

Our Life with AI

From innovation to application

Country Findings: Belgium

Overview

Google and Ipsos partnered once again to understand global public attitudes on AI, conducting 21,000 interviews across 21 countries.

The findings within this report provide more detail on the results specifically among Belgian adults in the hope of continuing to contribute to the conversation about how AI can benefit individuals and society.

Methodology

These are findings from a survey conducted by Ipsos between September 17-October 8, 2024.

A sample of 1,000 adults age 18+ who are residents of Belgium were interviewed online. The survey has a credibility interval of +/-3.8 percentage points.



AI upswing

AI in the hands of more people

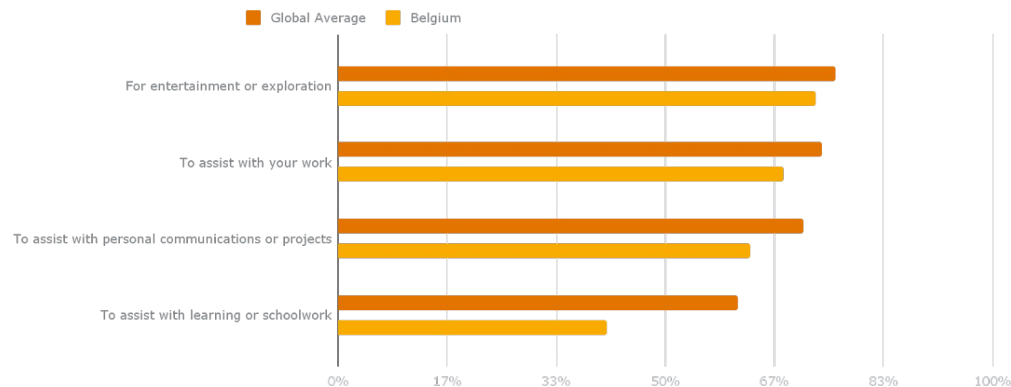
Since last year, AI usage has increased in Belgium and around the world. Forty-four percent of Belgians now report that they've used generative AI in the last year, up from 30% in 2023. Generative AI usage varies and goes beyond experimenting with the technology: Belgians are using it not only to entertain but to support their work, personal projects, and education.

Increased AI excitement

Last year, we noted that experiencing is believing when it comes to AI. When people use AI, excitement about what the technology can do outweighs and assuages concerns. We've seen this shift prove itself again this year: while Belgium is still contrary to most markets in that excitement about AI's potential does not outweigh concerns about the risks (46% excited/54% concerned), Belgians are more excited and less concerned than they were last year (39%/61%).

It is also clear that the public wants to ensure AI regulations help foster groundbreaking innovations in science and medicine. Belgians, like their counterparts around the world, believe fostering advancements in science, medicine, and other fields through AI innovation is more important (59%) than protecting impacted industries through AI regulation (41%).

AI usage - Belgium



Question asked in survey: Have you used an AI application in the last twelve months for the following? [Among AI users]

AI's benefits for society

Powering economic growth

Since last year, optimism about AI's impact on the economy has increased in Belgium - though not by as much as it has in other countries. A similar number of Belgians who think AI will change jobs and industries in the next 5 years believe it will be a good thing (44% compared to 43% last year). Compared to last year, more Belgians believe AI will change the economy in a positive way (36%, compared to 30% last year), and similar proportions of workers who believe they will be impacted by AI think they will have to find a new role or industry (13%, compared to 14% last year).

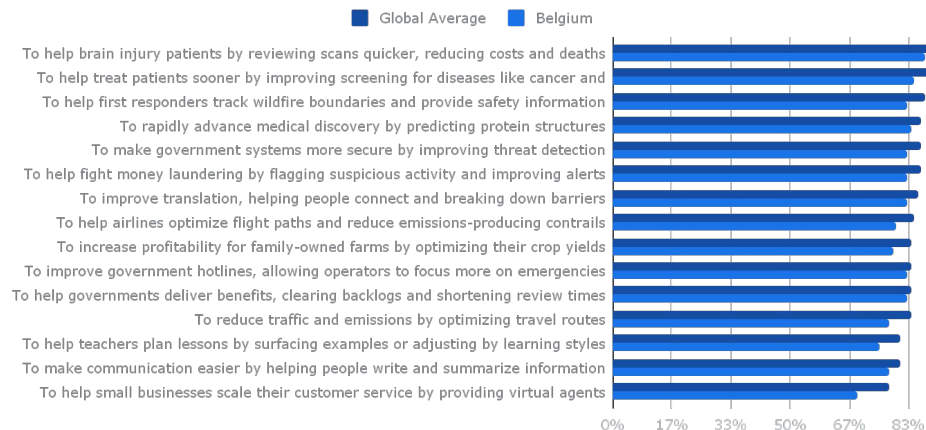
While excitement about AI and positive perceptions of AI's economic impact are both on the rise globally, countries with higher overall excitement about AI's potential tend to also expect the most positive economic gains from the technology. Belgians are less excited about AI compared to the global average (46%, compared to 57%) and less likely to expect positive gains from AI (36%, compared to 49%) than their counterparts around the world.

Powering societal advancements

Belgians see value in every current application of AI tested (see graph on right), but are most excited by AI's ability to benefit society by powering scientific discovery and advancing health care and medicine.

Looking ahead, over 6 in 10 Belgians expect AI to have a positive impact on science (63% positive impact) and medicine (64%), leading a list of promising applications including education (52%), cybersecurity and agriculture (both 46%).

Importance of current AI applications



Question asked in survey: Here are some ways AI is being used. Please indicate how important, if at all, you think each one is for society. [Total important]

Leveraging and leveling up with AI

AI for people – personally

Compared to last year, a similar number of Belgians believe AI will benefit people like them (48%, compared to 44% last year), though Belgians are below the global average in terms of expected benefit (59% globally say AI will benefit “people like me”).

Belgians are also excited about promising new AI applications: majorities say they are excited about AI being used to help people find information online (65% excited), for personal assistants that can help shop online, organize schedules, and plan trips (55%), and as a personal tutor or homework helper (56%). Belgians also believe that individual-level applications like helping people write and summarize information (78%) and improving translation (83%) are important for society.

AI for people – professionally

Professionally, people see AI not just as a tool for being more productive, but for operating at a higher, more strategic level. Belgians prioritize using AI to help people use complex data or systems (79% important) and promote business problem solving (76%). Unlike in most other countries, Belgians are split on whether they believe AI will free up workers time so they can focus on the more rewarding aspects of work (48%) or whether they feel AI will increase demands on workers to do more with less (52%).

Using AI at work

Nearly seven in ten (68%) Belgian AI users say they use AI for work. Workplace and work-related use among Belgian workers is varied, and goes far beyond drafting emails or cover letters. Belgians use generative AI to assist with writing (72% of workplace users), brainstorming (63%), and problem solving (66%) as well as using AI to help digest longer documents (64%) or complex information (56%).

Harnessing AI’s benefits – together

Belgians generally feel their country is appropriately seizing the moment when it comes to AI: 60% believe Belgium is doing enough to ensure their economy can benefit from AI.

The public expects government and technology companies to collaborate to leverage AI’s benefits, with 68% of Belgians supporting AI companies helping governments learn about AI and 65% supporting AI companies working with their government to test AI tools for government services. Belgians also prioritize government investment in AI infrastructure, with six in ten (61%) supporting government investment in high-speed internet and electrical generation to support AI.

