

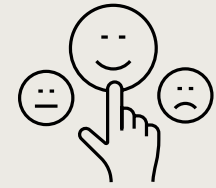


# AI in commodity trading: Why data will define the winners

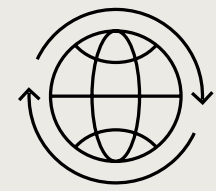
# About the research



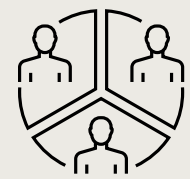
Artificial intelligence (AI) is changing how organisations in the commodities sector operate. This research explores where it is having the greatest impact today, and what will determine competitive advantage tomorrow.



HC Group surveyed  
131 executives



Global reach across  
9 countries

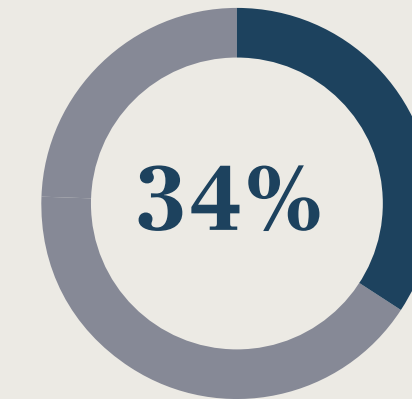


Encompassing three subsectors

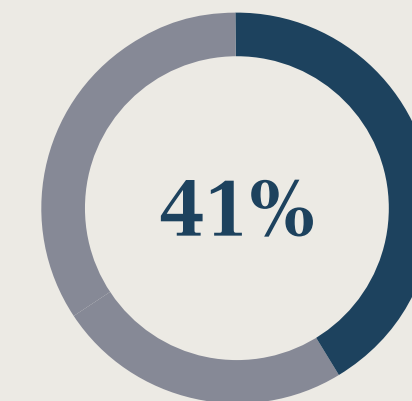
- Trading houses
- Asset-backed organisations
- Financial institutions

Fieldwork was conducted in February and March 2026 in local languages by FT Longitude, a specialist provider of thought leadership and research services.

## United States

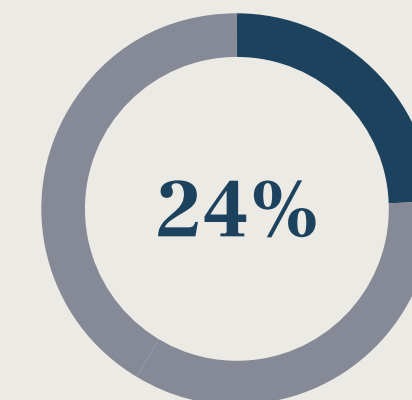


## Europe



United Kingdom (22%)  
Switzerland (19%)

## Rest of the world





GCC (11%)  
Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia,  
United Arab Emirates

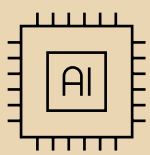
Singapore (11%)  
Other (2%)

# Key findings

## AI is delivering value at scale

 98% of executives say they are seeing some measurable value from AI.


 **#1 Risk management** the area where AI is delivering most value today.

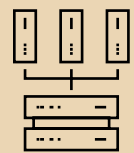
 **Trading houses, asset-backed organisations and financial institutions** are using AI differently to deliver on core competencies.

# 3.34%

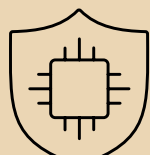
Executives expect AI to deliver an average additional 3.34% in trading P&L by 2027.

## Data is both the bottleneck...

 **#1** Data quality, access and organisation is ranked as the top-most barrier to scaling AI adoption and integration.

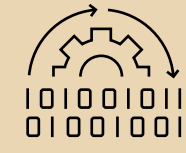
 **#2** This is closely followed by integration with existing systems.

Perceived barriers to scaling AI vary by market participant:

-  **Trading houses** see an enablement problem.
- Asset-backed organisations** see a trust problem.
- Financial institutions** see a talent problem.


## ...and the opportunity

Executives rank

- 
1. Faster decision cycles
  2. Superior proprietary data
  3. Superior risk pricing

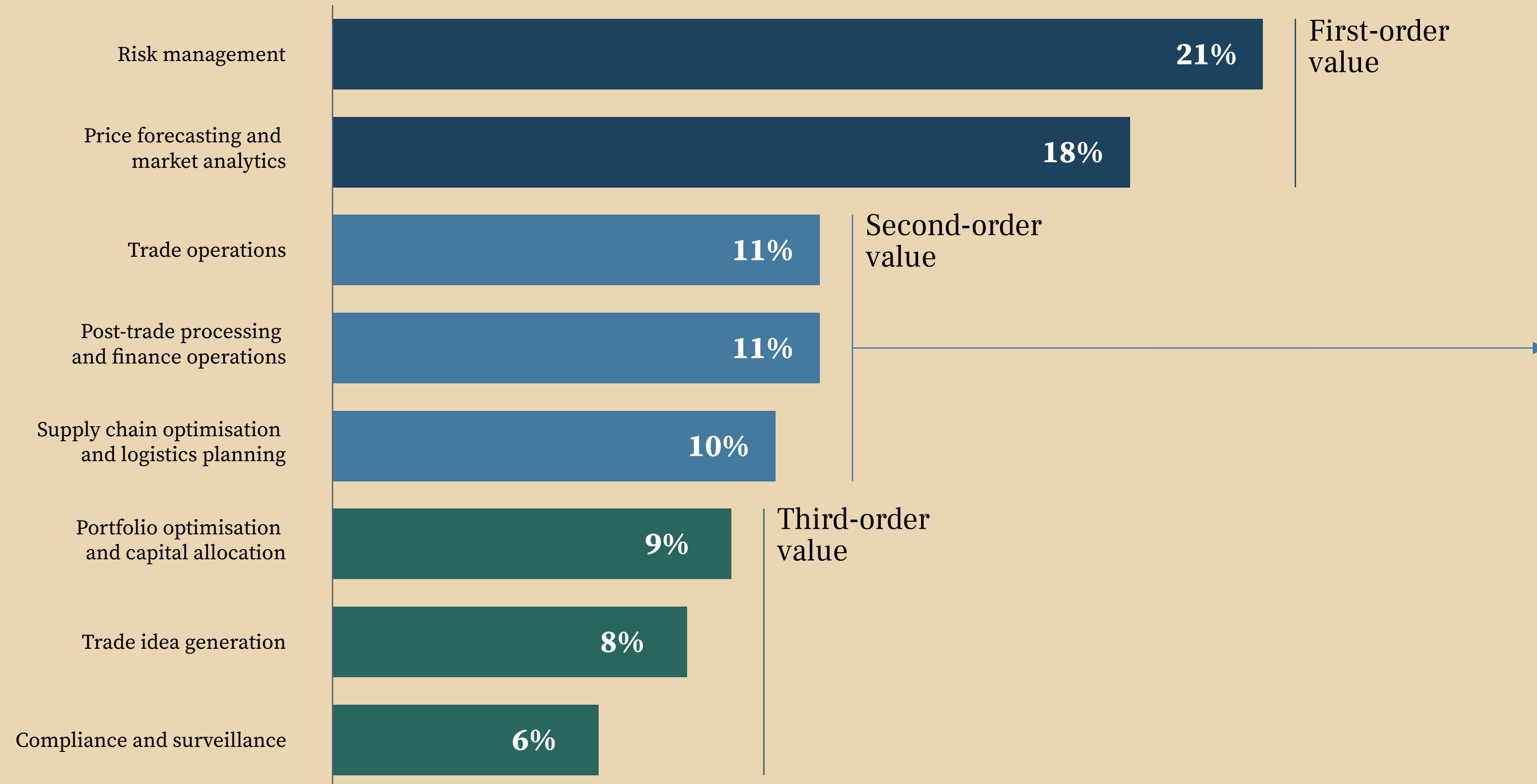
as the top 3 aspects of AI that will deliver the greatest competitive advantage over the next three years.

The data gap

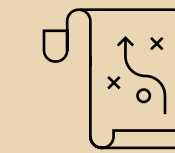
 Evidently, executives acknowledge that excellent data competency is the key to unlocking value from AI. At the same time, the majority recognise that their data estate is far from AI-ready. Those who bridge this gap will have a significant competitive advantage over the rest.

# AI is delivering commercial value

Where are you seeing the most commercial value from AI today?



Beyond risk and analytics, AI-driven commercial value diverges by business model



### Asset-backed organisations

- Supply chain optimisation and logistics planning



### Financial institutions

- Portfolio optimisation and capital allocation



### Trading houses

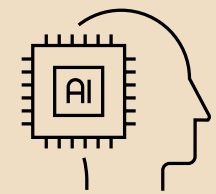
- Trade operations

# But not all sectors are equally confident in AI's impact on P&L

AI is delivering measurable trading P&L uplift

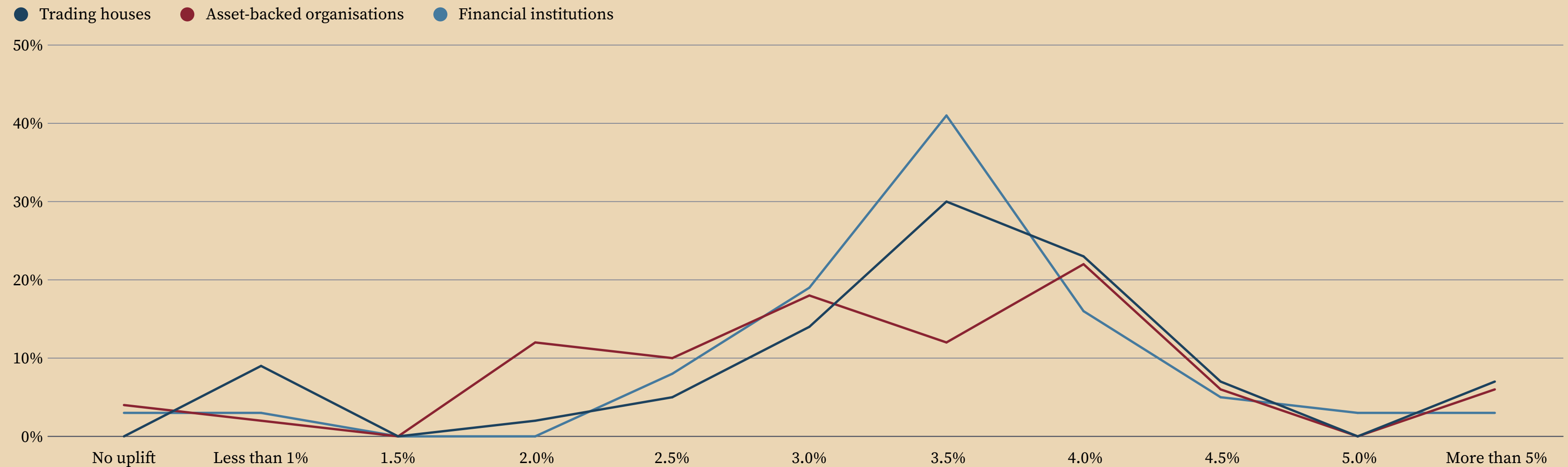


**3.34%**  
expected average uplift in trading P&L from AI by 2027

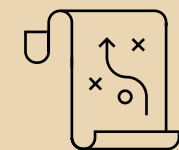


**and only 4%**  
say they're not seeing any measurable value from AI

### How do expectations of AI-driven P&L gains vary across firms by 2027?

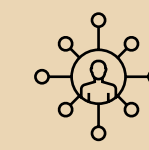


### Varies by company type



#### Asset-backed organisations

Display more conservative and dispersed expectations



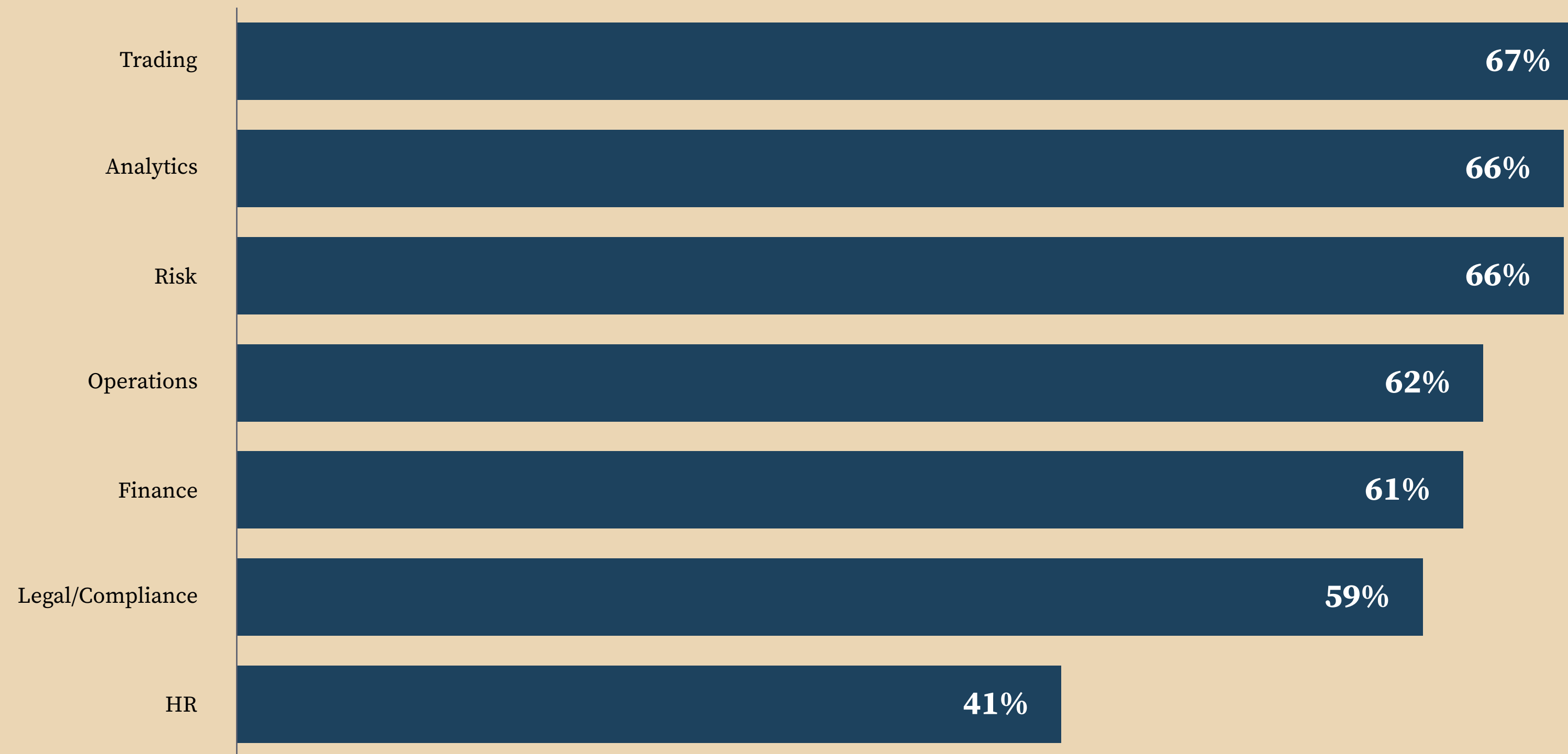
#### Financial institutions and trading houses

Show the strongest confidence in AI-driven uplift (peaking at 3.5%)

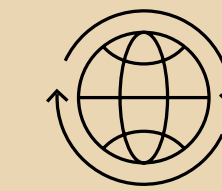
# Most organisations have scaled AI

Across front, middle and back office, the majority report that AI is embedded into their core workflows and systems, or is being used regularly – except in HR.

We have integrated and scaled or regularly use AI across the following functions

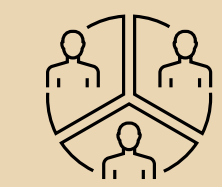


## Where AI is most mature



### Regions

- US:** Trading
- Europe:** Analytics
- Rest of the world:** Risk



### Sectors

- Trading houses:** Trading
- Asset-backed organisations:** Analytics
- Financial institutions:** Operations

# AI is delivering commercial value

Where do different sectors expect AI to deliver a competitive advantage in the next 3 years?

## Trading houses see advantage in speed, data and risk pricing



## Financial institutions see advantage in speed, efficiency and risk pricing

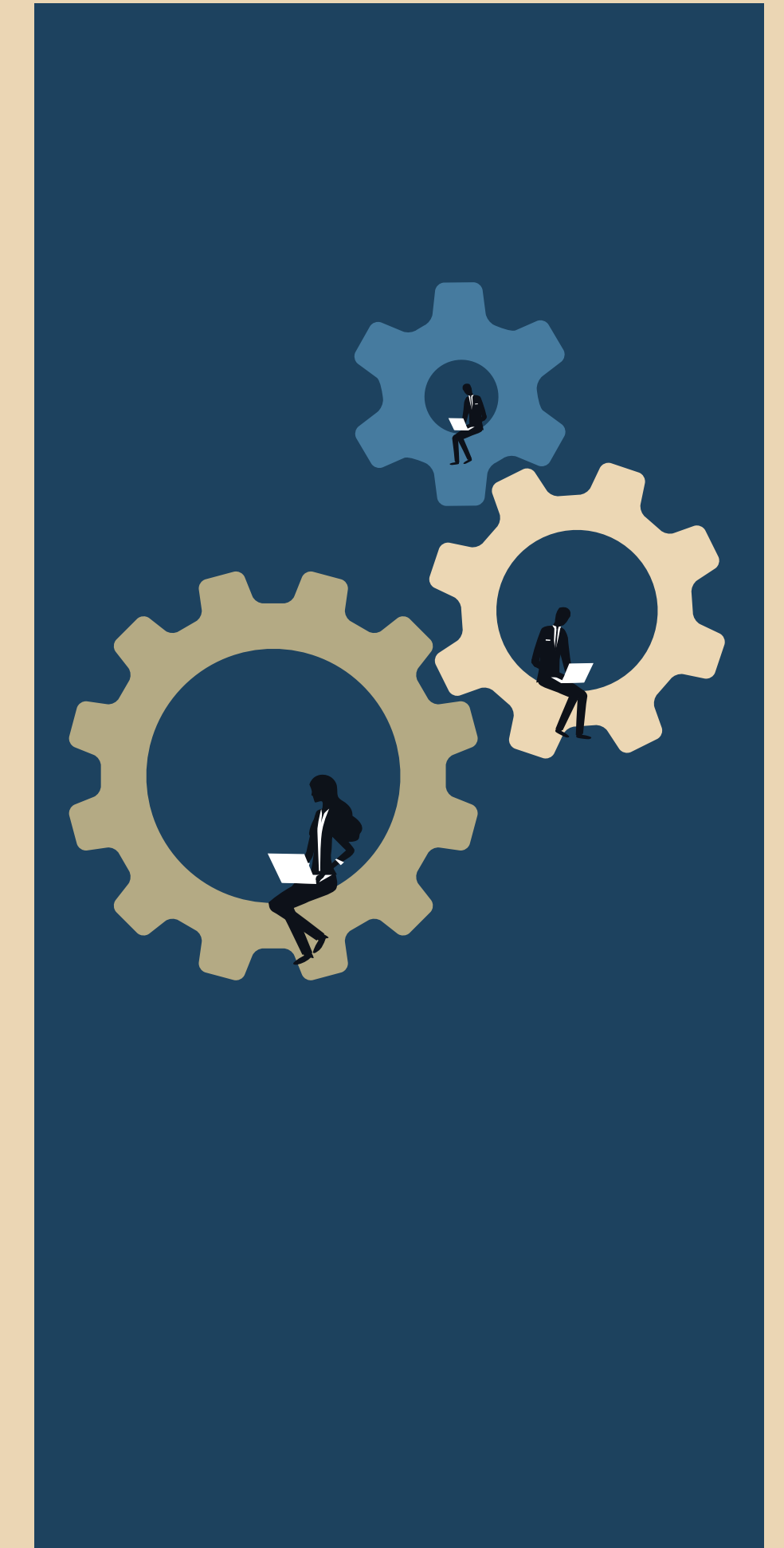
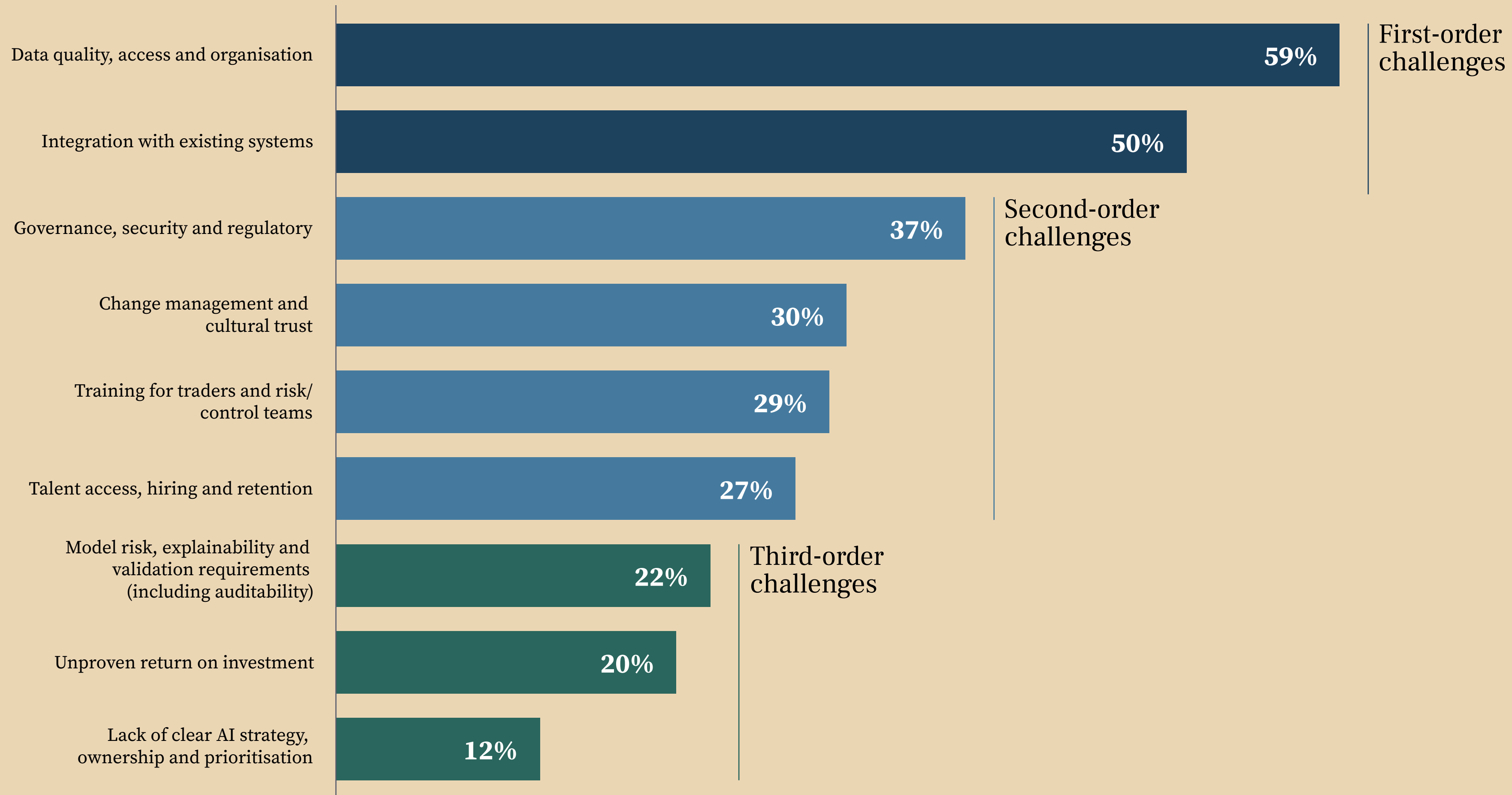


## Asset-backed organisations see advantage in data and efficiency






# But weak data foundations are slowing AI progress

What are the top barriers to scaling AI adoption and integration in your organisation today?

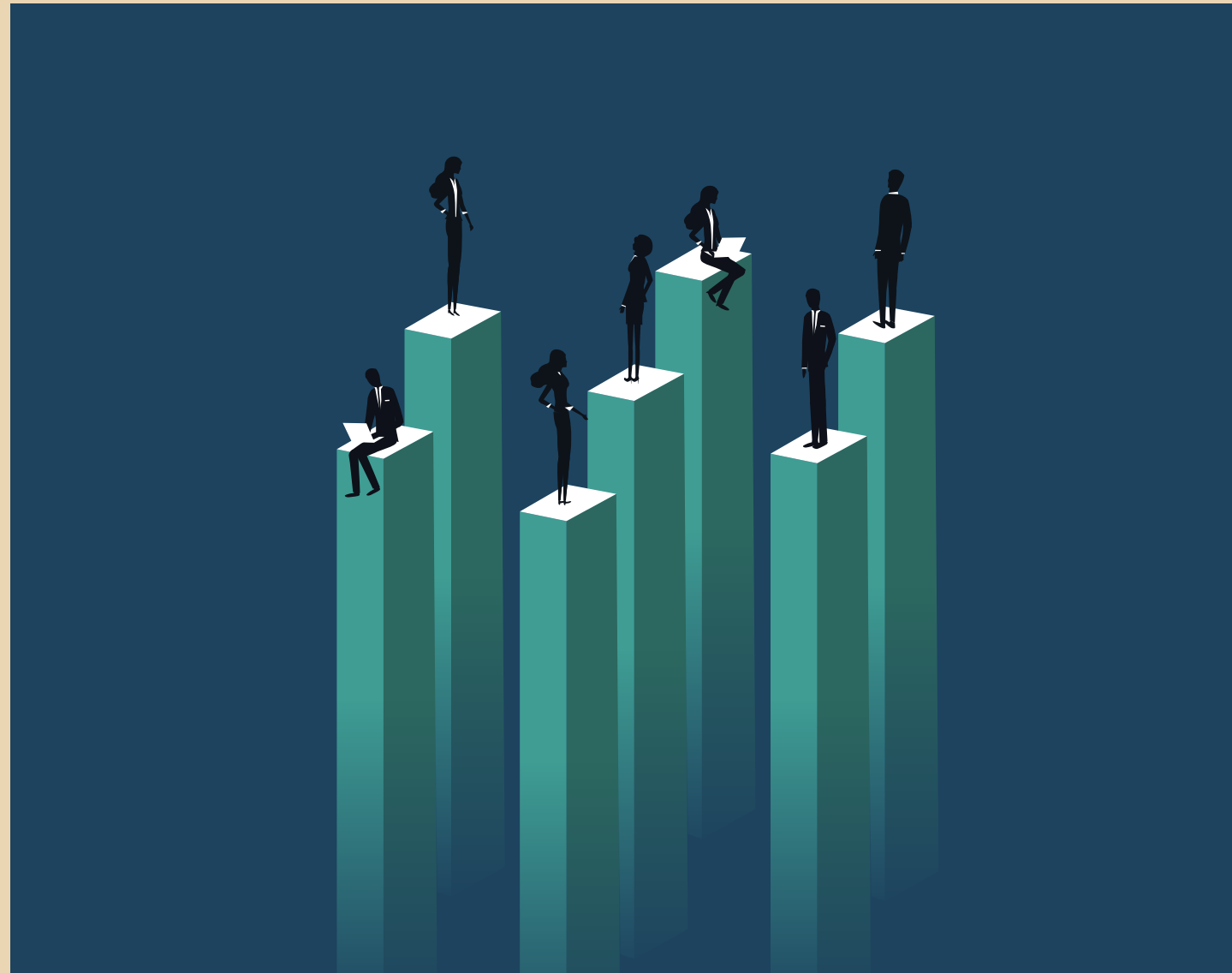


# Barriers to AI adoption differ by company type

	 <b>Trading houses</b> see an enablement problem	 <b>Asset-backed organisations</b> see a trust problem	 <b>Financial institutions</b> see a talent problem
Change management and cultural trust	<b>32%</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>30%</b>
Training for traders and risk/control teams	<b>39%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>27%</b>
Talent access, hiring and retention	<b>18%</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>35%</b>
Model risk, explainability and validation requirements	<b>16%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>19%</b>
Unproven return on investment	<b>9%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>30%</b>
Lack of clear AI strategy, ownership and prioritisation	<b>11%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>11%</b>

*Darker shading indicates higher-ranked barriers*

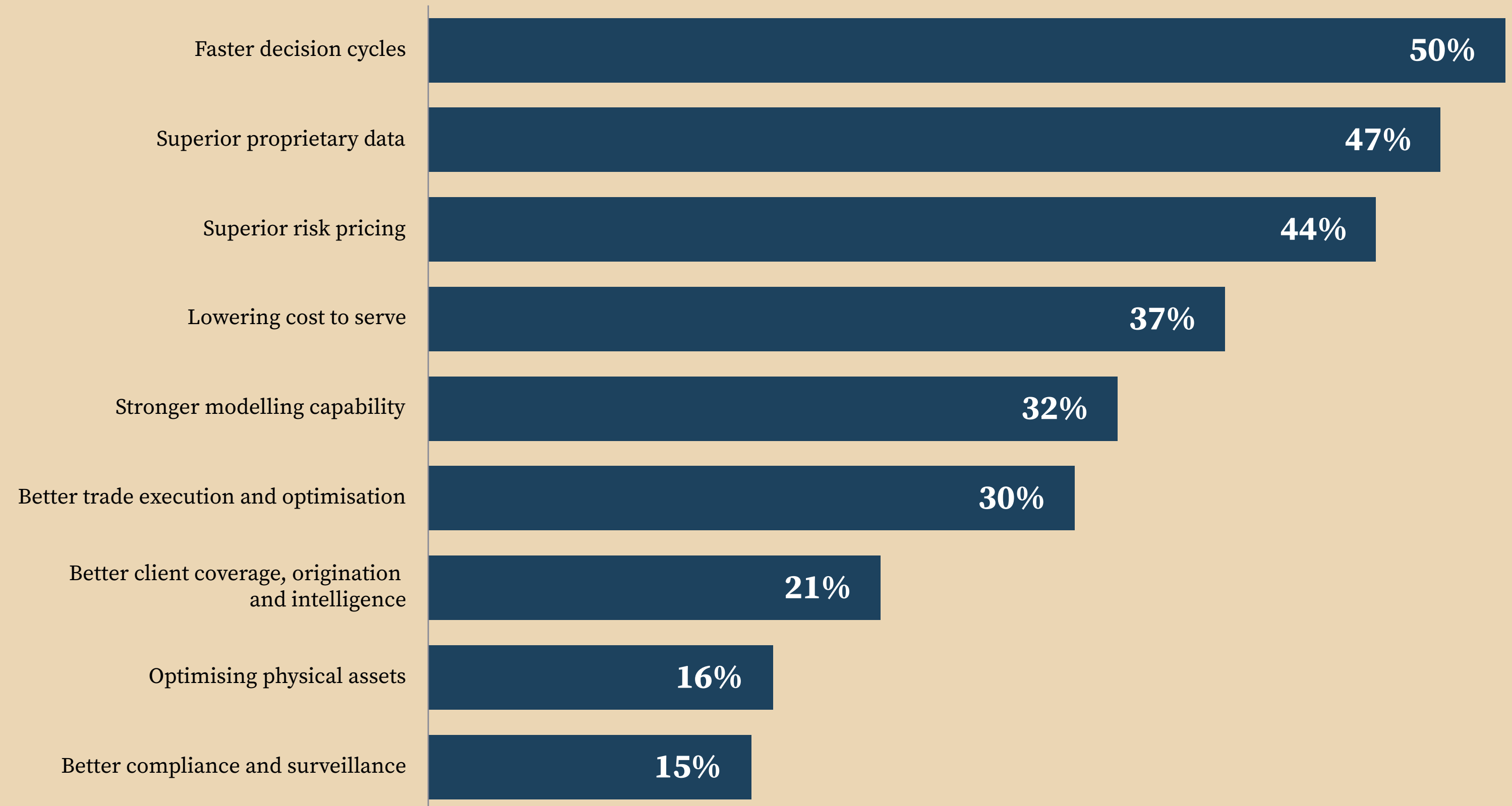
# Those who fix their data will come out on top



Harnessing data will enable organisations to:

- Make trading decisions quicker
- Have better, unique better datasets that only they control
- Price trades more accurately based on risks

Which aspects of AI do you think will deliver the greatest competitive advantage in your organisation over the next three years?





In collaboration with



## About HC Talent Intelligence



HC Talent Intelligence provides clients with a deeper understanding of the commodities talent landscape, enabling more informed decisions on hiring, retention, and organisational design.

Our work goes beyond recruitment. We help organisations understand how talent shapes performance: where it sits, how it moves, what it costs, and what it takes to win.

HC Talent Intelligence is part of HC Group, a global search firm dedicated to energy and commodities markets.

✉ Learn more: [intelligence@hcgroun.global](mailto:intelligence@hcgroun.global)