

Hey! What's New? 2026-30

Canadian Organizations Facing Critical Readiness Gap in Trusted AI Adoption

While Canadian businesses are moving aggressively to adopt artificial intelligence, a significant “readiness gap” is emerging between their strategic ambitions and their operational governance, according to *PwC Canada's Trust in AI report*.

In a press release, PwC says that the report “reveals that while most organizations recognize AI as the foundational technology of our era, many are operating in a ‘dangerous comfort zone’ of partial implementation. Without dedicated governance structures and rigorous AI lifecycle controls, AI risks can become fragmented, making accountability, risk management and incident response increasingly difficult.”

Jordan Prokopy, PwC's National Data Trust & Privacy Practice Leader, says that “Establishing strong AI governance is about building trust with customers and partners while future-proofing the business. Trust isn't a constraint on innovation; it is the condition that makes innovation possible at scale. Organizations that can demonstrate trustworthy AI can differentiate themselves and build a competitive advantage, regardless of how the regulatory landscape evolves.”

Among the report's key findings:

- 72% of organizations name responsible AI a top priority, yet 36% still have no dedicated governance function to manage risks.
- Nearly one-third of Canadian organizations plan to spend \$10M or more over the next three years and dedicate 26+ staff to responsible AI.
- Strategic hurdles persist, with 65% of leaders citing unclear ownership, difficulty inventorying existing AI systems, and fears that responsible AI will slow innovation as the top barriers to capturing AI's full potential.
- 71% of leaders anticipate positive financial outcomes from trustworthy AI, viewing it as a value driver rather than a cost centre.

The press release notes that the report highlights a widening divide between organizations that treat AI governance as a strategic priority and those still experimenting with limited implementation. “Leaders who invest in upskilling and view it not as a financial burden but as a necessary enabler – while embedding rigorous controls throughout the AI lifecycle – will be best positioned to unlock the full value of their AI investments. Achieving this requires a deliberate commitment to both spending and skills development to turn policy into practice.”

Brenda Vethanayagam, PwC's Partner, Risk Services and AI Trust, adds that “to build lasting trust, businesses need to go beyond policy and put in place consistent monitoring and independent testing. This discipline gives leaders the transparency they need to manage risks proactively and ensures AI systems stay reliable as they evolve.”

The report offers four specific actions for Canadian Leaders:

- **Elevate responsible AI to the C-suite and board:** Ensure governance structures match the strategic importance of AI, with clear, cross-functional accountability.

- **Know what AI you have:** You can't govern what you can't see. Conduct a comprehensive inventory of all AI systems to understand their purpose, owners and data sources.
- **Move beyond “partially implemented”:** Set clear timelines to complete foundational capabilities like risk tiering, model validation and continuous testing.
- **Close the skills gap now:** Invest in upskilling existing risk, compliance, privacy, security and data governance teams who already understand governance frameworks.

The report concludes that 2026 will be a transition year for Canadian industry. “Leaders will be those who move beyond planning mode to elevate responsible AI and its associated spend and staffing to a C-suite and board-level priority.”

Get the report at [Trust in AI | PwC Canada](#).