

CEO ECONOMIC ECHO SURVEY REPORT 2025



INTRODUCTION

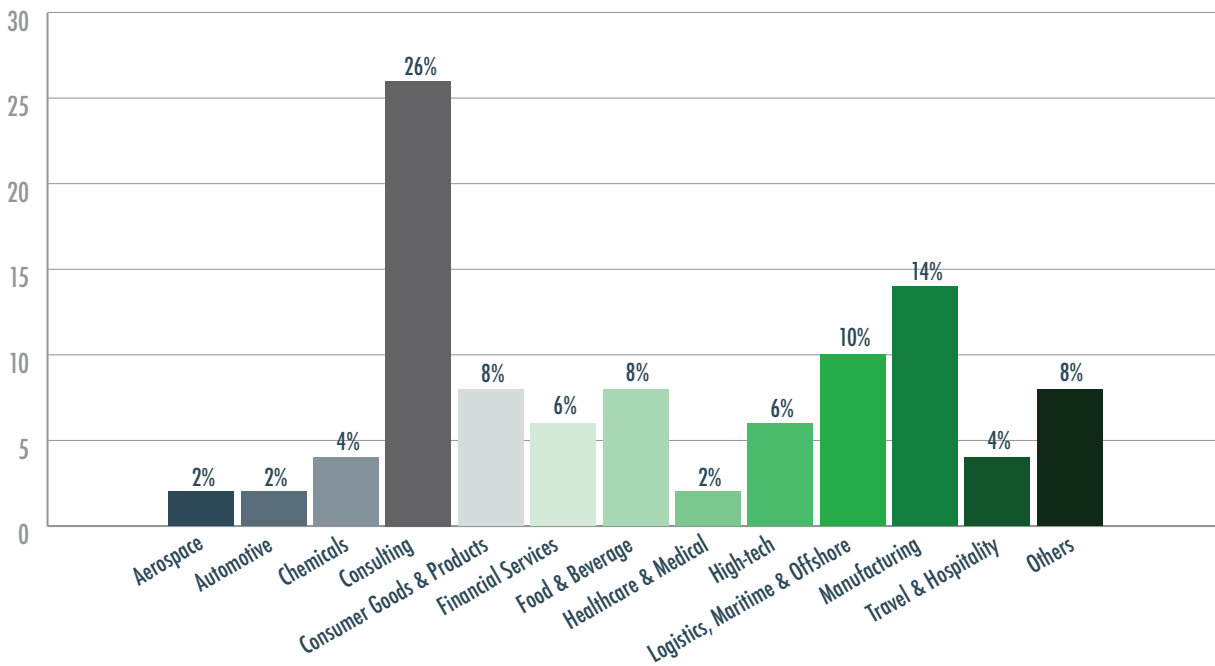
This quantitative survey gathered insights from 50 respondents, complementing the qualitative reflections already included in the CEO Economic Echo Report 2025–2026. The results provide a snapshot of company profiles, business sentiment, sustainability efforts, digitalisation progress, and responses to geopolitical and trade challenges. Each section below blends a narrative overview with highlights for individual survey questions.

1. COMPANY PROFILE

The respondent base represents a wide variety of industries, company sizes, and leadership roles, ensuring a diverse range of perspectives. Many companies have been present in Singapore for decades, highlighting the city-state’s role as a long-standing hub for European business in Asia. Most responses came directly from senior executives and management, reflecting strategic-level insights.

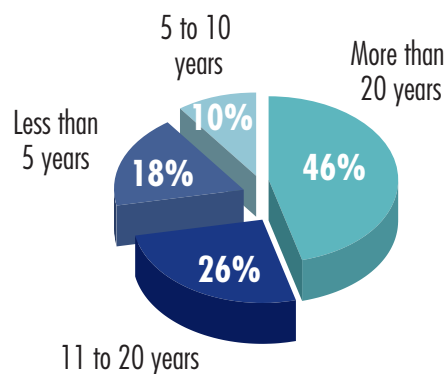
1.1 In which industry does your organisation operate in?

Consulting (26%), manufacturing (14%), and logistics/maritime (10%) are the top three industries represented, alongside a broad mix of other sectors.



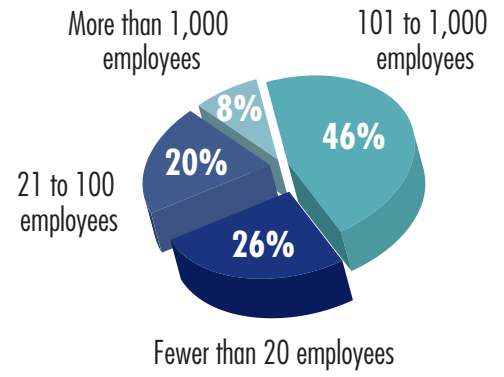
1.2 How long has your company been operating in Singapore?

Almost half (46%) of companies have been operating in Singapore for more than 20 years, underscoring strong local roots.



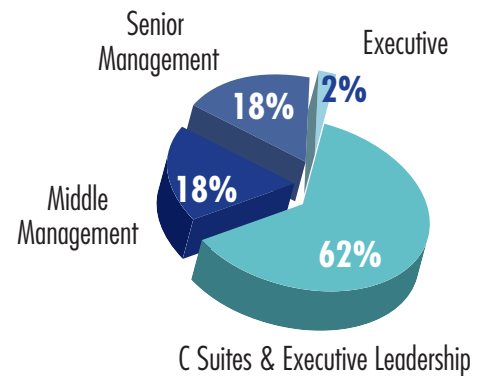
1.3
How many employees does your company have in Singapore?

The majority employ between 101–1,000 staff (46%), showing a concentration of medium-to-large operations.



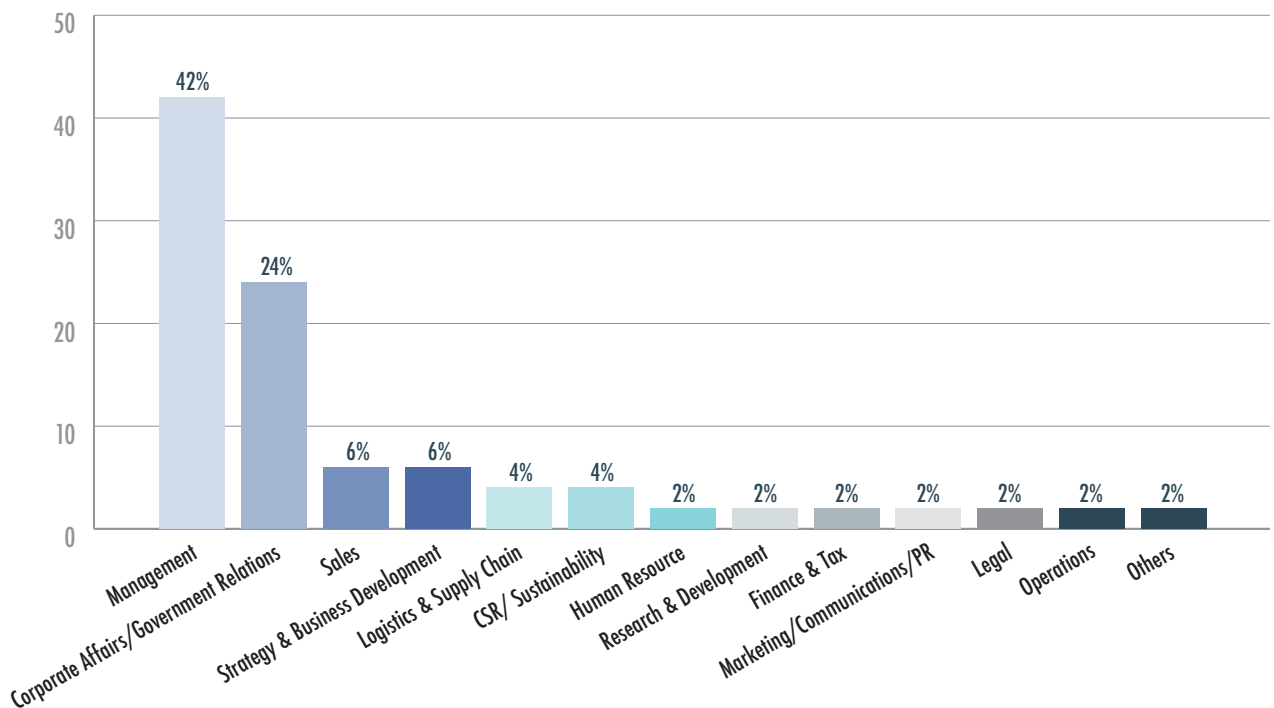
1.4
What is your role within your organisation?

Senior voices dominate: 62% of respondents are C-suite leaders, with additional input from senior and middle management.



1.5
Which department do you represent?

Most respondents represent management (42%) and corporate/government affairs (24%), indicating both operational and policy priorities.



2. BUSINESS SENTIMENTS

European companies remain largely optimistic about their operations in Singapore, though manpower and rental costs continue to be pressing challenges. Singapore’s regulatory environment is widely regarded as clear and predictable, while EU regulations are seen as more comprehensive, reflecting the ambition to uphold high standards across sustainability, digitalisation, and governance. Government support in areas such as tax incentives and workforce development emerges as a key lever for sustaining competitiveness.

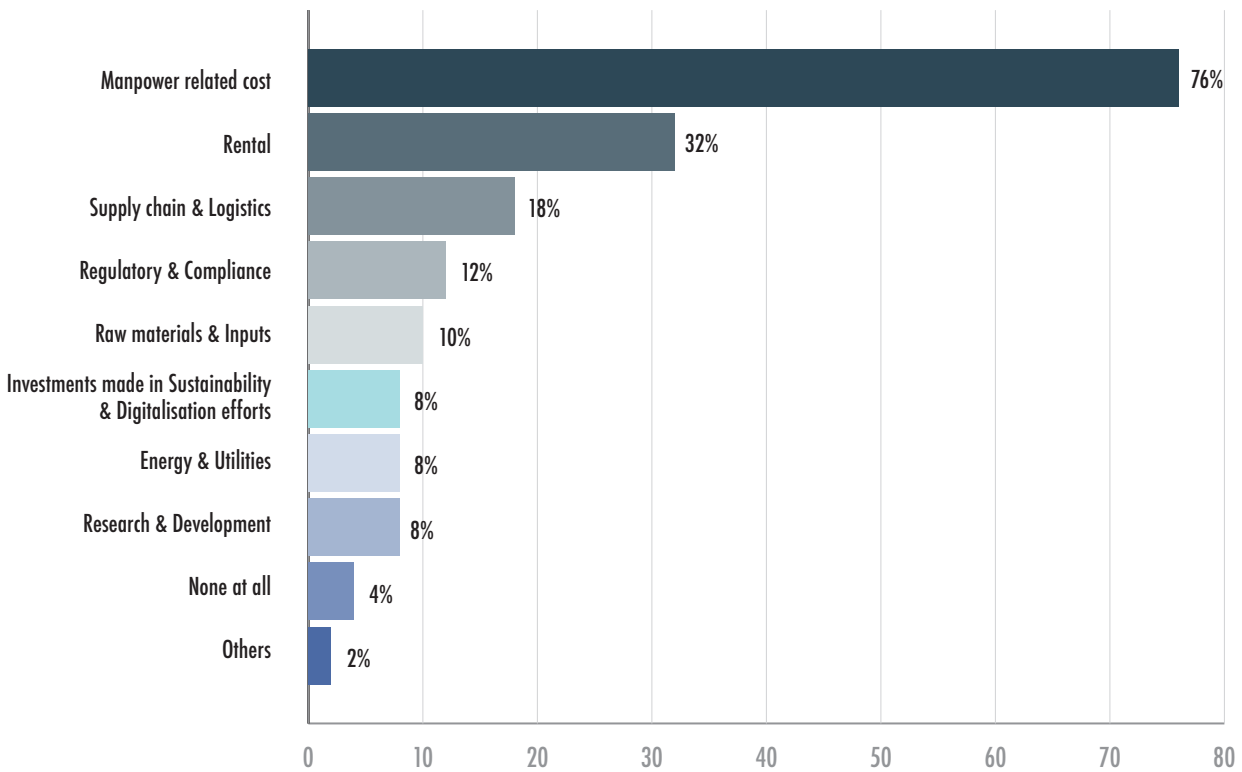
2.1 What is your overall outlook for your company’s operations in Singapore in the next 12 months?

58% of respondents expressed optimism (scores 4–5), with only 14% signalling concerns (score 2).



2.2 What are your top cost pressures currently affecting your business?

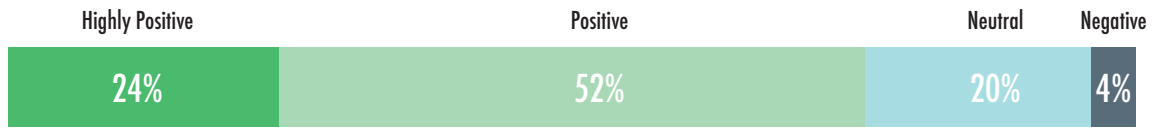
Manpower costs dominate (76%), followed by rental (32%) and supply chain issues (18%), highlighting both local and global pressures.



2.3

How manageable are current business regulations and compliance requirements in Singapore for your company?

A strong majority (76%) view Singapore’s regulations as manageable, confirming the country’s reputation for predictability and clarity.



2.4

How manageable are current EU business regulations and compliance requirements for your company?

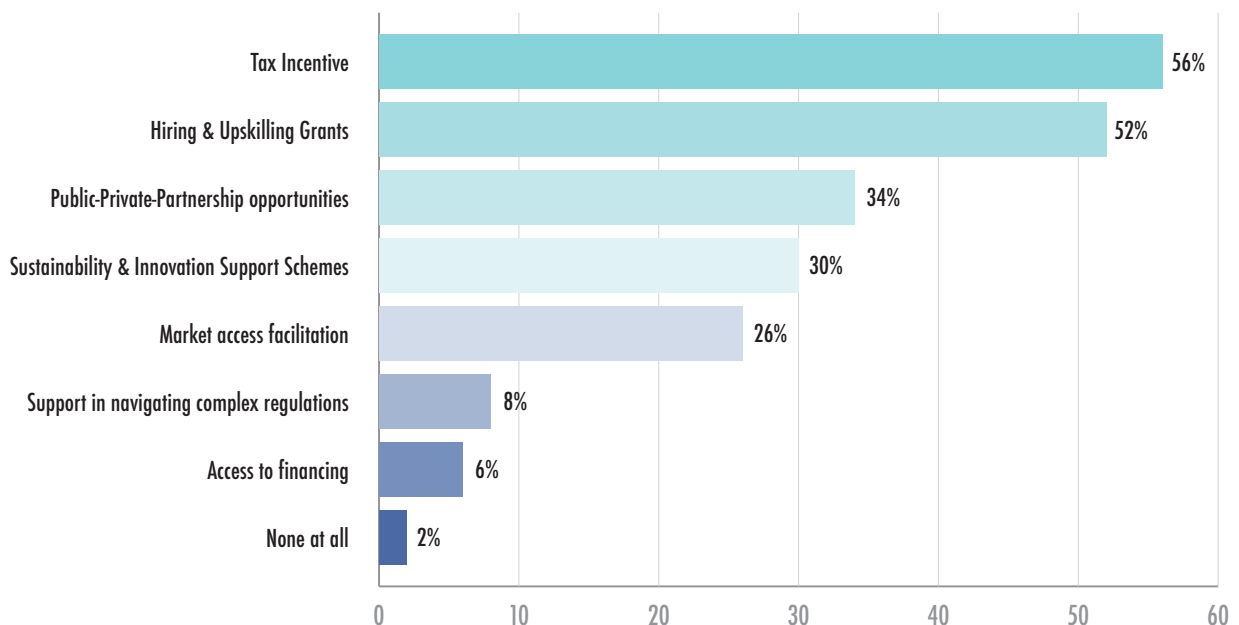
Perceptions are more diverse: 52% view compliance as manageable, greater complexity the presence of challenges. This complexity reflects the EU’s ambition to set rigorous benchmarks, offering companies opportunities to demonstrate leadership in meeting these global standards.



2.5

Which type of government support or policy would be most helpful to your business in the coming year?

Tax incentives (56%) and upskilling grants (52%) are most valued, with public-private partnerships (34%) and sustainability & innovation schemes (30%) also highlighted.

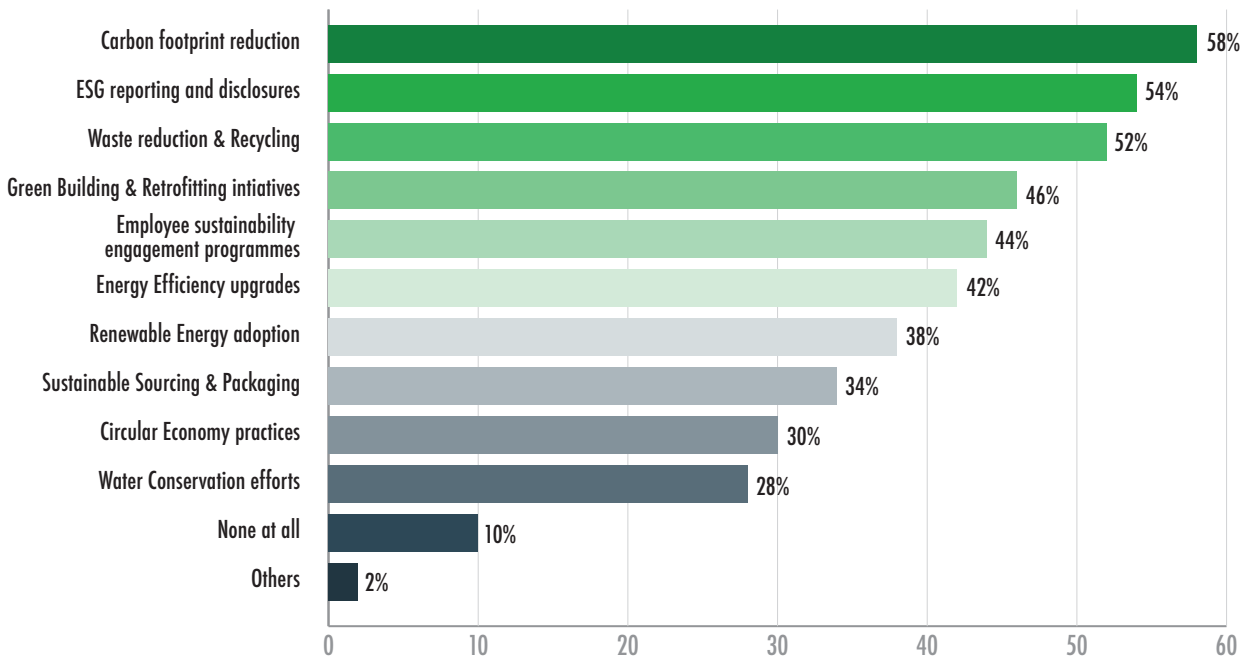


3. GREEN TRANSITION

Sustainability is a core focus for many firms, with adoption levels high across reporting, carbon reduction, and recycling initiatives. However, companies continue to face difficulties around costs, ROI measurement, and regulatory uncertainty. Despite these challenges, the benefits of sustainability are clear, with many citing brand reputation, compliance, and stakeholder engagement as key outcomes.

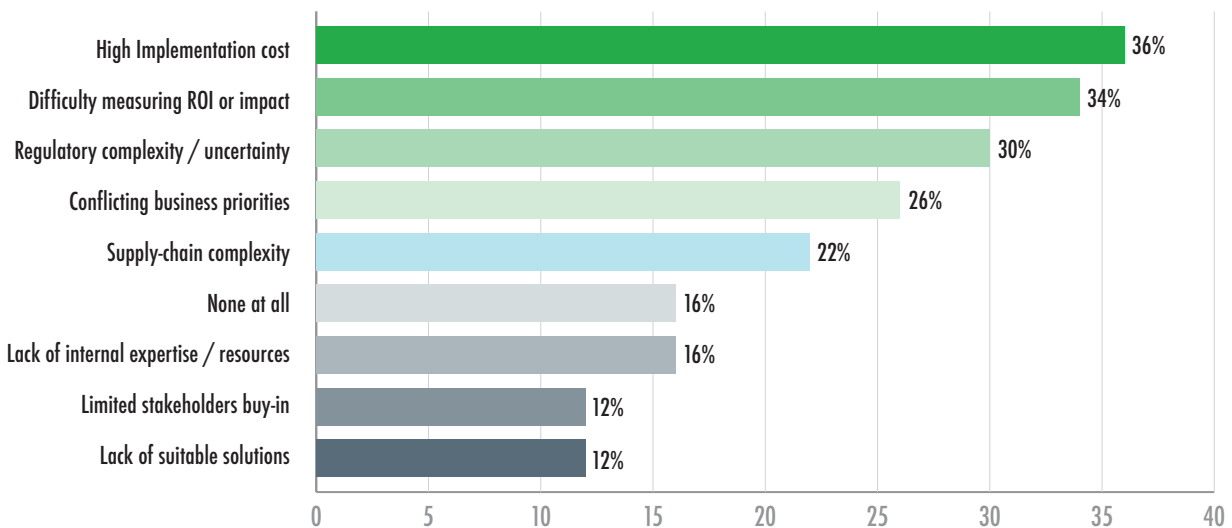
3.1 Which sustainability initiatives has your organisation adopted?

Carbon footprint reduction (58%), ESG reporting (54%), and waste reduction/recycling (52%) lead adoption, showing a broad commitment to sustainability.



3.2 What are the top challenges your company faced in implementing sustainability strategies?

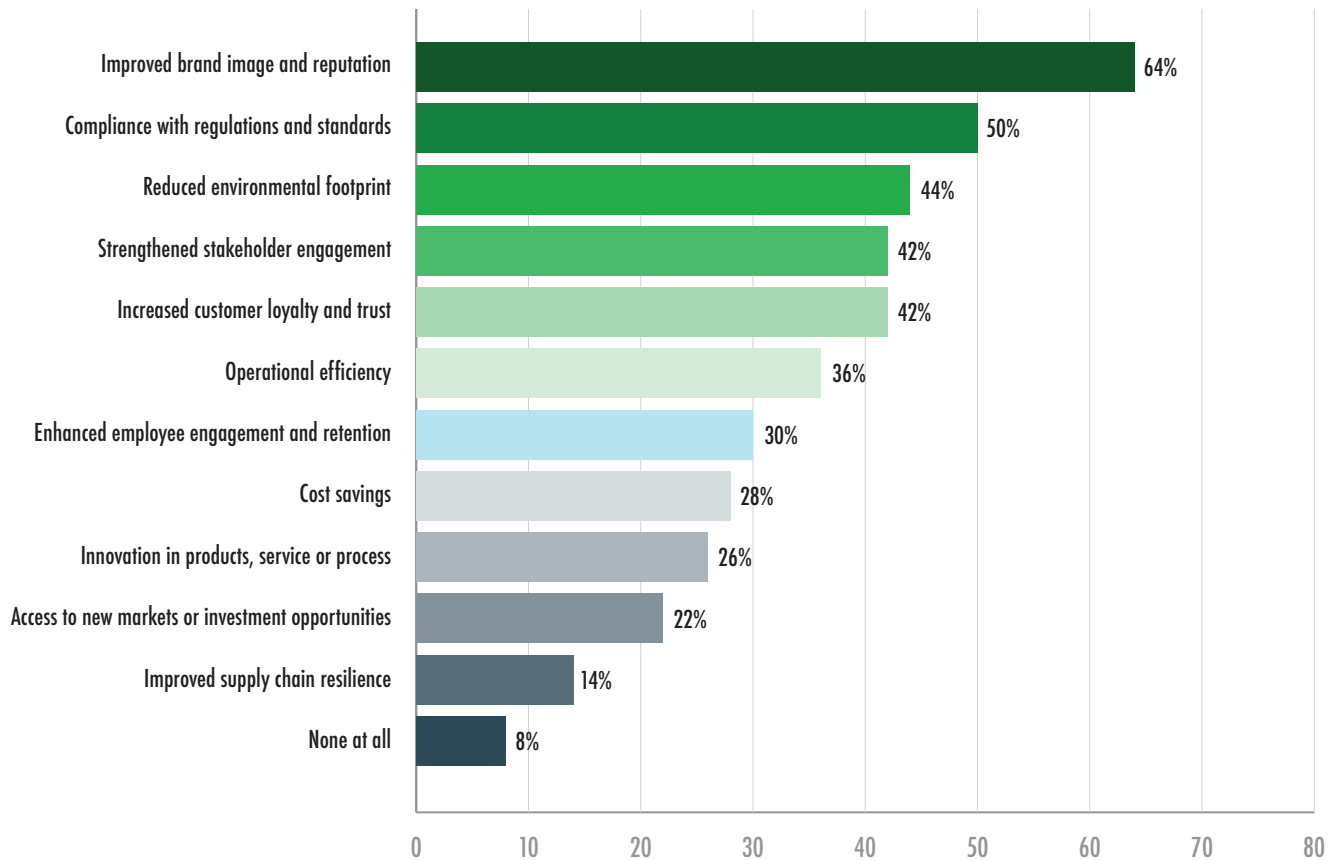
High implementation costs (36%) and ROI measurement difficulties (34%) are the main hurdles, with regulatory complexity/uncertainty also significant (30%).



3.3

What are the top benefits your company has realised from implementing sustainability strategies?

Top benefits include improved brand image (64%), compliance with regulations (50%), and reduced environmental footprint (44%), demonstrating both reputational and operational gains.



3.4

What has been the overall impact of implementing sustainability strategies on your company?

Two-thirds of companies (66%) see sustainability initiatives as having a positive impact, with only a minority citing neutral.

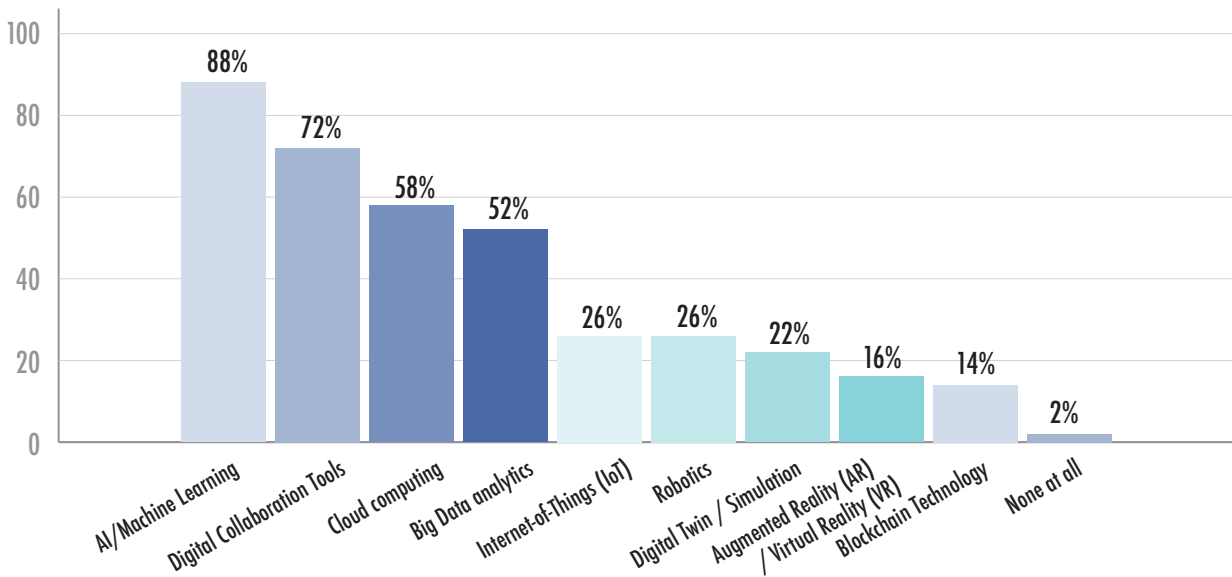


4. DIGITAL TRANSITION

Digital transformation is well advanced, with nearly all companies adopting AI, collaboration tools, and cloud computing. Cybersecurity concerns, legacy systems, and cost remain barriers, but the business case is strong: most firms cite efficiency, collaboration, and decision-making improvements. Overall, digitalisation is widely seen as a net positive, positioning European companies in Singapore at the forefront of technological adoption.

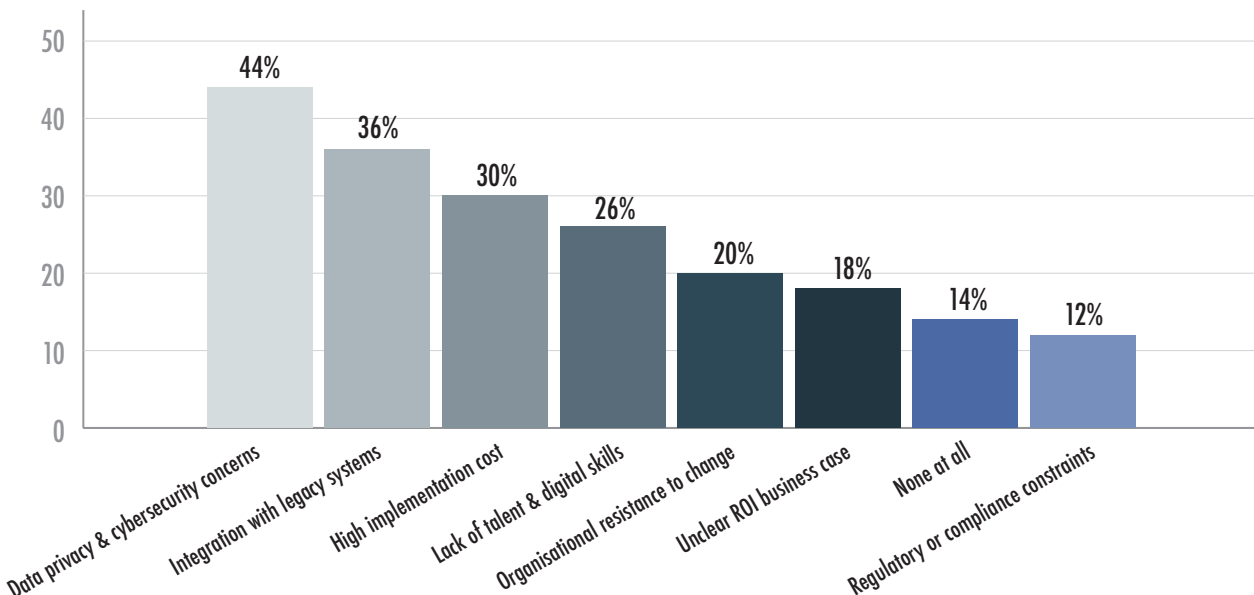
4.1 Which technologies has your company adopted as part of digitalisation efforts?

AI/Machine Learning (88%), digital collaboration tools (72%), and cloud computing (58%) dominate adoption, with strong uptake of big data analytics (52%).



4.2 What are the biggest barriers to digital adoption in your company?

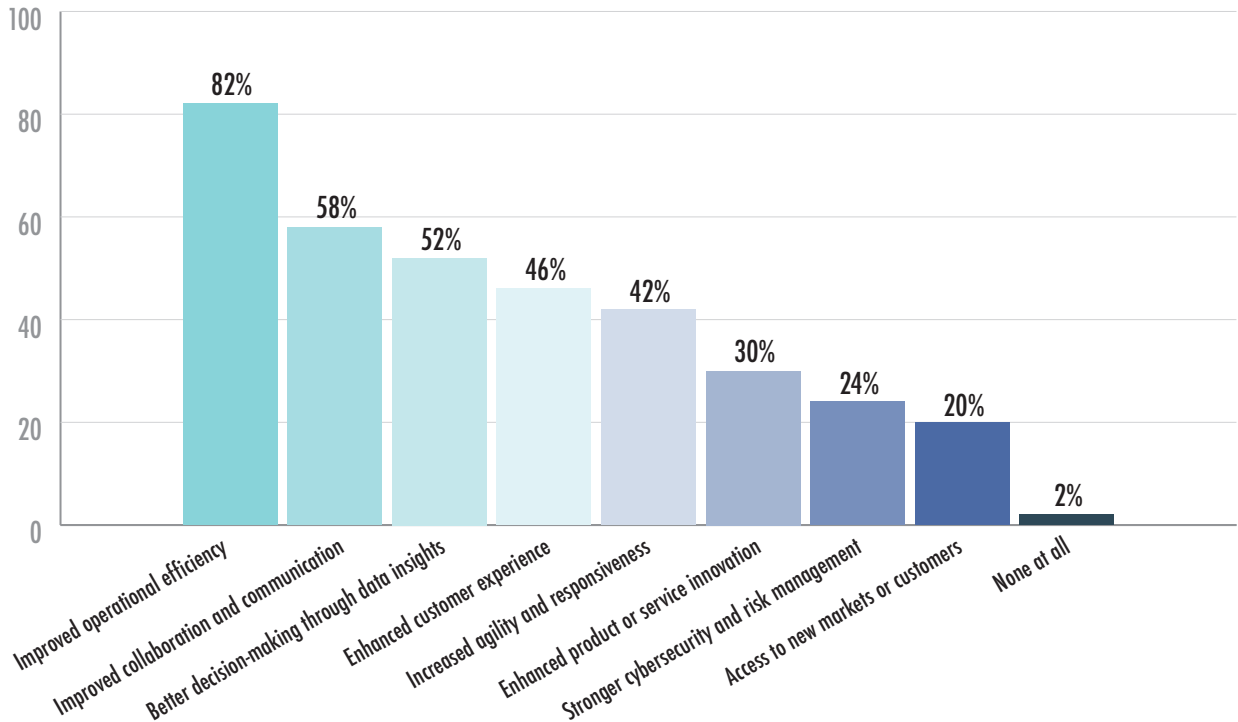
Key obstacles include data privacy and cybersecurity concerns (44%), integration with legacy system (36%), and high implementation cost (30%).



4.3

What are the biggest benefits your company has experienced from adopting digitalisation?

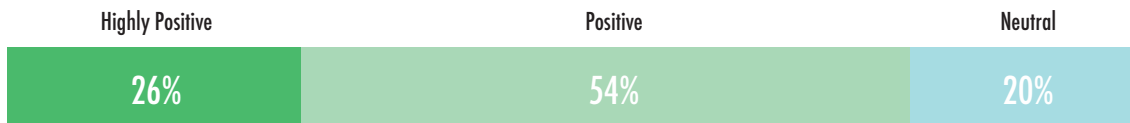
Operational efficiency (82%) is the most significant gain, followed by improved collaboration (58%) and better data-driven decisions (52%).



4.4

What has been the overall impact of digital transformation on your company's operations?

80% rated the impact positively (scores 4–5), showing that firms are moving beyond experimentation to realise tangible business value.



5. GEOPOLITICAL TENSION & GLOBAL TRADE VOLATILITY

Global geopolitics and trade volatility are shaping operations, but many European companies in Singapore view these developments as opportunities as well as risks. While supply chains and market access remain vulnerable, companies show a strong sense of preparedness, adopting risk management, diversification, and scenario planning. The data reflects resilience: most firms report moderate to positive impacts and are actively investing in building future-proof strategies.

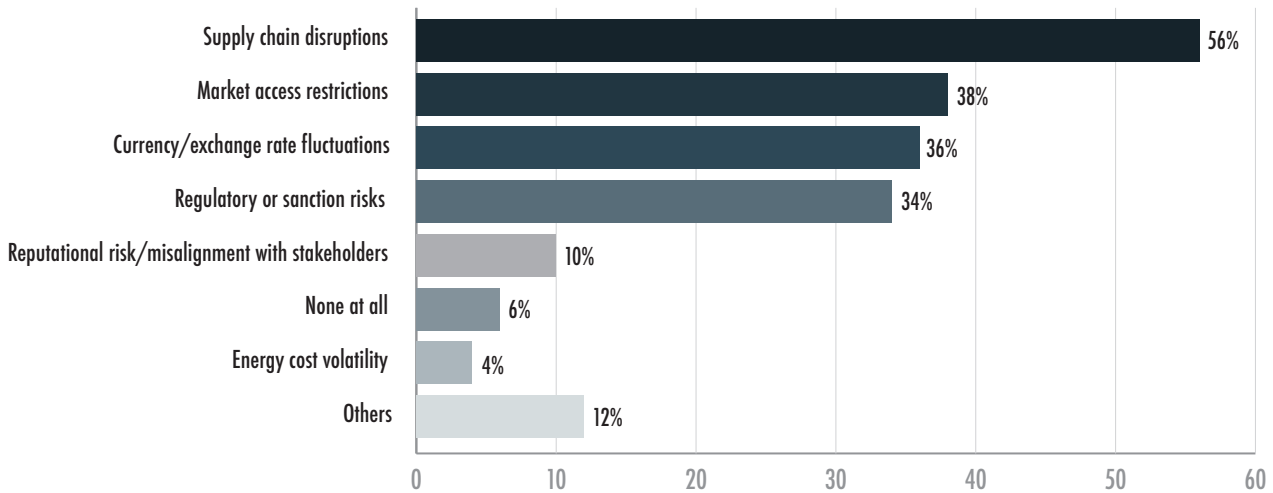
5.1 To what extent have recent geopolitical events impacted your business operations?

58% rated the impact as positive (scores 4–5), while 16% reported the impact negatively (score 2).



5.2 Which areas of your business operations have been most affected by geopolitical tensions?

Supply chains (56%), market access restrictions (38%), and currency fluctuations (36%) are the most impacted areas.



5.3 To what extent has global trade volatility affected your business operations in the past year?

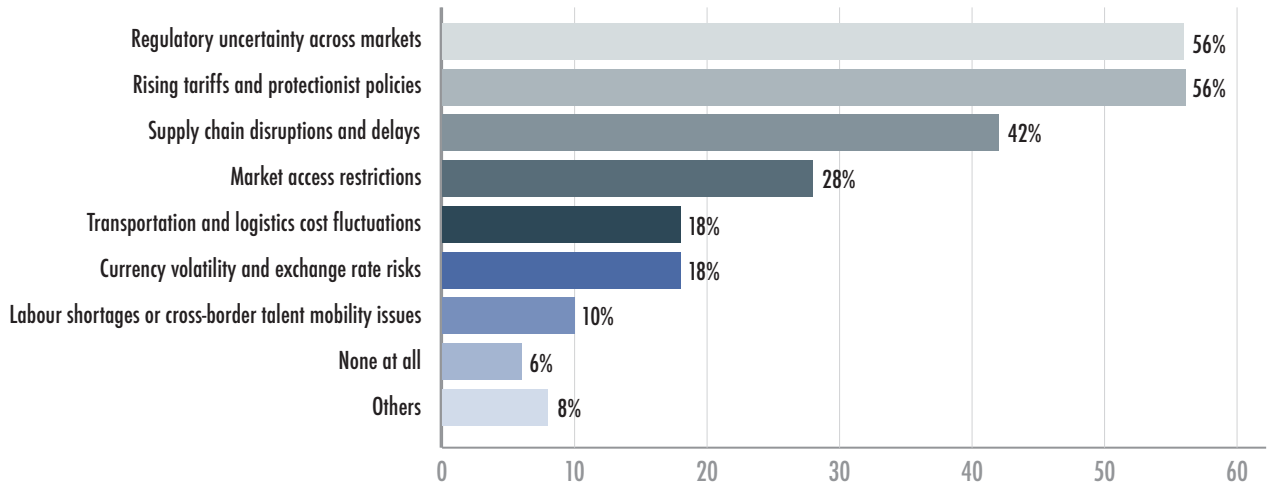
Most companies place the impact in the moderate range (scores 3–4), with only 6% reporting highly negative experiences.



5.4

What are your company’s biggest concerns related to international trade in 2025–2026?

Regulatory uncertainty (56%) and tariffs (56%) are the top concerns, followed by supply chain disruptions (42%).



5.5

How prepared is your company for future global trade uncertainties?

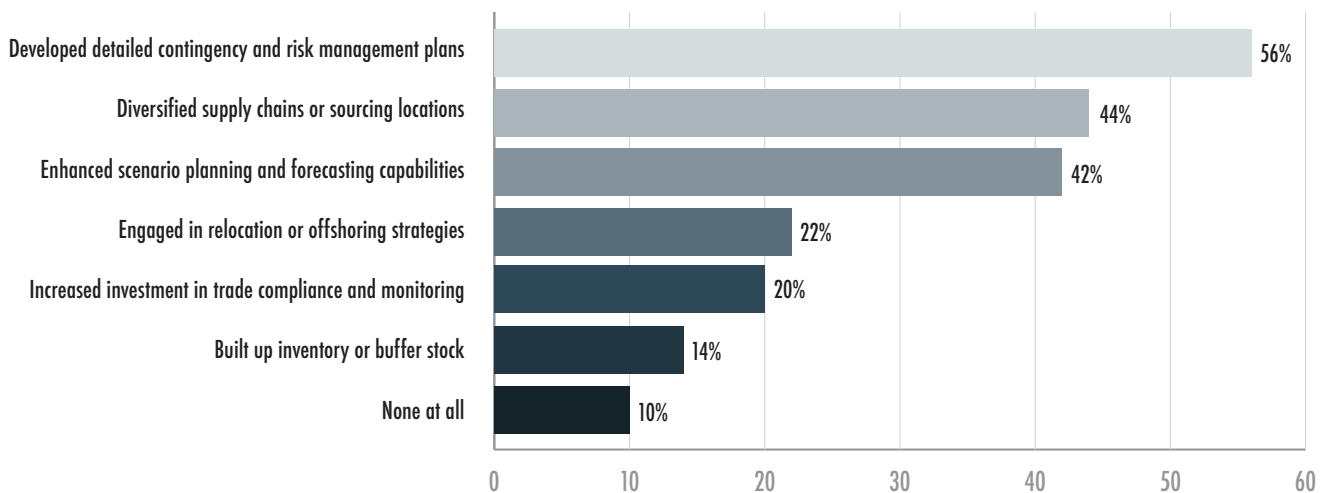
A majority (56%) feel prepared (score 4 and 5), with 10% considering themselves unprepared (score 2).



5.6

How has your company prepared for future global trade uncertainties?

Common steps include risk management plans (56%), diversified sourcing (44%), and scenario planning (42%).



6. CONCLUSION

The results of EuroCham Singapore's inaugural CEO Economic Echo Survey provide a timely and compelling snapshot of how European businesses are navigating the intertwined currents of opportunity and disruption in Singapore and the wider region. With 50 respondents across diverse industries, the survey highlights the maturity of the European corporate presence in Singapore while also underscoring the dynamism with which these companies are adapting to a shifting global landscape.

A WELL-ROOTED PRESENCE WITH SENIOR VOICES SHAPING DIRECTION.

Nearly half of surveyed companies have operated in Singapore for more than two decades, reinforcing the city-state's role as a trusted hub for European business in Asia. The majority employ between 101–1,000 staff, and more than 60% of responses came directly from C-suite leaders, demonstrating that the survey reflects not only operational realities but also strategic-level insights from those steering corporate direction.

BUSINESS SENTIMENT REMAINS RESILIENT BUT COST PRESSURES LOOM.

A strong 58% of companies expressed optimism about their outlook in Singapore for the next 12 months, while only 14% signalled concerns. Singapore's regulatory clarity is widely recognised, with 76% describing compliance requirements as manageable, while 52% describe EU regulations as manageable, though many acknowledge the higher standards are opportunities to showcase global leadership. While optimism is evident, cost pressures in Singapore remain acute: manpower costs top the list (76%), followed by rental (32%) and supply chain issues (18%). Companies identify tax incentives (56%), hiring and upskilling support (52%), and public-private partnership opportunities (34%) as the most valuable measures moving forward.

SUSTAINABILITY IS NO LONGER OPTIONAL, YET CHALLENGES PERSIST.

Corporate commitment to sustainability is strong, with carbon footprint reduction (58%), ESG reporting (54%), and waste reduction and recycling (52%) as the most widely adopted initiatives. Two-thirds of firms say their sustainability strategies have had a positive overall impact, with improved brand reputation (64%) and regulatory compliance (50%) among the most tangible benefits. Yet challenges remain: 36% cite high implementation costs, while 34% struggle to measure ROI. These results underscore the need for financing tools, policy clarity, and cross-sector collaboration to accelerate the green transition.

DIGITALISATION DRIVES EFFICIENCY AND RESILIENCE.

Alongside sustainability, digitalisation is viewed as a cornerstone of resilience. Some 88% of firms have adopted AI or machine learning, while 72% use digital collaboration tools and 58% leverage cloud computing. The payoff is evident: 82% report improved operational efficiency, 58% improved collaboration, and 52% better decision-making through data. Cybersecurity concerns (44%), integration with legacy systems (36%), and high implementation costs (30%) remain the biggest barriers, but 80% of companies rate the overall impact of digitalisation as positive, confirming that European firms are embedding technology as a core driver of competitiveness.

GEOPOLITICAL AND TRADE TURBULENCE: RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES.

Global uncertainties remain front of mind, with 56% citing regulatory unpredictability and tariffs as top concerns, alongside supply chain disruptions (42%). Supply chains (56%), market access restrictions (38%), and currency fluctuations (36%) are the areas most affected by geopolitical events. Yet companies are not standing still: more than half (56%) have developed detailed risk management plans, 44% have diversified sourcing, and 42% have expanded scenario planning. A majority (54%) consider themselves well prepared for future trade uncertainties, reflecting resilience and adaptability in the face of volatility.

AN ECOSYSTEM PREPARED FOR TRANSITION AND TRANSFORMATION.

Across all dimensions - business sentiment, sustainability, digitalisation, and global trade, one theme is clear: European companies in Singapore remain committed to long-term growth and are investing in capabilities that will define the next phase of competitiveness. Despite cost pressures and regulatory complexity, these firms are future-oriented, adaptable, and deeply engaged in shaping both regional and global transitions. In the decade ahead, this combination of deep-rooted presence and agile transformation will be decisive in enabling European businesses to thrive amid global uncertainty.