

## **Aware, but unprepared: New study reveals gaps in European businesses' workforce management strategies amid disruptions**

- **New research by ATOSS highlights that just one in three European companies is proactively adapting its workforce structures and processes to meet growing socio-economic challenges and digital transformation**
- **Adopting effective workforce management strategies can raise organizational preparedness three- to ninefold, laying a strong foundation for lasting resilience**

Munich, November 19, 2025 – **As European companies navigate an unprecedented time of disruption, new data from ATOSS Software SE highlights their differing levels of preparation towards socio-economic challenges and digital transformation.**

The research, executed by global market research company B2B international, designed in cooperation with ATOSS, surveyed more than 450 decision-makers across organizations of all sizes in Belgium, DACH, France, the Netherlands and Sweden. It analysed their level of preparedness and the potential of targeted workforce management measures across three drivers crucial to business resilience: technology, workforce, and organizational capabilities.

### **The European preparedness gap: Awareness doesn't equal readiness**

In today's volatile business environment, resilience is the decisive factor between thriving and becoming obsolete. Preparedness is the foundation of resilience – determining how effectively organizations can anticipate, respond to, and grow from disruption. However, the research highlights a significant gap between awareness and preparedness.

The companies surveyed revealed that they – on average – face seven critical challenges. The top challenges include: technological solutions implementation (61% of organisations select this as a critical challenge), political and economic instability (58%), changes in technology regulations (56%), employee well-being (55%), digitization and automation (54%), workforce planning capabilities (54%) and demographic changes in the workforce (53%). Still, only 25% of respondents feel fully prepared for those key challenges, and only 34% report planning proactively for change.

In other words: Europe's organizations are aware of the risks but struggle to translate insight into action. Without comprehensive action across employees, processes and tools, readiness toward disruption can drop to below 10%.

### **Technology readiness: Upskilling and reskilling make the difference**

As technology increasingly becomes a pivotal enabler of efficiency and future-ready business models, companies acknowledge the need to improve their adaptation to technology-related disruptions: less than a quarter feel adequately prepared for the introduction of technological solutions and the evolution of tech regulations, and 54% see the increasing digitalization of processes as a challenge.

A key lever lies in training. The findings show that companies implementing workforce management measures that include integrated learning and upskilling programs are nine times better prepared for the implementation of new technologies.

Adaptability, however, varies depending on the country: French companies see more potential challenges (9), but they also show a higher level of preparedness than other countries and plan bigger investments in training, data- and AI-based tools. Sweden shows high preparedness when it comes to the integration of technology solutions to support its workforce. The DACH regions lag behind, with minimal training and limited use of AI-powered tools.

### **The impact of a shifting workforce: navigating evolving demographics and work models**

Adequate workforce planning consolidates preparedness levels by improving employee retention, well-being, and teams' capacities to navigate change. Yet, workforce-related challenges are strongly felt by companies in all countries and sectors:

- 53% of respondents see demographic changes and shifting generational dynamics as a threat, but only 25% feel prepared
- Addressing and maintaining employee well-being to further engagement is a key challenge to secure employee retention, but only 29% feel adequately prepared to meet it
- 50% find adapting to employees' needs for flexible work models challenging

Strong potential lies in measures such as processes to retain senior employees' knowledge, DEI training, and training sessions in advanced analytics tools. Implementing those can improve the adaptability to demographic changes and shifting generational dynamics threefold.

"Workforce resilience isn't built through technology alone," notes Michael Knoblauch, Director Process Consulting at ATOSS. "It grows from cultures that empower people to adapt, learn and thrive through change."

### **From reactivity to proactivity: equipping tomorrow's leaders and businesses**

Organization determines companies' ability to anticipate and adapt to disruption. Organizational preparedness is one of the foundations of resilience – yet most companies currently lack the proactivity needed to equip their teams for the future:

- Organizational management remains overwhelmingly reactive: only 34% of organizations actively prepare for change
- Respondents acknowledge a need for effective personnel capacity planning – but only 31% feel equipped to tackle it
- Half of all surveyed participants feel challenged by the increasing need for performance measurement to navigate cost pressures

Performance measurement, workforce planning, and resilience to external shocks are key areas where strategic intent outpaces operational capability. The research shows that when companies proactively anticipate changes, they transform preparedness into a true competitive advantage. Integrating AI-powered forecasting tools, implementing training on performance measurement and fostering future-orientated leadership development can lead to a more effective personnel performance measurement and capacity planning – benefiting the business as a whole.

“Europe’s preparedness gap can be closed, if we act decisively,” adds Michael Knoblauch. “True success often comes from consistently putting proven solutions into action, not merely searching for new tools. With the right mix of technology, people and leadership, companies will be able to move from reacting to disruption to shaping it – and therefore vastly improve their workforce resilience.”

The full study is available for download here: [www.atoss.com/en/futureworks](http://www.atoss.com/en/futureworks)

#### **About the study**

The study is based on a survey of 450 decision-makers in Belgium, DACH, France, the Netherlands and Sweden, involved in workforce planning, organizational processes, and supporting technologies. The participants come from six industries and various areas of the company, from HR and IT to operations, finance, and strategy, right up to the executive level. The study is structured along a “three-driver” framework providing clear strategic categorization of resilience factors across Technology, Workforce, and Organization. The statistical analysis is a regression analysis measuring impact of targeted workforce management interventions on preparedness levels across key challenges. The findings provide a clear roadmap for leaders to make targeted investments, integrate flexibility into their workforce strategy, and establish resilience as a real competitive advantage.

#### **Research partner**

B2B International, part of the dentsu group, contributed its research expertise to the project. As a global leader in B2B market research B2B International brings analytical rigor and a deep understanding of how organizations make strategic choices.

#### **About ATOSS**

ATOSS Software SE is a provider of technology and consulting solutions for professional workforce management and demand-optimized workforce deployment. Whether time and attendance management, self-services, mobile apps, workforce forecasting, sophisticated workforce scheduling or strategic capacity and requirement planning. ATOSS has just the right solution – both in the cloud, on-premises and for SAP users. The modular product families feature the highest level of functionality, technology and platform independence. With more than 18,300 customers ATOSS workforce management solutions make a measurable contribution to increased value creation and competitiveness. At the same time, they ensure greater planning fairness and satisfaction at the workplace. Customers include companies such as Barry Callebaut, C&A, City of Munich, Decathlon, Deutsche Bahn, Lufthansa, OBI, Primark and W.L. Gore & Associates. Further information: [www.atoss.com](http://www.atoss.com)

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