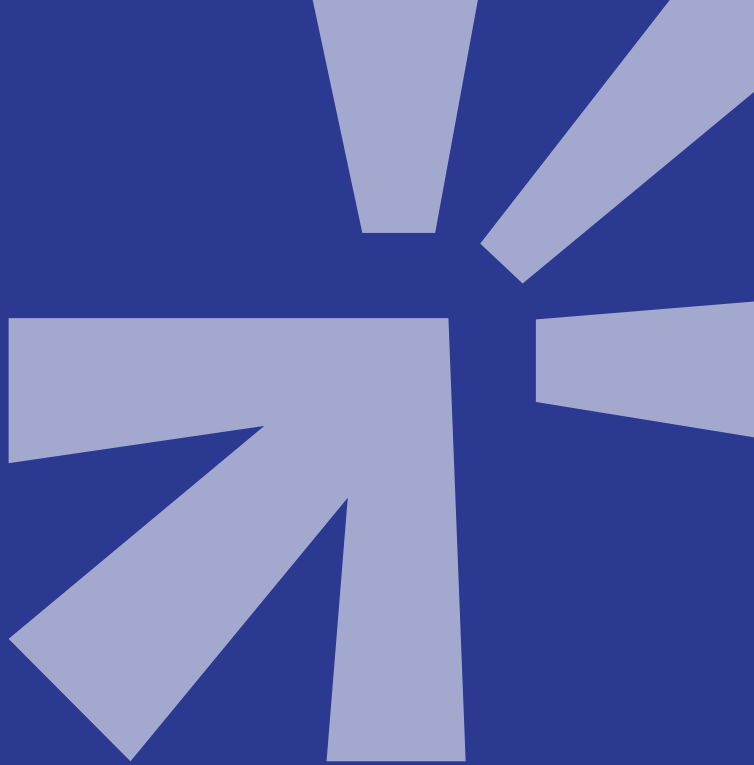


Corporate Affairs in Turbulent Times: Webinar

Exclusive to Contributors: A Highlights of the Oxford-GlobeScan Corporate Affairs Survey

22 April 2026





About the Research



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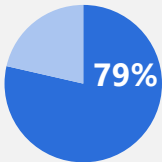


Methodology: Quantitative survey of 294 Corporate Affairs Leaders (February-April 2026)



Senior-level engagement

79% of participants report to the Board, CEO-level, or a Group Executive level

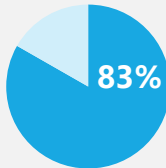


(78% in 2025 and 78% in 2024)



Experienced and tenured opinion

Over 8 in 10 have been operational in Corporate Affairs for more than a decade



(83% in 2025 and 81% in 2024)



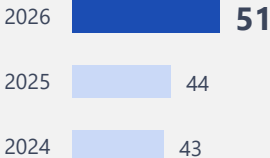
Cross-sector

Broad spectrum of Corporate Affairs professionals from industry sectors including many segments of B2B and B2C companies



International perspectives

Participation from over **50 countries**



Main Findings



Fundamental priority shift: from *Geopolitics* to *Geoeconomics*

We are seeing a normalisation of geopolitical concerns into more tangible geoeconomic pressures. While concerns around tariffs have eased somewhat, the real and immediate impact of AI on businesses is now being felt.



AI: Beyond wordsmithing to business intelligence, innovation and efficiency

AI is not a passing hype; it is becoming increasingly powerful and embedded in business operations. However, this brings new challenges, particularly around organisational readiness, internal transformation, and growing risks of external misuse or infiltration.

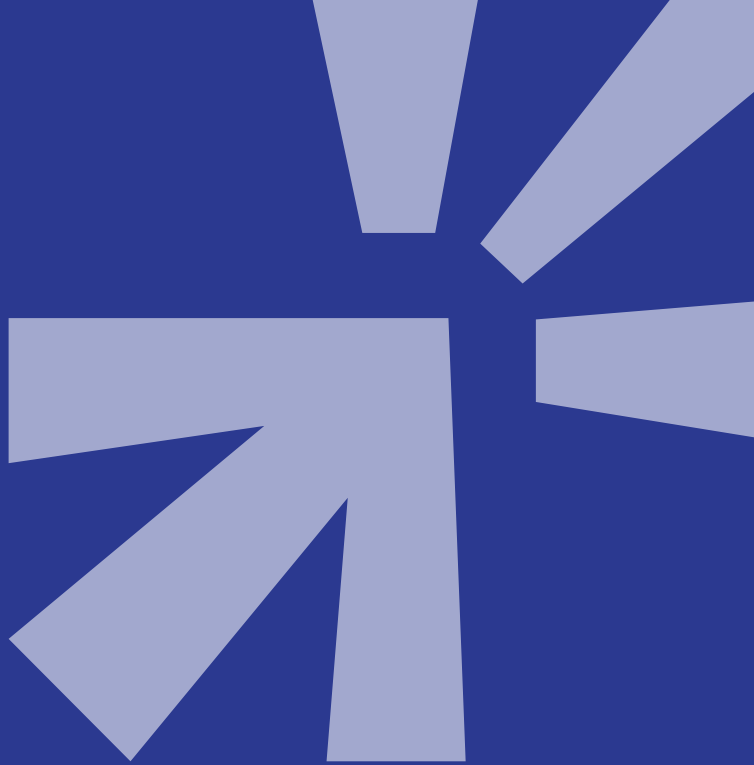


Advanced governance: the vital CA challenge and contribution

Effective governance of geoeconomic factors is emerging as one of the most significant reputational risks and opportunities, placing corporate affairs at the centre of strategic response.

Implications

- 1. A Geoeconomic Agenda:** The rise of AI as the sector, supply chains, trade policy, regional regulations and demands for growth create new priorities and focused capabilities especially related to decision support, alignment and integration.
- 2. Innovation Everywhere All the Time:** Dissatisfaction with the status quo approach to CA combined with AI advancements means we are entering a race to integrate and implement (both enablement and threat containment), but with *character* (ethics, human intelligence).
- 3. Embracing Governance as Frontline Reputation Lever:** A need for processes, policies , structures and measurement to manage changing regional realities and expectations, both inside and outside the enterprise, to deliver value with agility.



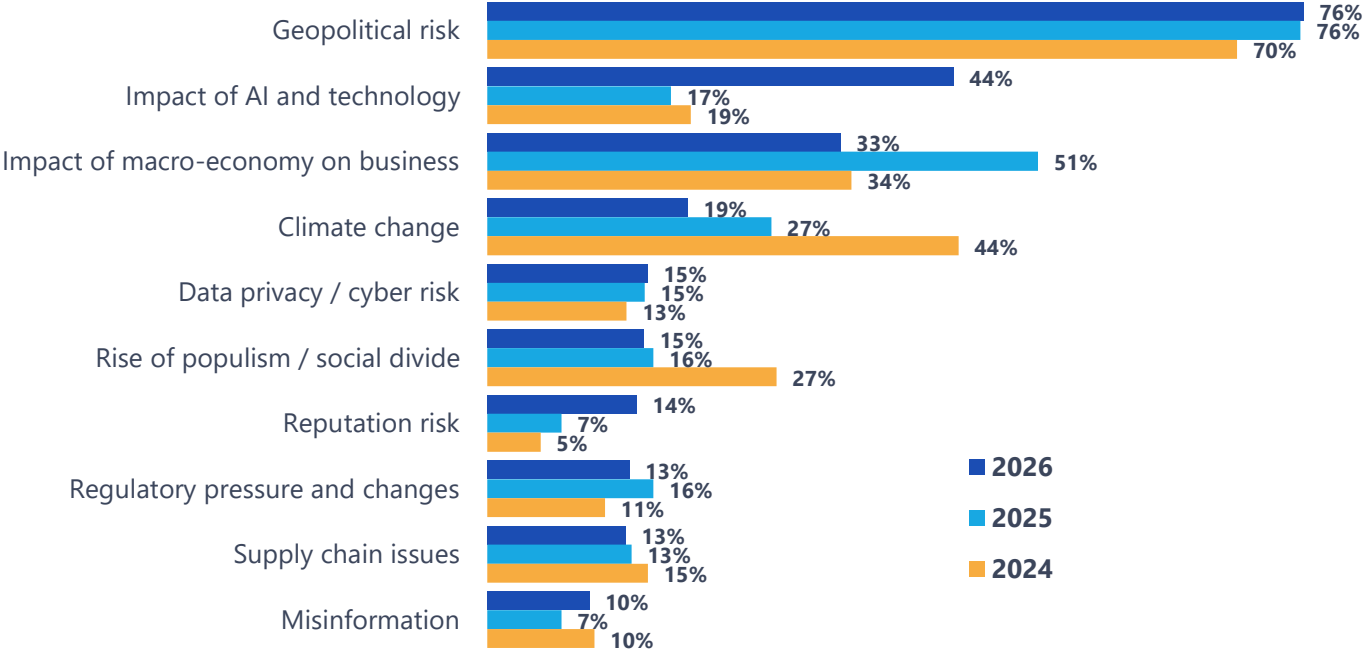
Issues Context

A more volatile world is defining the risk agenda

Geopolitics remains a dominant risk; the perceived risk from AI has risen sharply

Short-term Risks to Global Business

Open-ended, Total Mentions, 2024-2026



Risk exposure differs by sector, but geopolitics and AI consistently lead

Climate high risk for food/agriculture sector; supply chain for consumer, food, extractive sectors

Top Five Short-term Risks to Global Business, by Sector

Open-ended, Total Mentions, by Sector, 2026

Consumer products/retail	Food, agriculture, and beverage	Energy, extractives, manufacturing	Financial & professional services	ICT and media entertainment	NGO, research, IGO and Foundations
Geopolitical risk (84%)	Geopolitical risk (81%)	Geopolitical risk (75%)	Geopolitical risk (81%)	Geopolitical risk (74%)	Geopolitical risk (68%)
Impact of macro-economy on business (42%) <i>12% due to tariffs</i>	Climate change (31%)	Impact of AI and technology (40%)	Impact of AI and technology (48%)	Impact of AI and technology (65%)	Impact of AI and technology (39%)
Impact of AI and technology (31%)	Impact of macro-economy on business (25%) <i>0% due to tariffs</i>	Impact of macro-economy on business (33%) <i>15% due to tariffs</i>	Impact of macro-economy on business (25%) <i>6% due to tariffs</i>	Impact of macro-economy on business (32%) <i>6% due to tariffs</i>	Climate change (32%)
Supply chain issues (23%)	Supply chain issues (25%)	Supply chain issues (25%)	Data privacy / cyber risk (18)	Data privacy / cyber risk (26%)	Rise of populism / social divide (23%)
Rise of populism / social divide (23%)	Regulatory pressure and changes (25%)	Climate change (17%)	Reputation risk (18%)	Misinformation (16%)	Impact of macro-economy on business (20%) <i>5% due to tariffs</i>

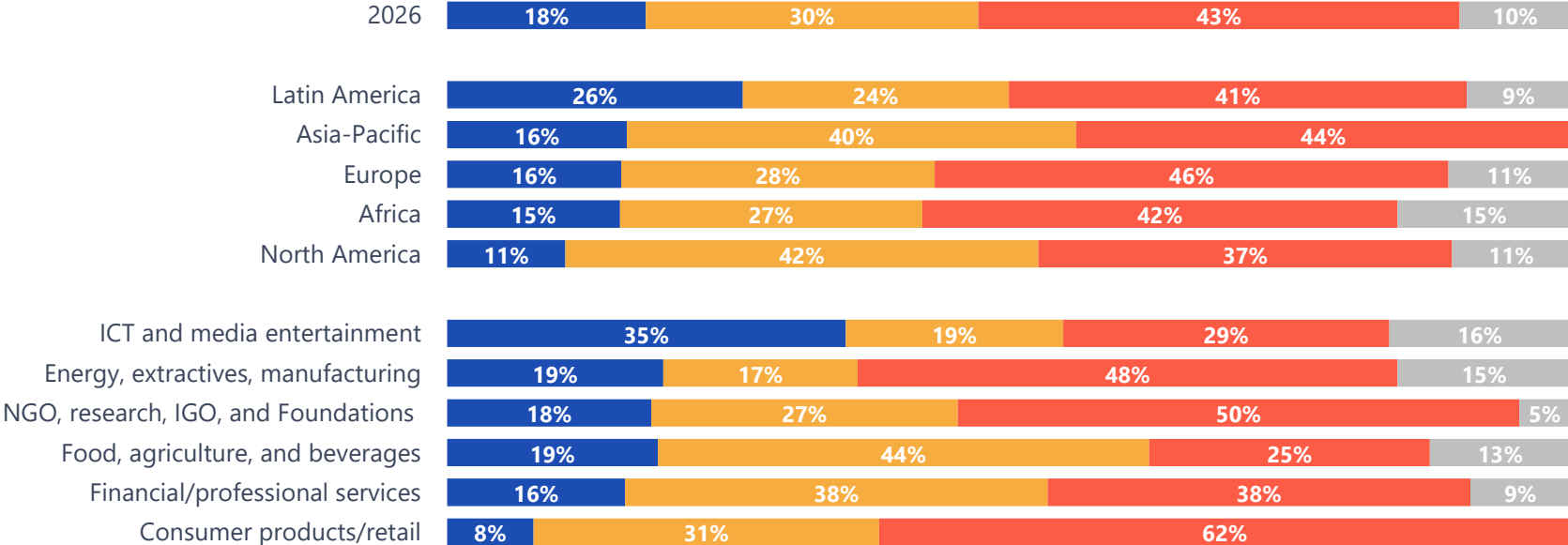
8 Q40. What are the biggest risks for global businesses over the next two years?

Preparedness for AI-driven misinformation is low

Significant gaps are seen across regions and sectors, particularly consumer products/retail

Your Corporate Affairs Function’s Preparedness to Manage AI-driven Misinformation, 2026

■ Prepared (4+5) ■ Somewhat prepared (3) ■ Not very prepared (1+2) ■ I don’t know / Not sure

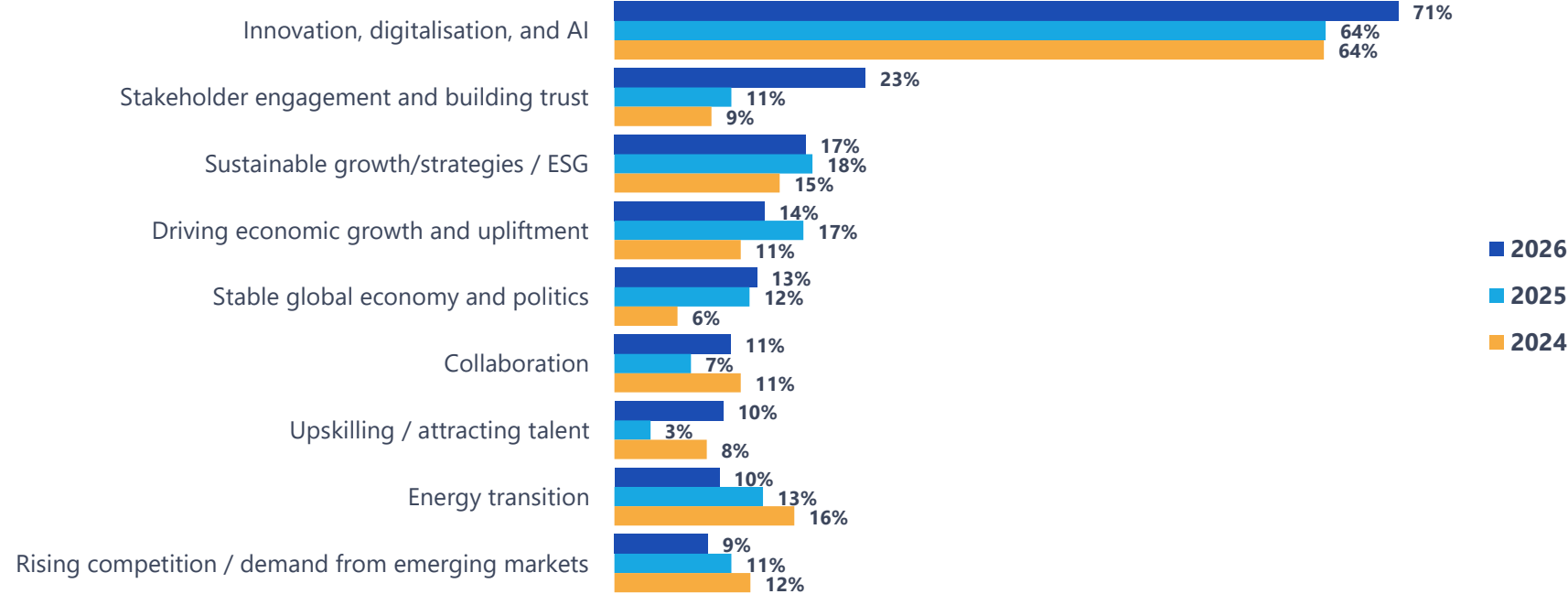


Opportunities for global business centred around innovation/AI

Innovation/AI increasingly the focus; import of engagement & trust also growing

Short-term Opportunities for Global Business

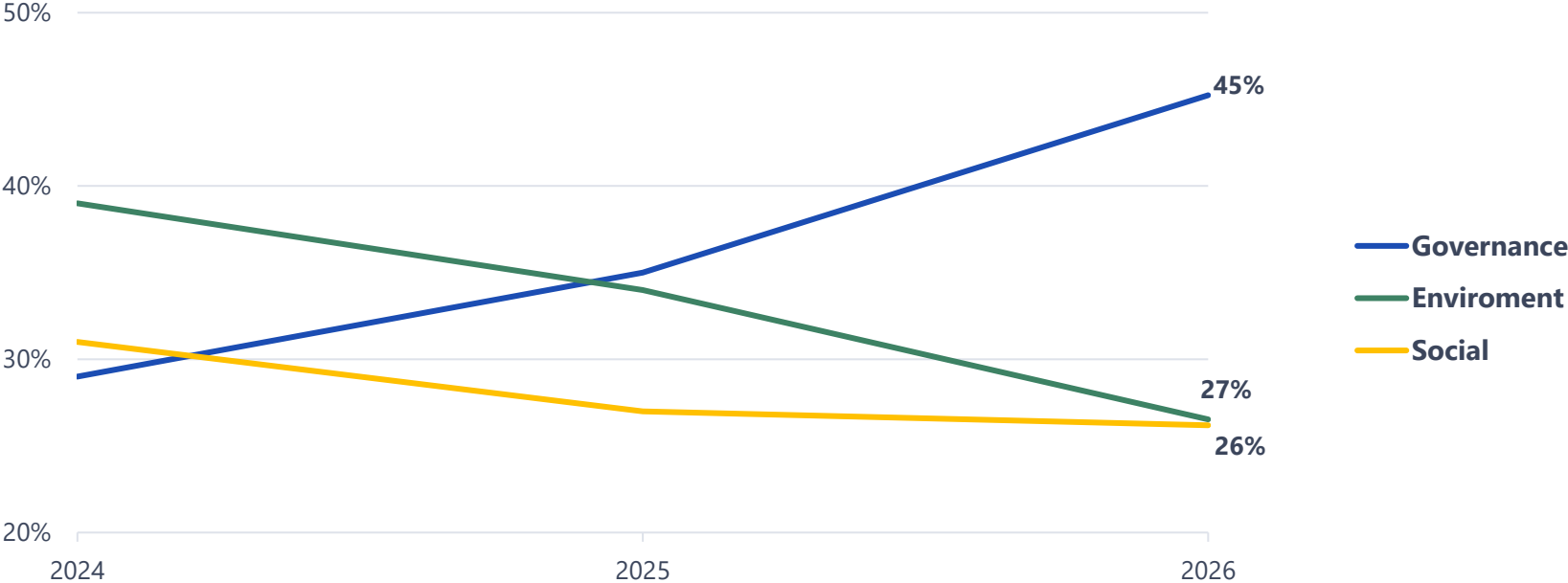
Open-ended, Total Mentions, 2024-2026



Governance has emerged as the leading ESG reputational risk

Driven by shifts across multiple regions, especially in the Global South

Highest Reputational Risk, Given 1st Ranking, 2024-2026

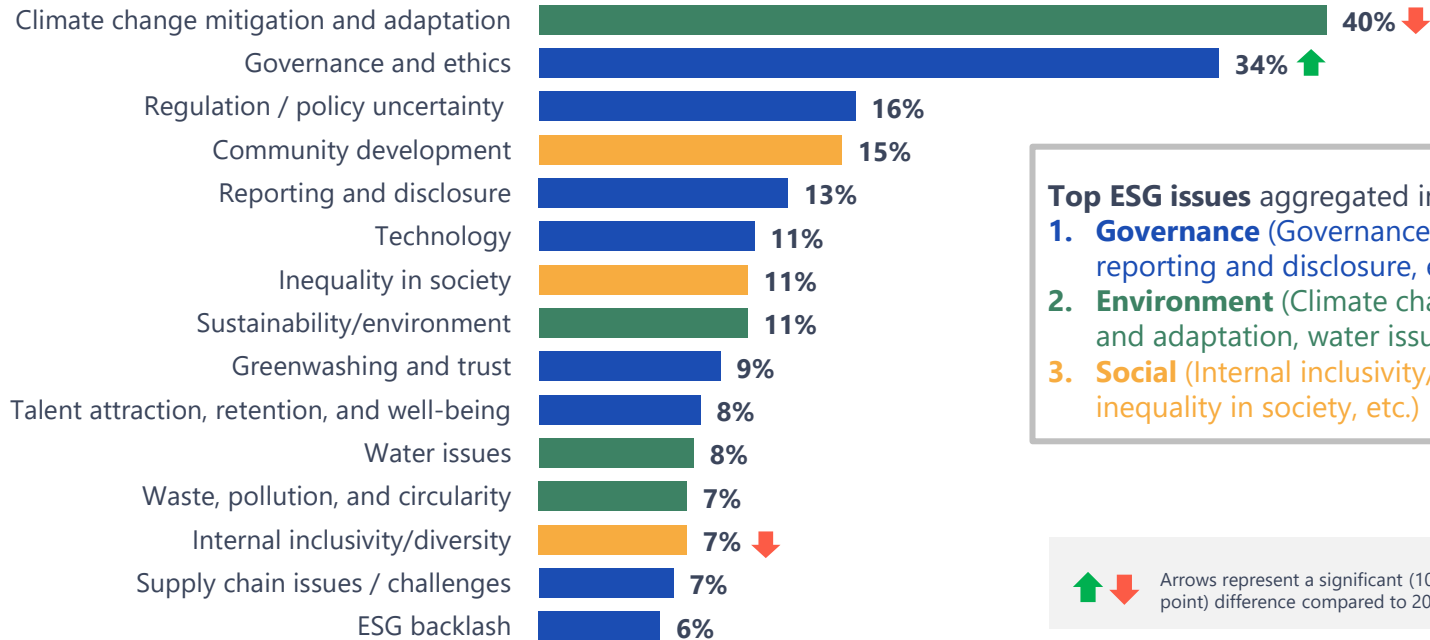


Climate change tops the list of ESG issues for businesses

Followed by governance and ethics and regulation / policy uncertainty

Top ESG Issues for Your Organisation

Open-ended, Total Mentions (up to Three), Top 15, 2026



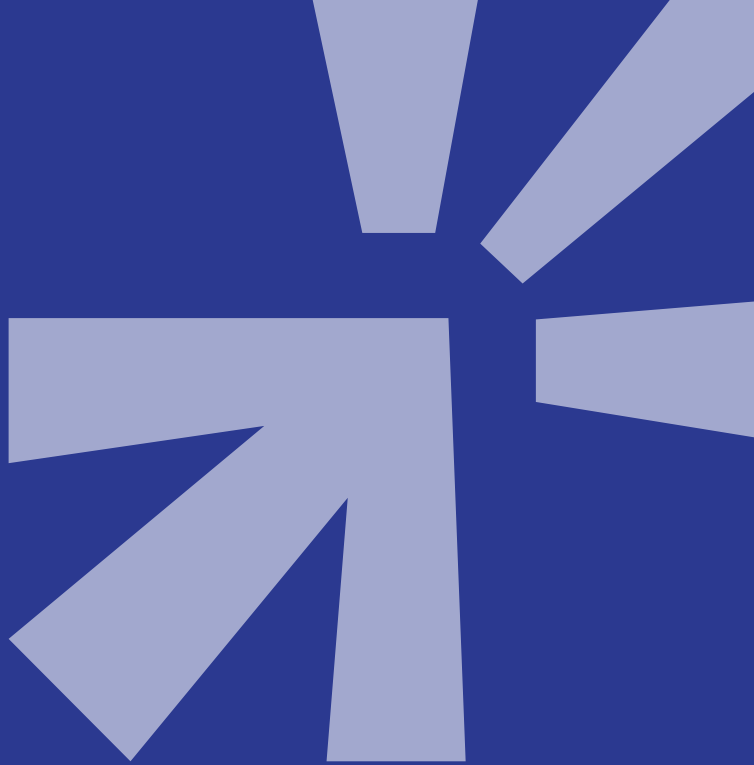
Top ESG issues aggregated into category type

1. **Governance** (Governance and ethics, reporting and disclosure, etc.)
2. **Environment** (Climate change mitigation and adaptation, water issues, etc.)
3. **Social** (Internal inclusivity/diversity, inequality in society, etc.)



Arrows represent a significant (10-point) difference compared to 2025





The State of Corporate Affairs

Geopolitical volatility and AI/communication tech are considered the two biggest factors reshaping the Corporate Affairs role

Factors Reshaping Roles with Corporate Affairs, 2026



Africa (31%) and Latin America (33%) tend to rank **AI and communications technology** as the top factor reshaping the roles within Corporate Affairs.



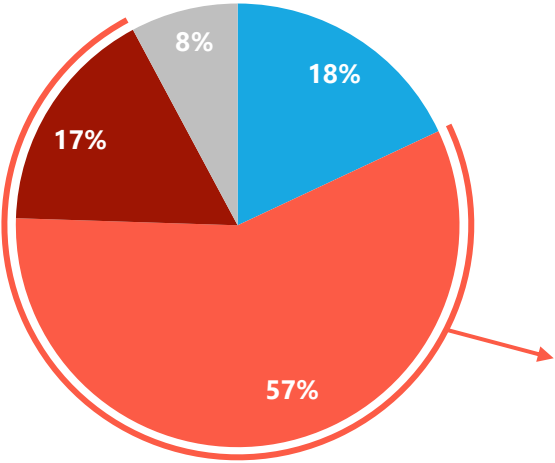
14 Q60. Please rank the top three factors that have most driven the emergence of new or reshaped roles within Corporate Affairs over the past three years?

Most believe Corporate Affairs practice needs revision

Sizeable sense of dissatisfaction of the status quo

Current State of the Corporate Affairs Practice, Total and by Sector, 2026

- Works well as it is and we should continue to pursue it
- Needs to be modestly revised but we are largely on the right track
- Should be radically revised
- Don't know / Not applicable

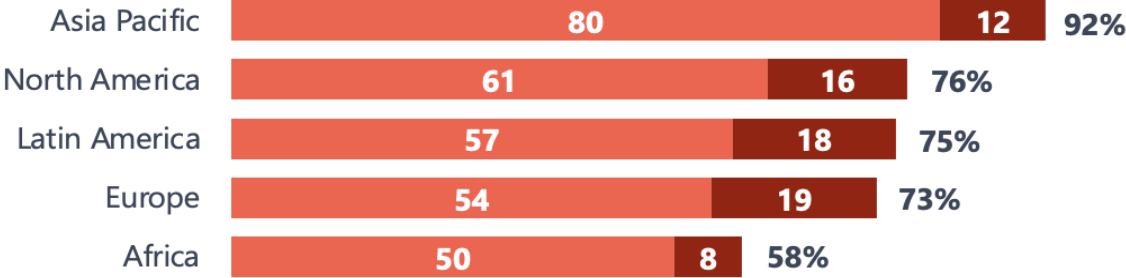


74% believe Corporate Affairs needs some form of revision

Appetite for revision varies by region

Desire for some form of change is highest in Asia-Pacific

Current State of the Corporate Affairs Practice, by Region, 2026



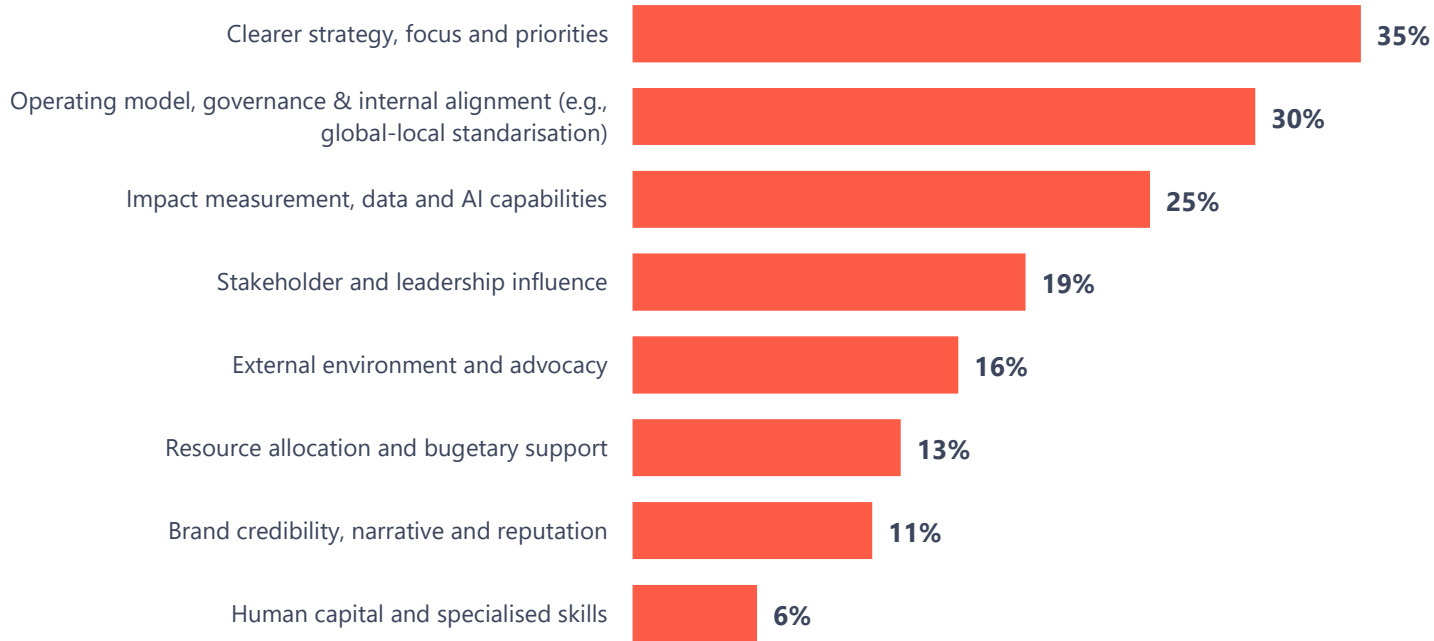
- Our current approach to Corporate Affairs needs to be modestly revised but we are largely on the right track.
- Our current approach to Corporate Affairs should be radically revised.

Calls for change is multi-faceted

Strategy/prioritisation, operating models/governance and data feature strongly

Aspects that need revision

Open-ended, Those that indicated revision needed (n=218), Total Mentions, 2026



Verbatims

Aspects of Corporate Affairs needing revision

“We are still set up as a generalist one-stop shop with multiple elements of corporate affairs being given equal weighting. We should look to rebalance, bringing in specialism and focus on areas of most value.”

Europe, Energy and extractives

“How to best communicate impact with clear integration into business strategy, growth and value creation.”

Asia Pacific, Consumer Goods and Retail

“We should strengthen forward-looking risk sensing and scenario planning to anticipate, not just manage, external developments.”

Europe, Chemicals

“A paradigm shift in mindset: from being seen as a cost centre to a profit centre; from acting as a firefighter to becoming an innovator and commercial driver...”

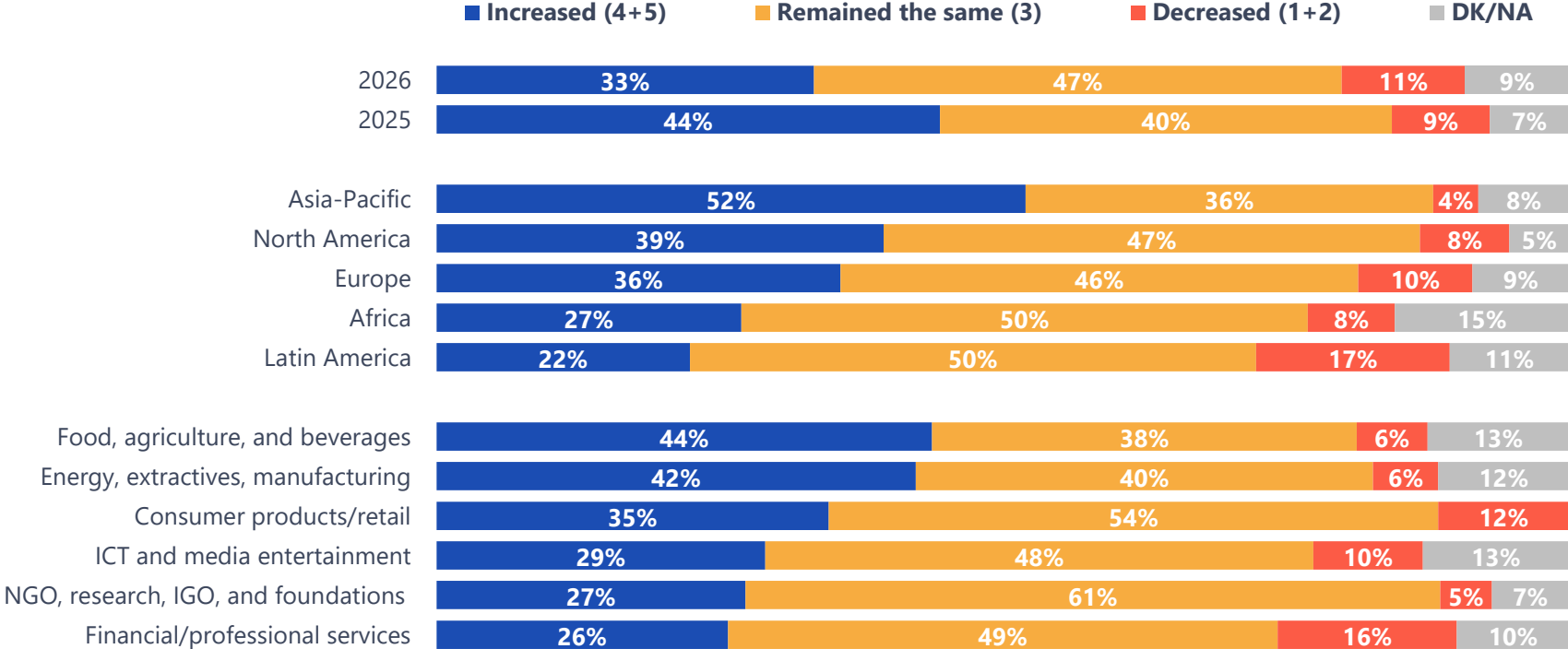
Asia Pacific, Consumer products/retail

“We are still organizationally siloed and relying on interpersonal relationships versus formalised process.”

North America, Travel and tourism

A third of respondents say that their organisation has increased their level of engagement in political advocacy in the past year

Change in Level of Engagement in Political Advocacy, 2025–2026



19 Q2.10 Has your organisation's level of engagement in political advocacy changed in the past 12 months? (2026 n=294, 2025 n=243)

Political Advocacy in Practice: Same Pressures, Different Responses

Many of the drivers of increased and decreased political advocacy are the same; the difference lies in how organisations assess the risk and choose to engage. Similar external pressures can prompt either more proactive advocacy or greater caution depending on leadership appetite, strategy, and capability.



1. Political & Regulatory Volatility

Common driver: Rapid regulatory expansion, geopolitical instability, elections, tariffs, and policy uncertainty.

- **Leads to increased advocacy when:** Organisations engage earlier and more proactively to shape regulation, protect market access, and reduce uncertainty.
- **Leads to decreased advocacy when:** The same volatility heightens perceived reputational risk, polarization, and fear of taking public positions, prompting caution or withdrawal.



2. Government Expectations & Access

Common driver: Governments are more interventionist, more central to business outcomes, and operating in more fragmented political systems.

- **Leads to increased advocacy when:** Governments expect closer partnership with business, engage actively, and create space for dialogue and co-creation.
- **Leads to decreased advocacy when:** Access narrows due to government turnover, reduced openness to private-sector input, or leaders perceived as disengaging or “on the way out.”



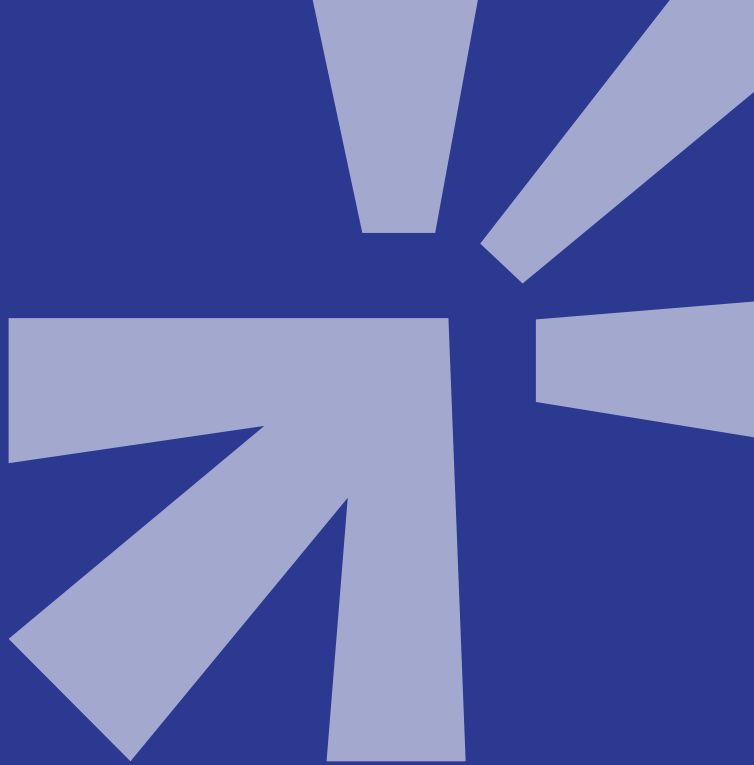
3. Leadership, Strategy & Organisational Readiness

Common driver: Internal reassessment of the role and value of public affairs.

- **Leads to increased advocacy when:** Leadership recognises advocacy as strategic, invests in capability, and shifts toward proactive, structured engagement aligned with long-term business goals.
- **Leads to decreased advocacy when:** Leadership changes, competing priorities, or limited resources deprioritise advocacy or redirect it toward core operational or commercial concerns.

Q2.11 You mentioned that your organisation's level of engagement in political advocacy has increased over the past 12 months. Could you explain the reasons for this? (2026 $n=97$)

Q2.12 You mentioned that your organisation's level of engagement in political advocacy has decreased over the past 12 months. Could you explain the reasons for this? (2026 $n=32$)



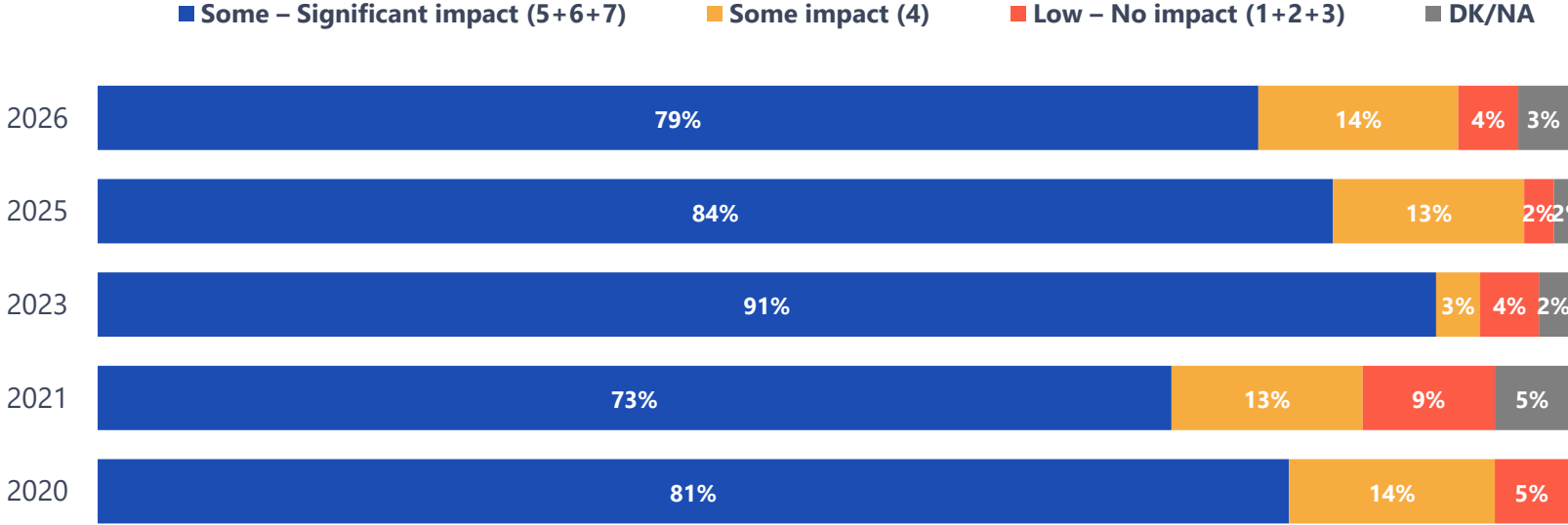
Are We Delivering Value?

Corporate Affairs is seen as critical to business value creation

Although perceived impact has softened since 2023

Impact of Corporate Affairs Function on Creating and Protecting Business Value

7-point Scale, 2020–2026



Corporate Affairs professionals see the function as successfully protecting business value through forecasting risk, reputation, and internal alignment

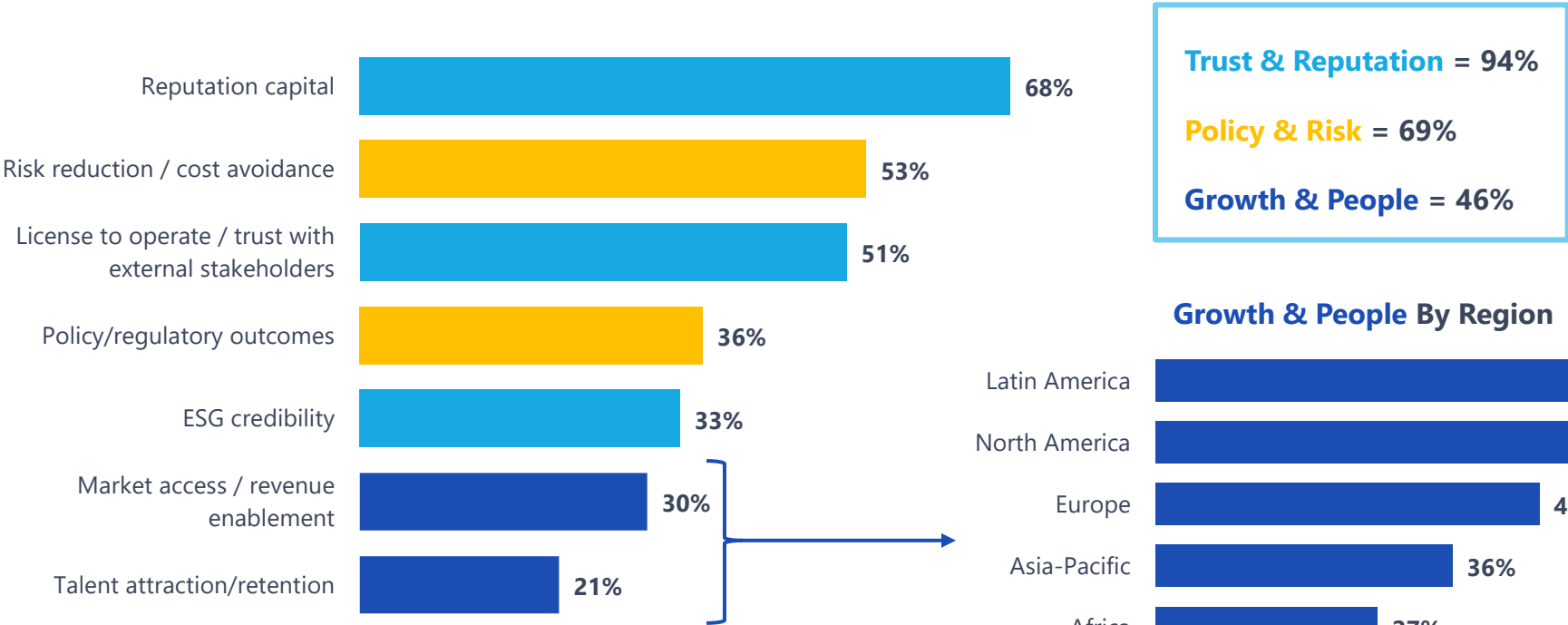
How the Corporate Affairs Function Effectively Creates Business Value

Open-ended, Coded Themes, Those who feel CA has at least *some* impact on creating business value (n=272), 2025-2026



The Corporate Affairs function is seen to have the most contribution toward reputation capital reducing risk

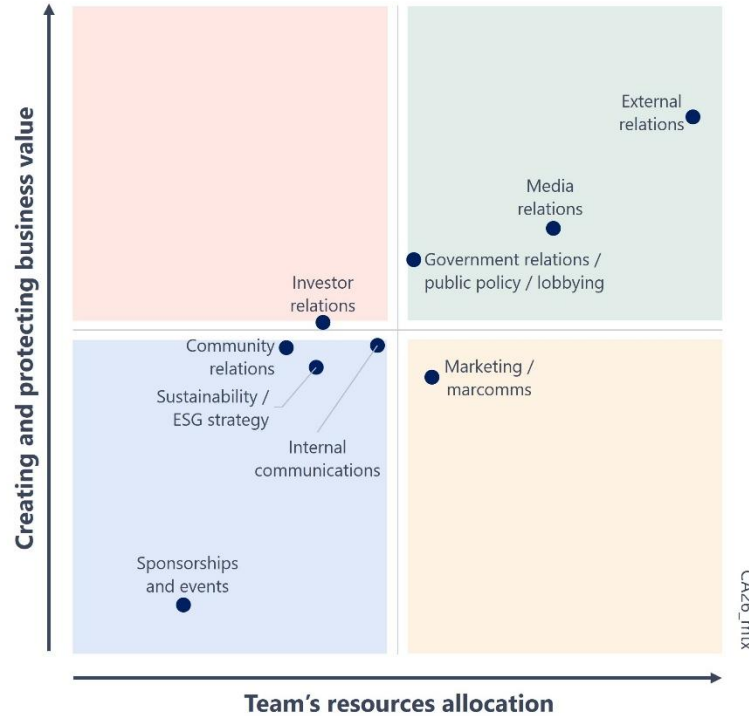
Areas Corporate Affairs Contributes to the Most, Total and by Region, 2026



Managing external relations remains the primary Corporate Affairs focus

Perceived value creation broadly aligns with current resource allocation

Creating and Protecting Business Value vs Resource Allocation, 2026



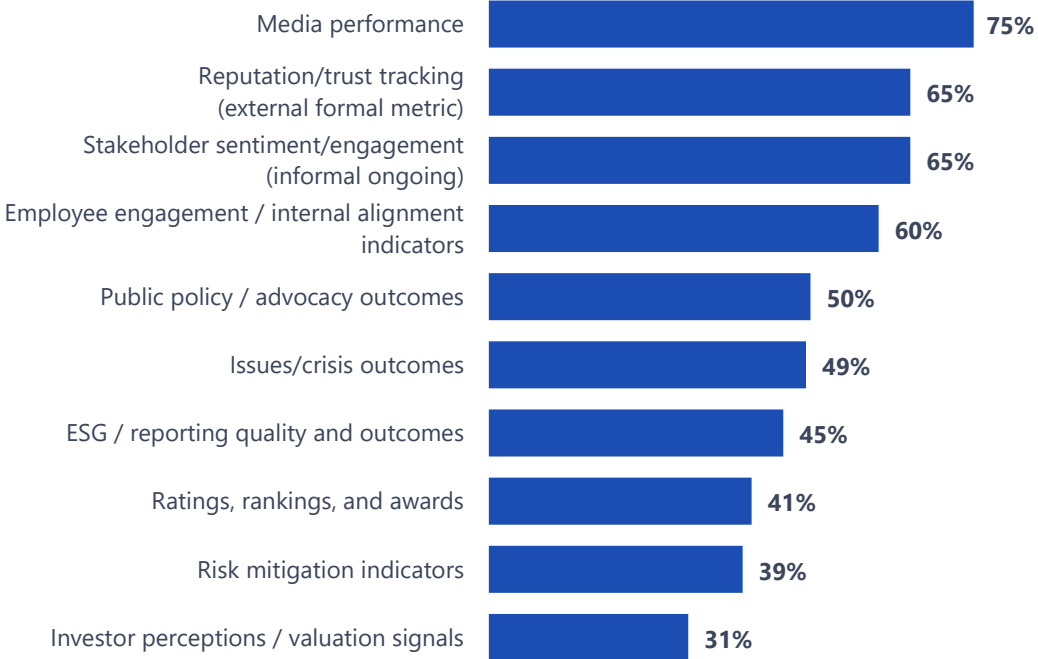
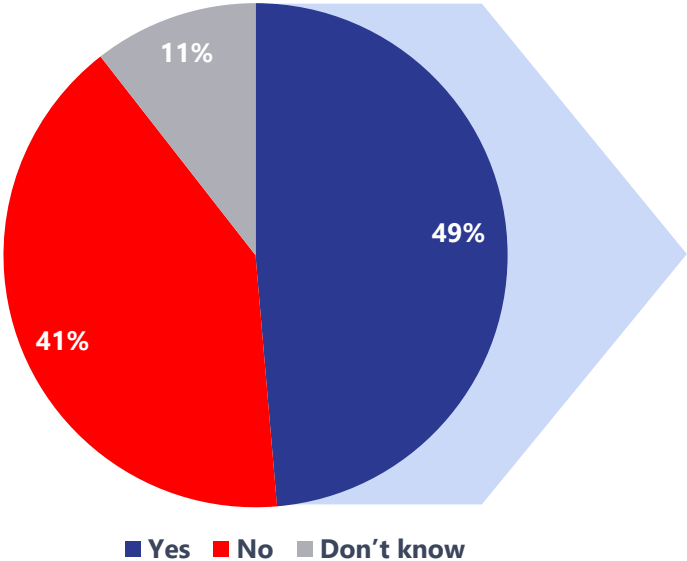
Q55. Thinking about the following Corporate Affairs roles in your organisation, to what extent does each contribute to creating and protecting business value?

Q56 Thinking about your organisation's Corporate Affairs function overall today, how much of your team's resources (time, budget, and people) are focused on each of the following areas?

Fewer than half of companies formally measure Corporate Affairs impact

Measurement relies heavily on media and reputation indicators

Measuring Success and Metrics Used, 2026

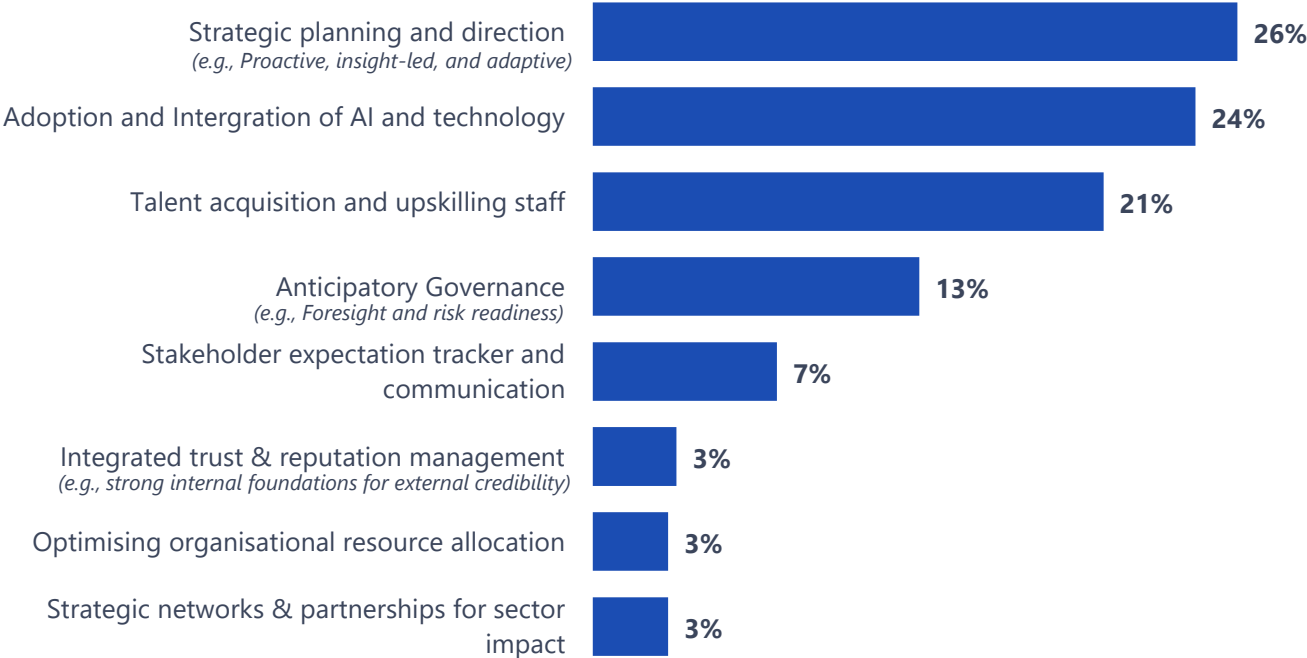


Corporate Affairs leaders converge on three foundations for future fitness

Strategic direction, AI integration and talent capability

Making Corporate Affairs Future-fit

Open-ended, Total Mentions, 2026



Verbatims

Making Corporate Affairs Future-fit

“Being prepared for the future means elevating the function from reactive communication to a strategic capability for intelligence, reputation and anticipation of the environment.”

Latin America, Professional services

“A future-fit Corporate Affairs function is one that systematically turns external complexity into actionable strategic insight, making it central to business growth, risk protection, and credibility.”

Europe, Manufacturing

“Build an intelligence-driven function that turns real-time data into faster, better decisions.”

North America, Consultancy

“Ensure that all team members are future-ready, skilled up and appropriately equipped.”

Asia Pacific, Manufacturing

