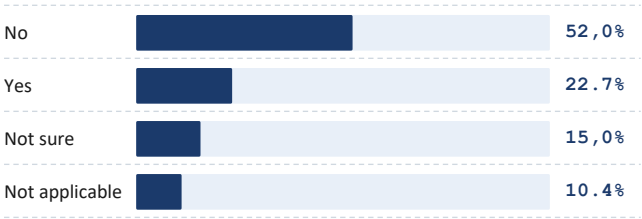
IRRESPONSIBLE USE BY OTHER BOARD MEMBERS (N=293)



BOARD LEVEL ATTITUDES (N=665)



ORGANIZATIONAL ACCESS TO AI TOOLS (N=662)

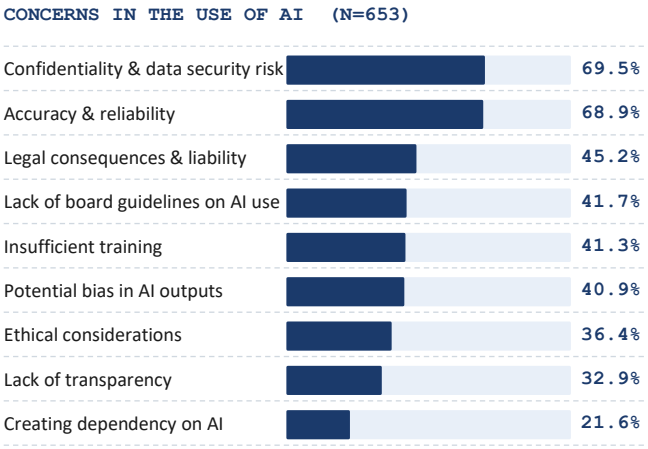


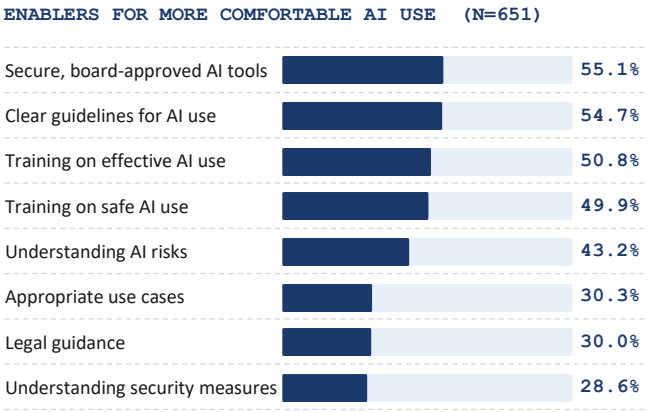
Concerns & Comfort

The concerns board members associate with AI use are concentrated at the top of the risk hierarchy. Confidentiality and data security are the most widely cited worries, followed closely by doubts about the accuracy and reliability of AI outputs. Legal liability, the absence of board-level guidelines, and insufficient training are each registered at around 42–45 percent, while potential bias, and ethical considerations follow closely after.

What would move the needle is equally clear. Secure, board-approved tools, clear guidelines and training are the most commonly selected enablers. Together, these top responses point in the same direction. Board members are not waiting for AI to prove itself technically, they are waiting for the institutional infrastructure to catch up.

> *Secured, board-approved tools, clear guidelines and training are the most commonly selected enablers*

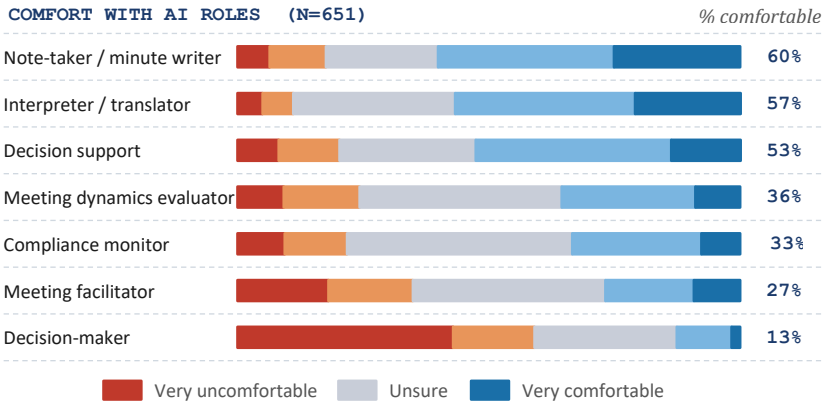




The limits of acceptance

Comfort with AI in the boardroom follows a clear gradient from passive to active roles. Board members are most at ease with administrative tasks with AI as a note-taker (60% comfortable) and interpreter (57%). Decision support sits just above the majority threshold at 53%, suggesting that AI as an analytical aid is broadly accepted, provided humans retain judgment.

Comfort drops for roles involving observation or oversight and fall further for facilitation. The sharpest result is for AI as a decision-maker, where only 13% express any comfort. The pattern reflects a consistent underlying norm: AI is welcome as a tool in the boardroom, but not as a participant with agency



Competence & Training

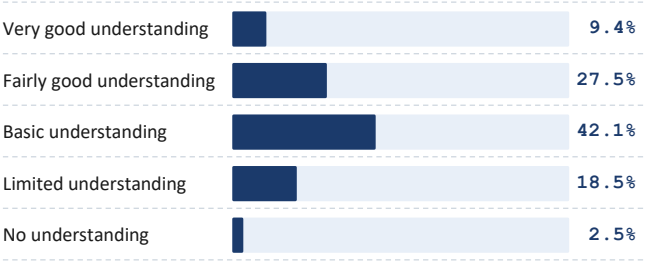
Technical understanding of AI among board members is modest. 43 percent describe their understanding as basic, 19 percent as limited, and 3 percent as none at all. Only 27 percent report a quite good understanding, and 9 percent very good. The majority of board members are operating with foundational or limited AI knowledge.

> *Over 50 percent state there is no specific AI expertise present on the board*

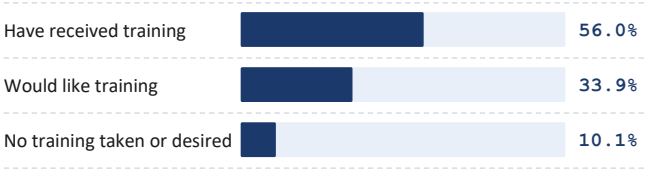
Training uptake is more encouraging. 56 percent report having participated in AI-related education or training in the past twelve months, while 34 percent say they want training but have not yet received it.

When it comes to expertise at the board-level, over 50 percent state that there is no specific AI expertise present on the board, while 21 percent state that there are board members with a deeper level of expertise.

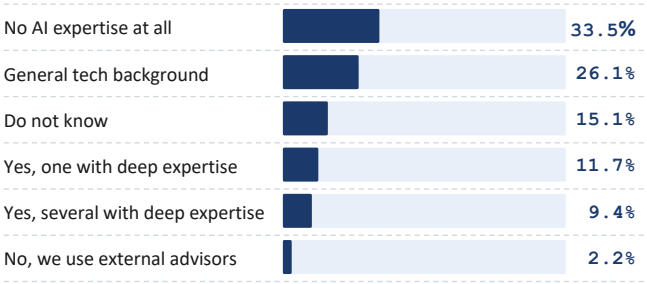
TECHNICAL AI UNDERSTANDING (N=648)



AI TRAINING (N=648)



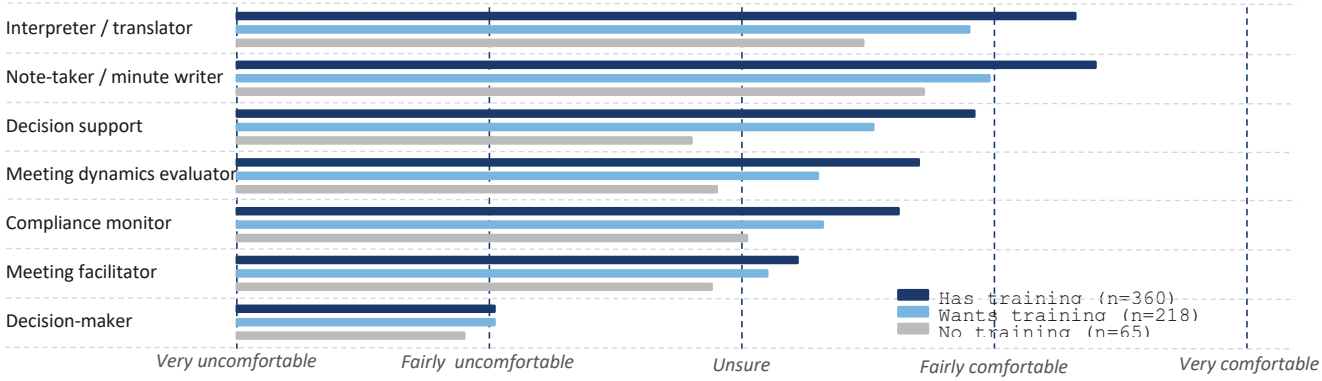
BOARD-LEVEL AI EXPERTISE (N=648)



The decision barrier

Training does not appear to break what might be called the decision barrier. Comfort with AI as a decision-maker, rather than a decision supporter, remains low across all groups, regardless of training status. This reflects a principled position about the role of human judgment in governance, not a knowledge gap.

TRAINING AND COMFORT



AI User Archetypes in the Boardroom

Board members do not form a uniform group when it comes to AI adoption. Usage patterns, motivations, concerns, and expectations vary considerably across respondents. To make sense of this variation, the analysis identifies four distinct archetypes of AI users in the boardroom. These are not rigid categories but representative profiles, each capturing a coherent combination of behaviors, attitudes, and competence levels that recur across the sample. Together, they illustrate the range of relationships Norwegian board members currently have with AI, from narrow and practical engagement to broad and intensive use. Understanding these profiles matters not only for describing where boards stand today, but for thinking about what support, governance, and training different groups of board members are likely to need going forward. The four archetypes: The Thinkers, The Professionals, Efficiency Users, and Power Users differ systematically across tool choice, data sharing, perceived benefits, comfort with AI roles, and expectations for future use.

The Thinkers	The Professionals	Efficiency Users	Power Users
17%	**42%**	**33%**	**7%**
Research & learning	*Broad, responsible use*	*Meeting prep & admin*	*Intensive, broad use*
n: 89	n: 219	n: 174	n: 39
Women: **33%**	Women: **28%**	Women: **33%**	Women: **26%**
Age: **59 yrs**	Age: **57 yrs**	Age: **59 yrs**	Age: **52 yrs**
Board experience: **20.0 yrs**	Board experience: **18.6 yrs**	Board experience: **17.4 yrs**	Board experience: **13.1 yrs**
Use case	**Use case**	**Use case**	**Use case**
Administration: **12%**	Administration: **97%**	Administration: **98%**	Administration: **89%**
Analysis: **49%**	Analysis: **67%**	Analysis: **17%**	Analysis: **66%**
Intelligence: **60%**	Intelligence: **57%**	Intelligence: **7%**	Intelligence: **45%**
Learning: **74%**	Learning: **67%**	Learning: **24%**	Learning: **50%**
Tools and training	**Tools and training**	**Tools and training**	**Tools and training**
Free tools: **43%**	Free tools: **25%**	Free tools: **67%**	Free tools: **18%**
Paid tools: **41%**	Paid tools: **51%**	Paid tools: **27%**	Paid tools: **58%**
Enterprise tools: **16%**	Enterprise tools: **24%**	Enterprise tools: **7%**	Enterprise tools: **24%**
Received training: **61%**	Received training: **80%**	Received training: **35%**	Received training: **66%**
Wants training: **30%**	Wants training: **16%**	Wants training: **54%**	Wants training: **26%**

Archetype Profiles

The Thinkers *DEPTH OVER SHORTCUTS*

The Thinker brings long experience in board work and has also become genuinely active with AI in everyday life. In the boardroom, these two things do not fully overlap — not from unfamiliarity with the technology, but from a considered view about where it belongs. The boundary between their personal use and board-level use is present and deliberate.

When AI enters their board preparation, it does so in a specific register: following industry developments, working through complex topics, and building a richer understanding of the terrain before a meeting. Administrative tasks

such as summarizing papers and structuring agendas tend to be handled by other means. Time saved is rarely their measure; the engagement with AI is more often an investment in depth than a shortcut.

On the question of broader AI adoption in governance, their position is neither closed nor uncritical. What's needed, in their view, is clarity: on guidelines, on transparency, on the nature of the risks involved. The line between personal AI use and AI use at the board level reads less like a fixed rule and more like an active choice, one that reflects long familiarity with how deliberation works and what it depends on

The Professionals BROAD USE, GROUNDED COMPETENCE

The Professional works with AI across a wide range of tasks: administrative work, analysis, trend monitoring, and building knowledge. They are the most likely to have participated in formal training, often use paid tools, and are among the most comfortable with AI playing an active role, not just in preparation but in board work itself. Broad use and developed competence tend to appear together in this profile.

Their concerns around data security, accuracy, and the limits of AI judgment are present but don't function as constraints on engagement. They coexist with high overall comfort, a pattern that distinguishes this user from those whose awareness of risk translates into narrower use or firmer boundaries. Compliance with existing guidelines, where they apply, tends to be high.

What's distinctive about this user is coherence across dimensions that don't always move together. Comfort, competence, training, and breadth of use are all high, and they reinforce each other. Whether that profile is the result of a particular path — structured exposure, organisational context, deliberate investment — or reflects something more self-selecting, the data does not resolve. But the pattern is consistent and the clearest example of what broad, grounded AI use in governance looks like in practice.

Efficiency Users NARROW, PRACTICAL, CONSISTENT

The Efficiency User is an experienced board member who has found a clear and consistent role for AI in their work: preparing for meetings. Summarizing board papers, drafting agendas, and reducing time spent on routine tasks. These are the areas where AI earns its place. Beyond that, the engagement is limited, and they tend to use free tools, share relatively little data with AI systems, and focus on tasks where the cost of error is low.

What is harder to read from the outside is whether that scope reflects a settled position or simply the limits of what they have had the chance to explore. This is the user type least likely to have received training, and the most likely to want it. That gap between appetite and access is notable, and it sits uneasily alongside any reading of their current use as a fixed preference.

They see a more modest role for AI in board work overall, compared to user types with broader use patterns. Whether that reflects what AI can genuinely offer in governance contexts, or what this user has not yet had reason to discover, remains an open question. Their current use is coherent and practical, but the demand for training suggests the boundaries of that use may be less settled than they appear.

Power Users HIGH INTENSITY, HIGH AWARENESS

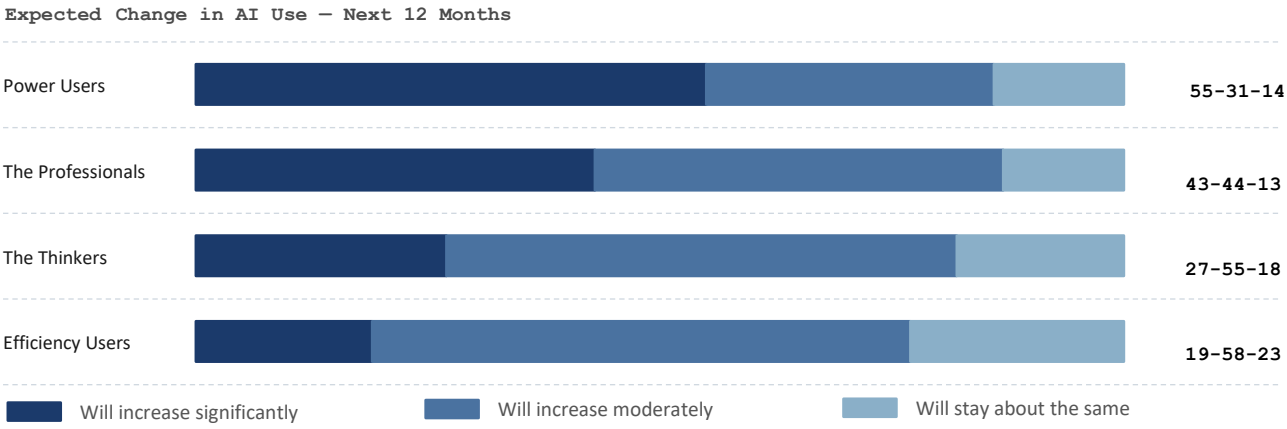
The Power User is among the younger board members in the sample and brings comparatively fewer years of board experience, though still substantial. What defines them is intensity: AI use that spans nearly every task type, high reported time savings, and a significantly higher level of data sharing with AI tools than other user types. Strategic, financial, and legal information all come into play the picture. More than half use paid solutions.

They also carry the greatest concerns of any archetype. Data security and transparency all peak here. This is not a contradiction so much as a profile. Someone who uses AI extensively and thinks carefully about what that means. Their demand for structure is correspondingly strong: guidelines, secure tools, legal clarity, training. They see more value in AI for board work than any other user type, and plan to expand their use further.

One detail stands out, as this is the only user type that regularly notices other board members using AI in ways that feel irresponsible. Research on how people assess others' behaviour suggests that heightened sensitivity to risk in those around us often reflects our own engagement with the same terrain, not as a sign of bad faith, but as a natural consequence of thinking carefully about something you do yourself. For this user, who shares more data, uses more powerful tools, and operates closer to the edge of what governance norms currently cover, that awareness seems entirely consistent. They are not unaware of the questions their own practice raises. The demand for structure reads in part as a response to their own position as much as a general governance concern.

Changes in AI Use

Those who already use AI most intensively are also the ones most likely to accelerate further, while those with narrower and more routine use are the least likely to expand beyond it. This suggests a structural divergence in trajectory that will widen the distance between the most and least AI-active board members.



Five Board Types

The sample can also be segmented by organizational type. By grouping respondents according to board characteristics rather than individual behavior, five distinct board types emerge each with a characteristic AI maturity profile:

- **Civil society**: associations, non-profits, foundations, and housing co-operatives. Typically member-governed, mission-driven, and operating outside commercial logic.
- **Public sector**: enterprises owned or controlled by the state or municipality, including public utilities, regional bodies, and government-backed institutions.
- **Large companies**: privately held or listed commercial firms of significant size, where boards carry formal accountability for strategy, risk, and financial oversight.
- **Startups and young firms**: early-stage ventures, typically founder-led, where board members often combine investor, advisory, and governance roles.
- **Small businesses**: owner-operated private companies where the board tends to be small, closely held, and closely aligned with day-to-day management.

Civil Society	Public Sector	Large Companies	Startup Founders	Small Business
32%	**10%**	**16%**	**20%**	**21%**
n: **249**	n: **77**	n: **123**	n: **156**	n: **165**
Av board size: **6.1**	Av board size: **6.3**	Av board size: **6.8**	Av board size: **3.7**	Av board size: **3.9**
Guidelines: **7%**	Guidelines: **9%**	Guidelines: **25%**	Guidelines: **14%**	Guidelines: **15%**
Experience: **15.6 yrs**	Experience: **16.3 yrs**	Experience: **13.6 yrs**	Experience: **12.4 yrs**	Experience: **28.3 yrs**
Thinkers: **12%**	Thinkers: **17%**	Thinkers: **22%**	Thinkers: **13%**	Thinkers: **23%**
Professionals: **32%**	Professionals: **42%**	Professionals: **46%**	Professionals: **46%**	Professionals: **47%**
Efficiency: **49%**	Efficiency: **42%**	Efficiency: **28%**	Efficiency: **28%**	Efficiency: **24%**
Power Users: **7%**	Power Users: **0%**	Power Users: **12%**	Power Users: **12%**	Power Users: **9%**
AI expertise present: **11%**	AI expertise present: **8%**	AI expertise present: **29%**	AI expertise present: **26%**	AI expertise present: **28%**
AI on agenda: **0.5/3.0**	AI on agenda: **0.5/3.0**	AI on agenda: **1.0/3.0**	AI on agenda: **0.7/3.0**	AI on agenda: **0.9/3.0**

Several patterns stand out. Civil society boards have almost no formal governance of AI use and only a few board members with AI expertise. They are dominated by Efficiency Users, reflecting a narrow but practical engagement with technology. Large-company and small-business owner boards share a similarly strong Professional presence, but diverge in the share of Thinkers, which is markedly higher among the most experienced boards. Startup founder boards stand out for their Power User concentration, consistent with high-intensity use driven by necessity. Public sector boards are the only type without Power Users, which likely reflects both compliance constraints and a preference for cautious, structured adoption. At the same time, similar to civil society, there is a low share with boards that have AI expertise. Across all five types, Professionals form the largest single archetype, suggesting that broad and competent AI use is already the modal pattern in Norwegian boardrooms, even if its depth and governance vary considerably by context. Overall, the topic of AI has featured relatively little in board meetings, though clearly more so in private sector firms than in civil society and public sector organizations.

The Big Picture

Norwegian board members are using AI, and use will grow. Yet how it is being used varies considerably. For some board members, AI spans preparation, analysis, communication, and strategic intelligence gathering. For others, it is limited to summarizing documents or reducing time on routine tasks. The range is wide, and the profiles are distinct.

Across all groups, AI delivers clearest value where tasks are bounded: preparation, documentation, drafting. Use in analytically demanding areas, like risk management, strategic scenario planning, remains far less common and returns weaker perceived benefit. And one boundary holds firm regardless of archetype, experience, or training: comfort with AI as a decision-maker is low and convergent across the entire sample. Board members are willing to work alongside AI, but they are not willing to delegate judgment to it.

What is missing is structural. Only 14 percent of board members operate within a clear organizational framework for AI use. Most organizations do not provide AI tools for board use, leaving members to self-select tools that may never pass procurement review or data processing assessment. The result is a landscape where sensitive financial, strategic, and legal information enters AI systems without any framework governing what can be shared, with which tools, or under what conditions. Board-level AI expertise is similarly thin, as over half of respondents report no dedicated AI competence on their board, and a third of those who want training have not yet received it.

The data are clear on what would make a difference. Across all archetypes, board members consistently prioritize the same enablers: secure, board-approved tools, clear usage guidelines, and training. These lead ahead of legal guidance, or practical examples. While training matters, it does not resolve the fundamental governance gap nor does it move the needle on the decision barrier. That position is principled, not remedied by competence-building alone.

The divergence between user types sharpens the picture further. Power Users and Professionals plan to accelerate their use. Efficiency Users, the largest group, are stabilizing around a narrow role, with more than half having received no training despite wanting it. Boards will increasingly contain members with fundamentally different risk profiles, data practices, and expectations of what AI can and should do in a governance setting. Managing that internal diversity will itself become a governance challenge.

The sector dimension reinforces this unevenness. Civil society boards lag on adoption and have almost no formal governance. Public sector boards are shaped by compliance constraints that limit intensive use. Large-company boards are the only type where formal guidelines are meaningfully present. The infrastructure for responsible AI use is not evenly distributed, and the boards that may need guidance are often the ones least likely to have it.

The question for boards, governance associations, and training providers is not whether AI belongs in the boardroom. Among engaged board members, it already does. The question is whether the frameworks, norms, and oversight structures will develop quickly enough to make that presence something boards can account for, rather than something that simply happens around them.

Summary

This report presents findings from a large-scale survey of active Norwegian board members, examining how artificial intelligence is adopted, used, and governed in boardroom practice. Conducted by NHH Norwegian School of Economics and Orgbrain, the study collected 777 usable responses across seven thematic modules covering AI use, tool choice, data sharing, perceived value, governance, concerns, and competence.

AI is actively being used on the board and its use is expecting to grow. Use concentrates heavily in administrative and preparatory tasks — drafting, summarizing, and documentation — while more analytically demanding applications such as risk management and strategic planning remain far less common. Four distinct user archetypes emerge from the data — Thinkers, Professionals, Efficiency Users, and Power Users — each with characteristic patterns of tool choice, data sharing behavior, perceived benefit, and future intent.

The governance picture is one of widespread use without institutional structure. More than four in five board members operate without formal organizational guidelines for AI use, and most boards have never placed the topic on their agenda. Sensitive financial, strategic, and legal information is routinely shared with AI tools under no organizational framework. The demand signal from board members is consistent, what they want most is more capability, and institutional legitimacy: secure tools, clear guidelines, and organizational frameworks that make responsible use possible.