

Hey! What's New? 2025-43

How A License to Lead Can Transform Human Potential in an AI World

A new report from EY says that Artificial Intelligence (AI) has become an integral part of the way we live and work. It notes that the firm's *AI Sentiment Index Study*, a global survey of over 15,000 people, shows that 82% of respondents had consciously used AI in the past six months. "And many will have used or relied on AI without even realizing it. This is not just a technology revolution — it's a human one. AI is changing what people can achieve."

However, the research found, "there is an adoption gap — a space between how much people are willing to use AI and how much they actually do. That is caused by concerns around trust, privacy and control, but it's also about what's currently available. Better AI tools matter, but it's equally important to make sure people want to use them, and that they see the value. Closing this gap is a significant opportunity for organizations."

This is where leadership is critical, the report says. "Organizations that actively create confidence around AI, demonstrate its benefits, and empower people to engage on their own terms will put themselves in the strongest position — not just to implement AI, but to shape its role in business and society."

EY calls this the "license to lead." Organizations can earn and grow their license by using AI in ways that align with human needs and expectations, while enhancing human potential rather than diminishing it.

This report explores where adoption gaps exist, what it takes to close them and how organizations can create a license to lead, so they are best placed to benefit from AI now and to shape its future.

The report notes that people's engagement with AI today reflects a focus on practicality. "Most are not interested in AI in itself; they want to know how it can help them meet existing goals. Today, the most common uses are for straightforward, efficiency-driven tasks. Some applications are highly specific, such as managing electrical consumption, while others are more general and widely applicable, like learning about a topic or summarizing information. When AI provides immediate tangible value, people are interested."

But there are clear boundaries to where people feel comfortable adopting AI today. "More complex systems, tasks requiring personal data, or emotionally engaged interactions remain less commonly used. These applications often demand a greater level of confidence or user engagement, or they require people to use technologies in ways they don't understand."

Overall, these boundaries — which we explore in more detail later — will shift as AI evolves. According to the report, "it's important to track them, so business leaders can make decisions based on where people are now and where they are heading, not where they used to be. Leaders who assume AI adoption will follow a simple trajectory will miss the deeper reality: as AI becomes more powerful, it needs to become more trusted and more intuitive."

This is what the AI Sentiment Index does, by quantifying global levels of comfort with AI. Today, the global index score is 68 out of 100.

The report notes that “those who are most comfortable with AI are significantly more engaged — on average, they’ve used 15 different AI applications in the past six months, compared to six among those who feel neutral and just three among those who remain uncomfortable. The data highlights a reinforcing effect: those who feel comfortable with AI tend to explore more applications, gradually increasing their confidence and usage.”

The research found that AI adoption and sentiment are not uniform around the world. “Demographic factors like age, education and geography play an important role in how people are relating to AI. But psychographics — how people think, what they value, and their emotional response to technology — are just as critical. The AI Sentiment Index reveals significant global variation in all these areas, highlighting both opportunities and risks for businesses. AI is not a one-size-fits-all story — it’s a deeply personal, context-driven experience.”

At a national level, AI sentiment varies widely. “Skepticism remains more pronounced in France (51), New Zealand (52), and the UK (54), which sit at the lower end of the Index. Countries like India and China are leading the way, with sentiment scores of 88, reflecting optimism and deep AI integration into daily life. These differences reflect more than just policy or infrastructure — they reveal how different societies are internalizing AI’s role in their futures.”

For a whole lot more on the findings of EY’s research, get the report at [Transform human potential in an AI world | EY - Sweden](#).