



CRO Survey | A CRO program initiative

How COVID-19 impacts
the profession of the CRO

II Edition



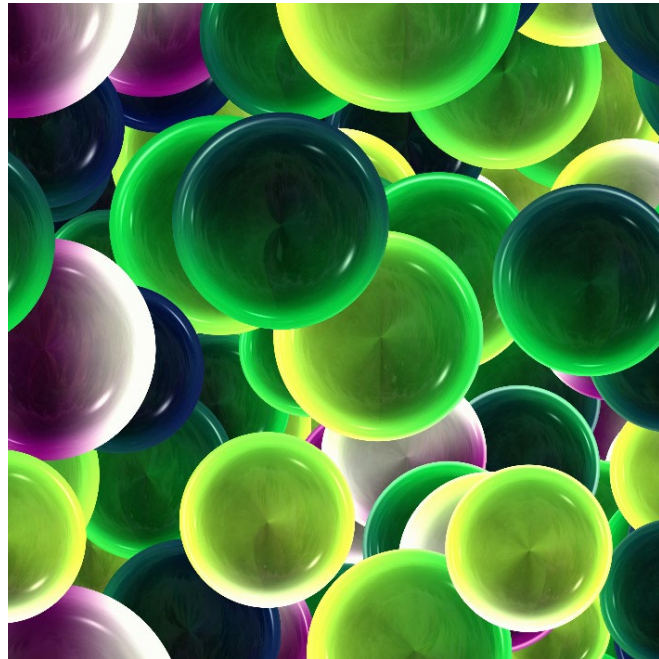
Contents

- [Preface](#)
- [Executive summary](#)
- [Risk perception](#)
- [Risk mitigation and management tools](#)
- [Key organizational impacts of Covid-19](#)
- [Indicators, emergency plan and methodologies](#)
- [Lessons learned from the Covid-19 emergency](#)
- [Conclusions](#)
- [Contacts](#)

Preface

Uncertainty and disruption are the key elements of the ongoing crisis where the Covid-19 pandemic stresses companies' resilient plans and organizations globally. Climate change and environmental risks remain a crucial topic for CROs and enterprises. At the same time, the Covid-19 emergency emphasizes new emerging threats. Nearly 60% of the respondents of the latest Global Risk Perception Survey conducted by the World Economic Forum (WEF) say that today "infectious diseases" and "livelihood crises" are the top short-term risk on a global scale. At the same time, climate change – and "Climate action failure" in particular - remains one of the most impactful (catastrophic) long-term risks identified.

Reacting to global supply chain shocks, putting people's health and safety first while assuring business continuity are just some of the simultaneous business challenges that companies and leaders faced during 2020. In this scenario, risk management has the chance to prove its role as a driver of new value and strategic goals within the enterprise. The Covid-19 crisis has created new areas of uncertainty and transformation that can drive Chief Risk Officers (CROs) to shift from a "loss prevention role" to a more strategic and leading one. To create value for the entire organization, the Risk Managers must detect changes in risky situations through early-warning systems, giving the organization time to face each challenge and be ready to answer in a timely fashion.



That is the context in which Deloitte launched this new edition of the annual analysis on risk perception, risk management practices, and CRO's initiatives.

This report, which is developed under the CRO Program, aims to collect the points of view of relevant leaders and players in this area to understand how risk perception evolves and how Covid-19 has impacted the

CRO profession and risk management activities within companies. More specifically, this report consists of three parts. The first one is centered on understanding the current and prospective presence and relevance of each risk within the companies of the interviewees, focusing on seven macro risk areas: Strategic risk, Reputational risk, Financial risk, Liquidity & Credit risk, Cyber risk, Health risk, ESG risk, and other Operational risks; the second one focuses on the impacts of Covid-19 on operations and performance of the risk functions; while the last part offers some lessons learned from this emergency, providing an overview on the areas of intervention to be addressed in the future to respond to the new needs shaped by the pandemic.

We hope that this analysis can provide the risk management community valuable insights to better understand the changes and transformation in terms of risks occurring in the business environment and the impacts that these can have on the way professionals are working and creating value within their companies.

We wish to thank all the survey participants for their time and valuable answers.

Alessandro Di Lorenzo
CRO Program Leader Italy

Executive summary

Risk perception

Several attention areas emerge from an analysis of macro risk categories: **innovation** and **digitalization** remain relevant for CROs and risk managers, and respondents often mention **low reactivity to market changes** and **cybersecurity** as risks. **ESG related issues** are particularly relevant also among **Reputational risks**. Among Financial risks, those related to interest rates are relevant. Still, the risk associated with **stock market volatility** is the only one that is expected to increase over a 1-year trend. This specific trend is connected to the current emergency due to Covid-19 and its impacts on the equity markets. As to the other Operational risks, **business continuity** and **IT systems' failure** are the most perceived risks among the respondents. Their relevance could be due again to Covid-19 and to the increasing necessity of maintaining operations and assure continuity to the business during a **lockdown** and in a situation of **extended remote working**.

How COVID-19 impacts the profession of the CRO: remote working, emergency plans, and methodologies

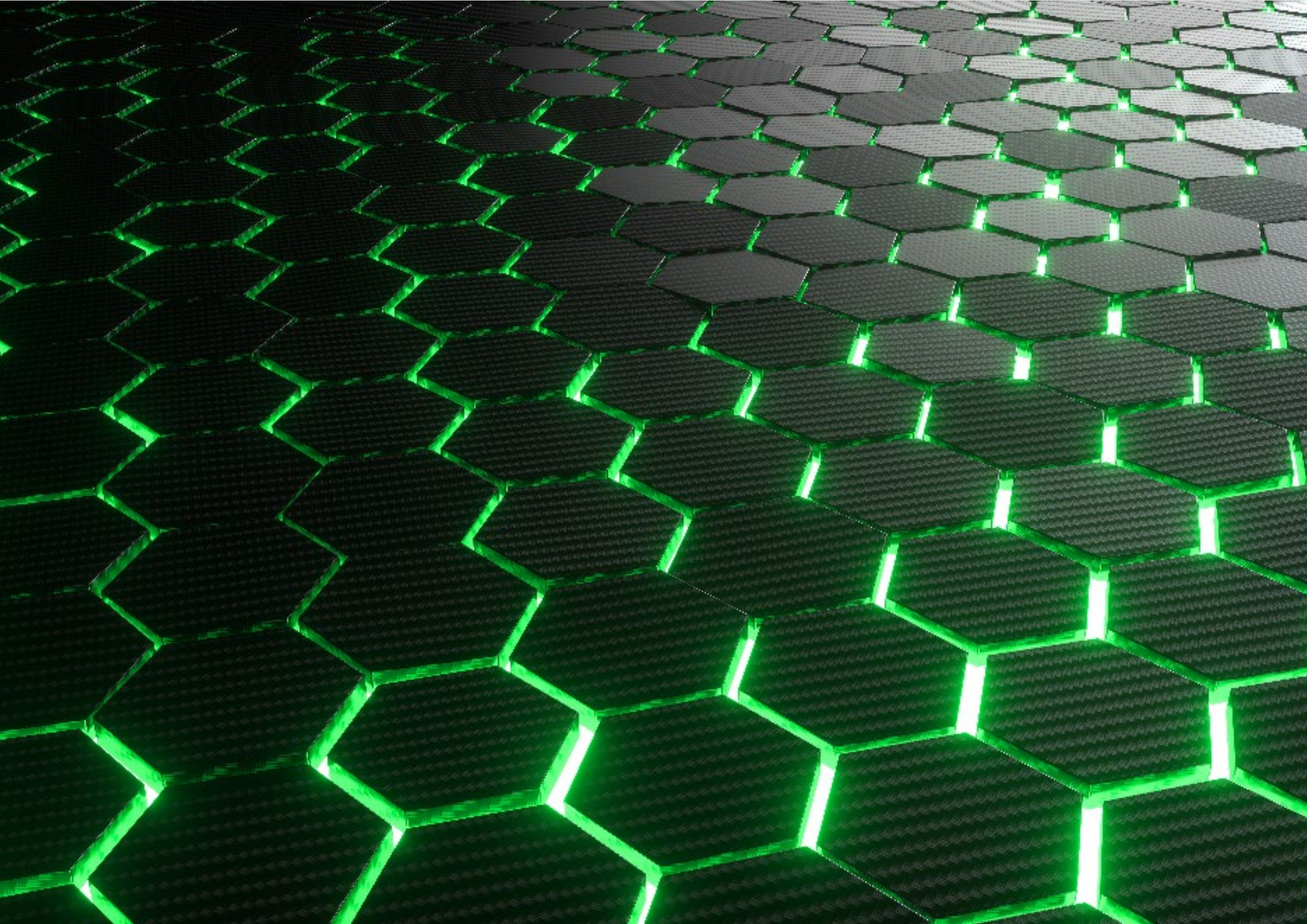
How has the CRO way of working changed during the Covid-19 emergency? Although **risk reporting** is not impacted by remote working in terms of **quality** and **productivity**, the organization of the activities within the risk management functions has partially changed.

Among the respondents, no significant difficulties are observed in terms of **data exchange** and **collaboration** between functions. Business-as-usual deadlines are respected, while the top management looks for more information and analysis with **higher frequency**. In this situation, 3 out of 4 respondents feel that the **risk function** is (at least partially) **understaffed**.

Early warning indicators and emergency plans have mostly worked as expected, helping CROs and risk functions face the Covid-19 emergency. On the other hand, **significant difficulties** have been faced by the risk management function regarding the methodologies for **scenario definition** and **the calculation of regulatory requirements** (where applicable).

Lesson learned from the Covid-19 emergency

Due to the Covid-19 emergency, **new needs have emerged** both in **organization** and data management and in terms of methodologies. Regarding the organization, specific attention should be given to **process reengineering**, mainly through automation and digitalization; process reengineering is also an area where intervention is highly urgent. As to **data management**, the need **to improve the IT infrastructure** is mentioned by most respondents, 65% of whom consider it as a **moderately urgent** need. Finally, the most relevant new requirement is **to review/develop business continuity and emergency plans** regarding methodologies. However, only very few respondents say that an intervention is highly urgent in this area.



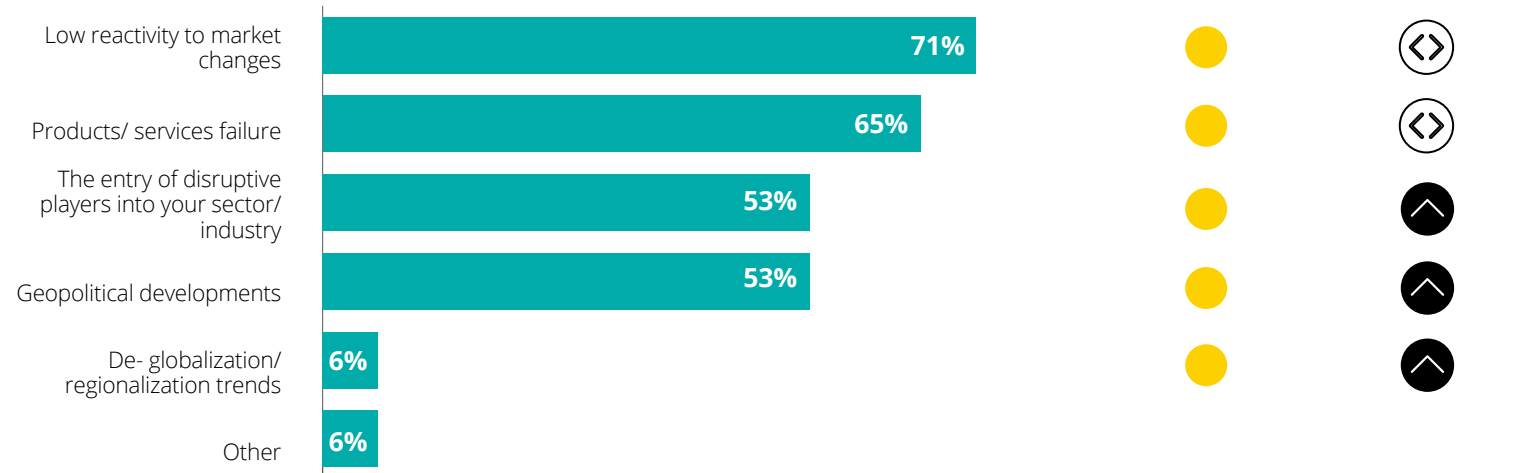
Risk perception

Strategic risks

Warning to innovation and geopolitics

Innovation and enterprises' ability to face it (or not) is the current significant strategic risk perceived by the interviewees' companies. The most frequently mentioned strategic risk is related to the **low reactivity to market changes**, which confirms what worried mostly the CROs involved in the survey's previous edition. The fear of disrupting players entering the market/sector is also perceived as a relevant risk by the respondents. The majority of them say the 1-year trend related to this specific risk is increasing. Over the same time frame, the risks associated with **geopolitical development** are expected to grow, too.

Which of the following strategic risks exist in your company nowadays?



LEGENDA

The level of the (average) current impact of each risk can be

- High
- Medium
- Low

For each item, the chart shows the 1- year trend which is expected from the highest percentage of respondents; the trend can be:

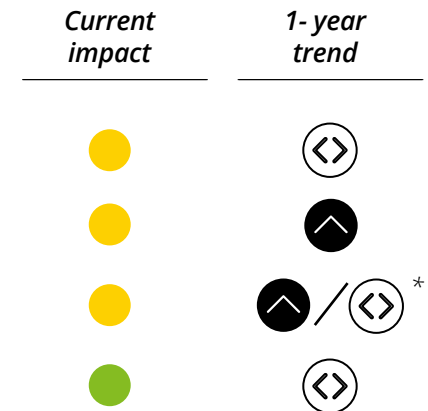
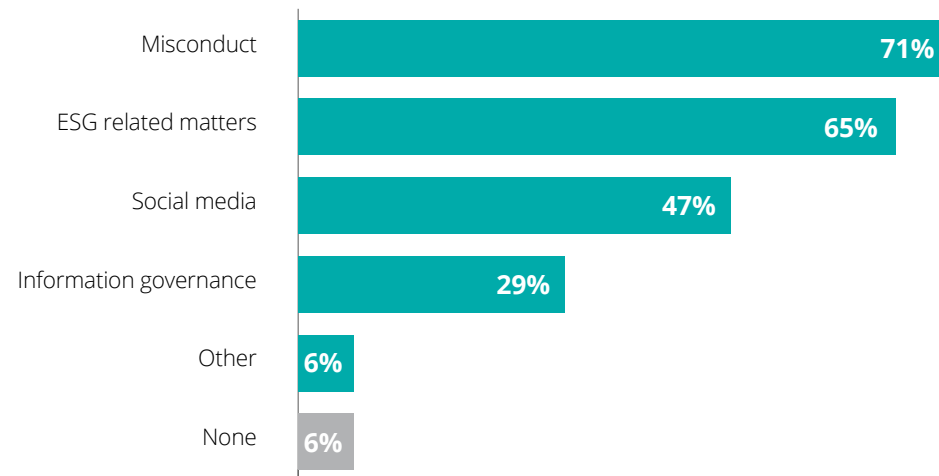
- ⬆ Increasing
- ↔ Costant
- ⬇ Decreasing

Reputational risk

Reputation, ESG and misconduct

The respondents' focus is on «new» risks connected to **misconduct** and **ESG related matters**. In particular, the latter risks are expected to grow over one year. As opposed to last edition's results, the risk related to **information governance** is less perceived by the respondents; it is a relevant topic for financial institutions, which have given it a lot of attention over the past years.

Which of the following reputational risks exist in your company nowadays?



LEGENDA

The level of the (average) current impact of each risk can be

- High
- Medium
- Low

For each item, the chart shows the 1- year trend which is expected from the highest percentage of respondents; the trend can be:

- ⬆ Increasing
- ↔ Costant
- ⬇ Decreasing

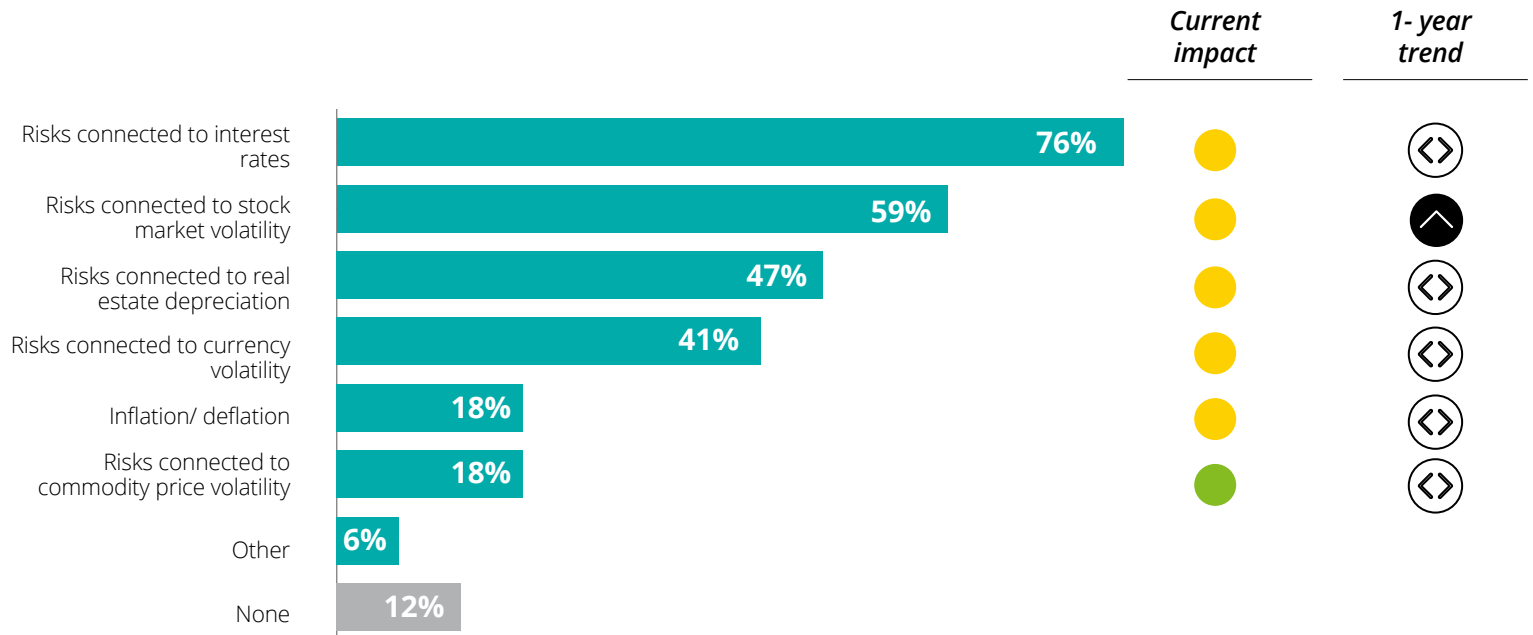
* Regarding «Social media» the same percentage of respondents says that the 1- year trend is "increasing" or "constant"

Financial risk

Increasing economic uncertainty impacts stock market volatility

The risk related to **interest rates** is still relevant. However, the risk connected to **stock market volatility** is perceived as increasing over one year by the highest number of respondents. The result can be explained by the effects of the Covid-19 emergency since an **increasing economic uncertainty** is generating turmoil on the stock markets and increasing volatility.

Which of the following financial risks exist in your company nowadays?



LEGENDA

The level of the (average) current impact of each risk can be

- High
- Medium
- Low

For each item, the chart shows the 1- year trend which is expected from the highest percentage of respondents; the trend can be:

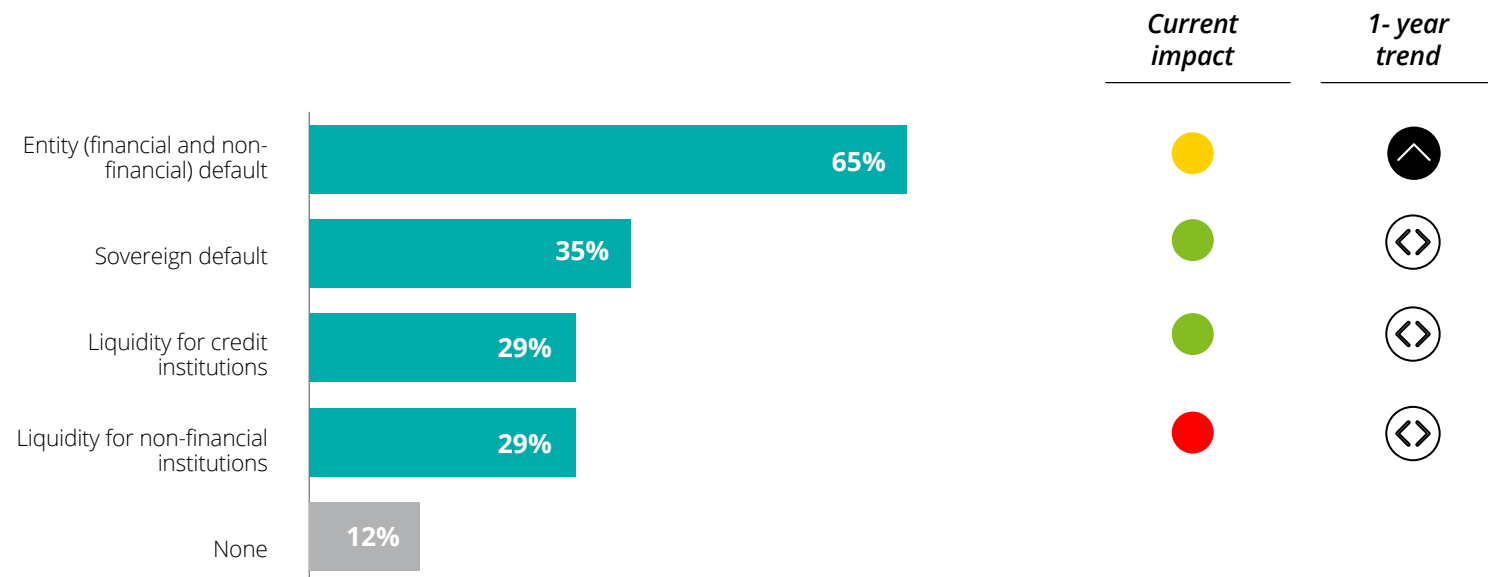
- ⬆ Increasing
- ⬅ Costant
- ⬇ Decreasing

Liquidity & credit risk

Concerning for entity default and liquidity

Two significant trends emerge in this area: on one side, the **default risk for financial and non-financial entities** is considered as having a moderate current impact, but it is expected to grow; on the other side, the **liquidity risk for non-financial institutions** is currently perceived as high-impact, and it is expected to remain constant over a 1-year horizon. Credit risk perception is somehow in line with the previous edition of the survey as concerns impact and future trend. The latter could be **more Covid-19-driven** since the emergency has relatively increased challenges regarding access to funding sources, high costs, and assets disposal (a situation that is expected to remain stable over the next year).

Which of the following liquidity & credit risks exist in your company nowadays?



LEGENDA The level of the (average) current impact of each risk can be

- High
- Medium
- Low

For each item, the chart shows the 1-year trend which is expected from the highest percentage of respondents; the trend can be:

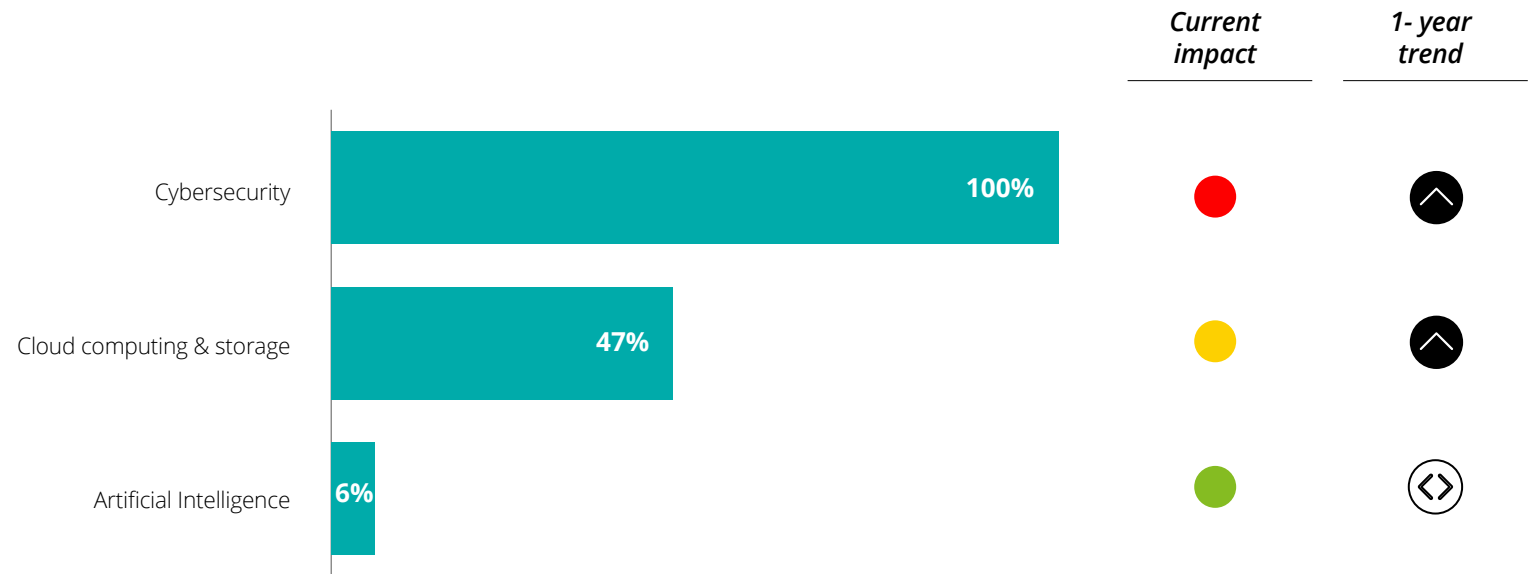
- ⬆ Increasing
- ↔ Costant
- ⬇ Decreasing

Cyber risk

All eyes are on cybersecurity

A significant risk source is represented by **cybersecurity**, which all the respondents report as having a high current impact and an increasing 1-year trend. On the other side, other technologies such as **cloud technologies** and **artificial intelligence** are perceived as less risky.

Which of the following cyber risks exist in your company nowadays?



LEGENDA

The level of the (average) **current impact** of each risk can be

- High
- Medium
- Low

For each item, the chart shows the **1-year trend** which is expected from the highest percentage of respondents; the trend can be:

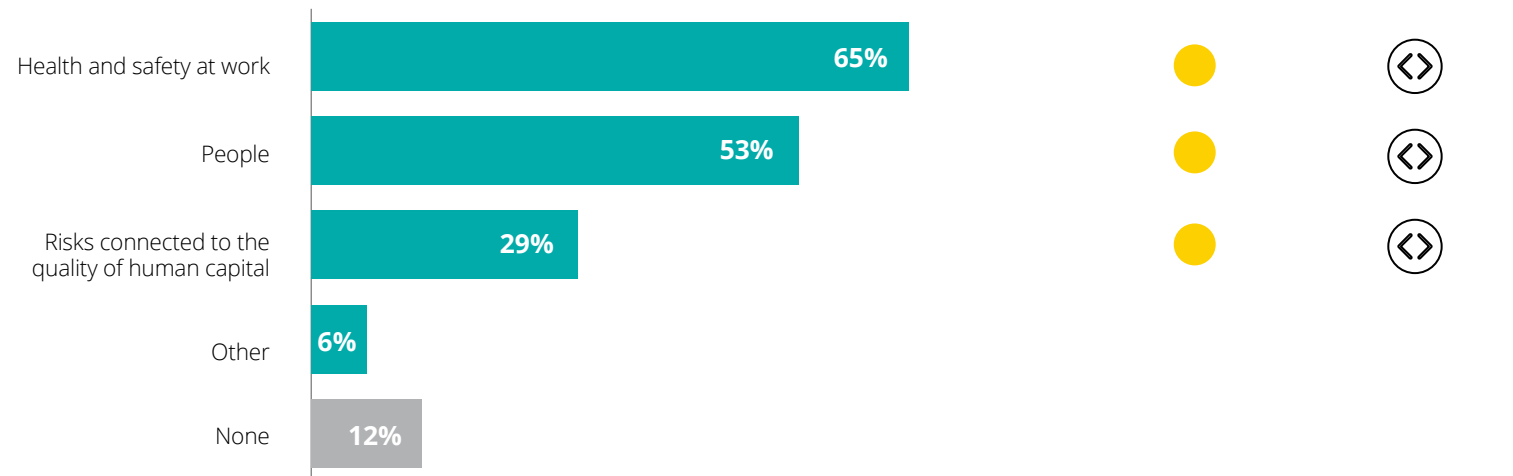
- ⬆ Increasing
- ↔ Costant
- ⬇ Decreasing

Health risk

Health and safety at work in the first place

The panel of respondents widely perceives the risks related to **health and safety at work**. However, most respondents consider this risk to be constant over a 1-year horizon and, in general, to have a moderate (“medium”) current impact. The same results emerge for risks related to **people** and the **quality of human capital** (both with medium impact and a constant trend).

Which of the following health risks exist in your company nowadays?



LEGENDA

The level of the (average) current impact of each risk can be

- High
- Medium
- Low

For each item, the chart shows the 1-year trend which is expected from the highest percentage of respondents; the trend can be:

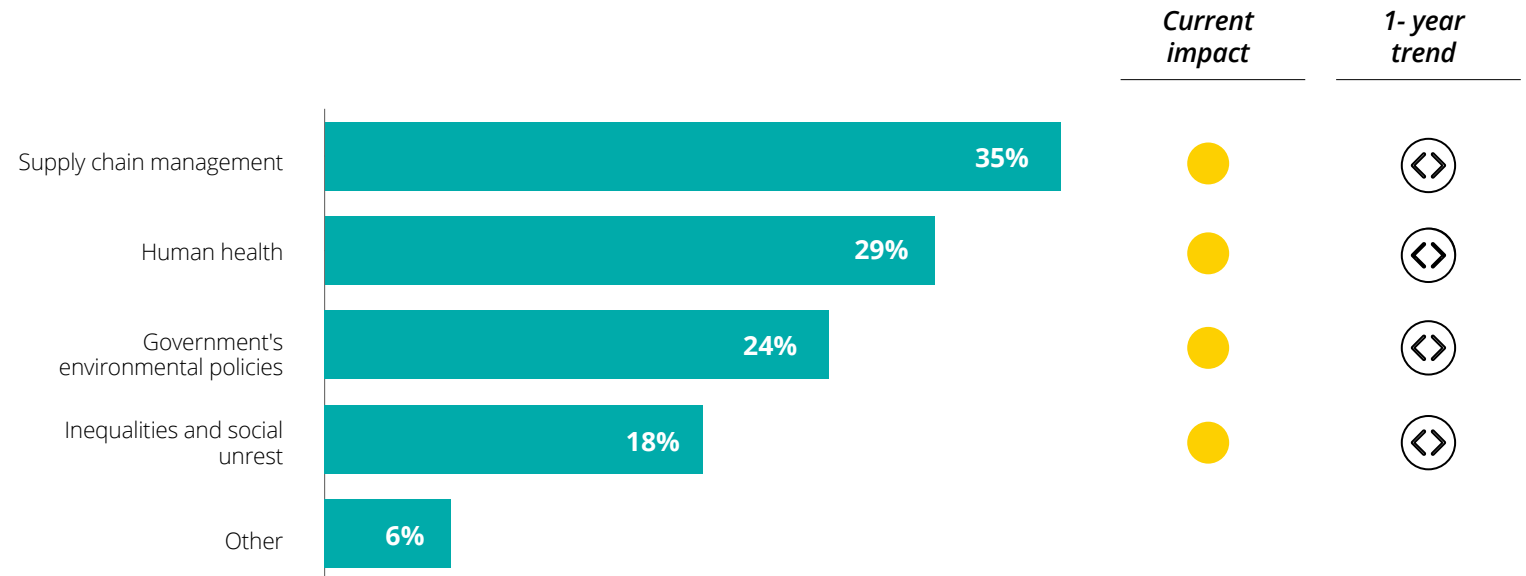
- ⬆ Increasing
- ↔ Costant
- ⬇ Decreasing

ESG risk

Some alerts from the Covid-19 emergency

ESG risks and, more specifically, **environmental** and **climate change** risks are well-known and recognized risks globally, especially over the long term. However, the Covid-19 emergency has pointed out other specific ESG risks too: 1 out of 3 respondents included **supply chain management** among the current ESG risks, where Covid-19 has highlighted some weaknesses of the current situation; moreover, **human health** is also cited by the respondents among the existing ESG risks, with a medium impact and a constant 1-year trend.

Which of the following ESG risks exist in your company nowadays?



LEGENDA

The level of the (average) current impact of each risk can be

- High
- Medium
- Low

For each item, the chart shows the 1-year trend which is expected from the highest percentage of respondents; the trend can be:

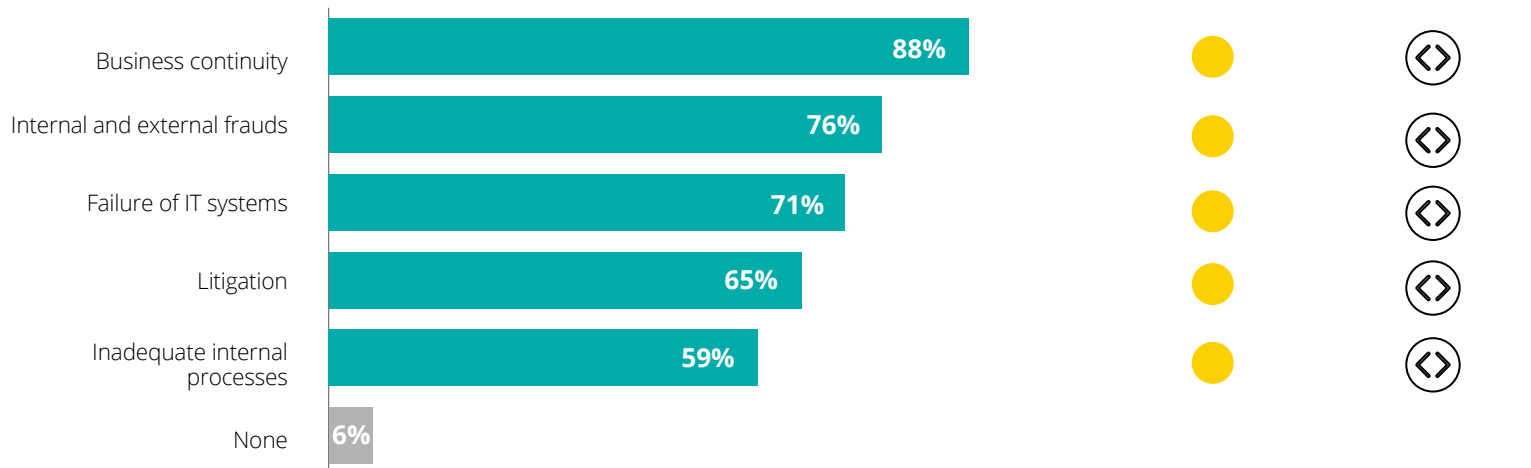
- ⬆ Increasing
- ↔ Costant
- ⬇ Decreasing

(Other) Operational risks

Business continuity, fraud and IT systems are real concerns

Among the Operational risks, **business continuity, failure of IT systems, and fraud** are considered highly relevant. These risks have a «medium» current impact and a constant 1-year trend.

Which of the following (other) operational risks exist in your company nowadays?



LEGENDA

The level of the (average) current impact of each risk can be

- High
- Medium
- Low

For each item, the chart shows the 1- year trend which is expected from the highest percentage of respondents; the trend can be:

- ⬆ Increasing
- ↔ Costant
- ⬇ Decreasing

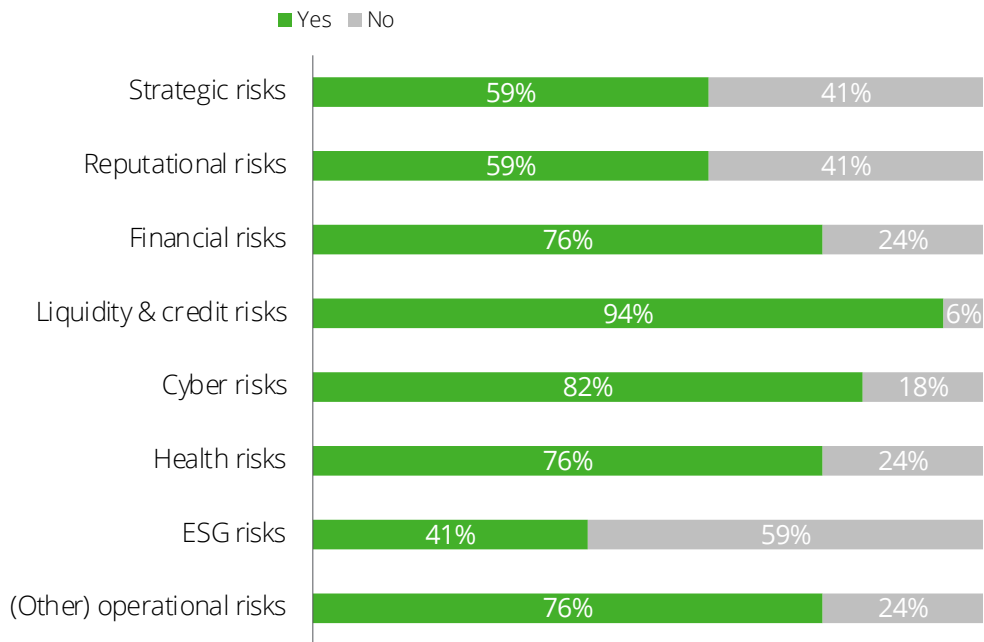
Risk mitigation and management tools



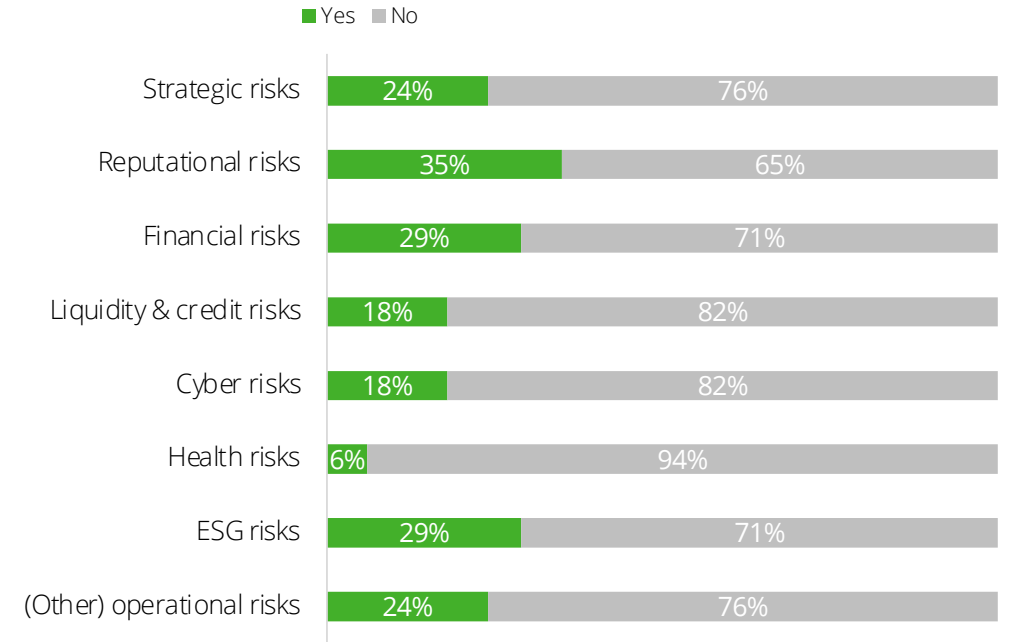
Some risks have a full (tool) coverage

For some risks categories, which are more consolidated or relevant within the enterprises, a **«full coverage»** in terms of **tools for risk mitigation/management** is expected: for Financial, Liquidity & Credit risks, as well as for Cyber and Operational risks, there is a high number of respondents confirming the availability of existing or desired risk mitigation tools. On the other hand, **for emerging/new risks** and risks related to business strategy, **no similar «full coverage»** has been achieved.

Are there in your company any existing risk mitigation/ management tools for these risks?



Are there in your company any desired risk mitigation/ management tools for these risks?



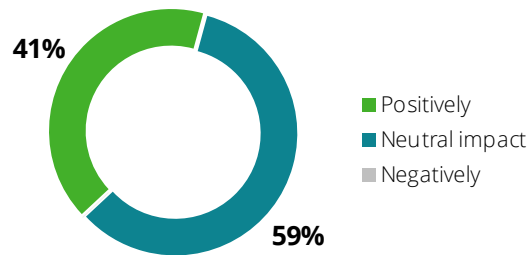
Key organizational impacts of Covid-19



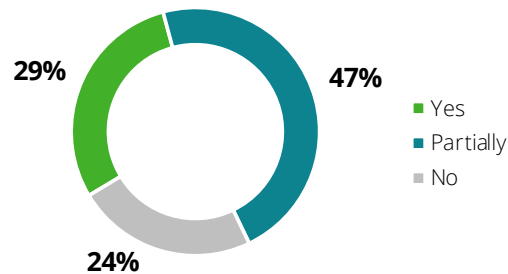
During the Covid-19 emergency...

Remote working has had a **positive or neutral impact** on the productivity and quality of risk reporting. However, it has affected the organization of the activities within the risk management function, if not entirely, at least partially. Moreover, most of the respondents declare that **no difficulties have been faced in data exchange** and **collaboration** between the risk management function and other areas and that the Business As Usual (BAU) deadlines have been respected during the emergency. In contrast, the top management has asked for more information with higher frequency. In this situation, 3 out of 4 respondents feel that the risk function is understaffed.

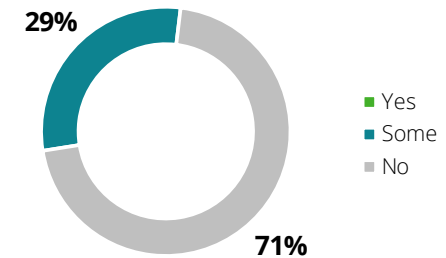
...how did smart working impact productivity and quality of risk reporting?



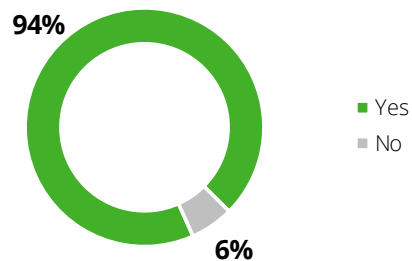
...did smart working affect the activities organization within the risk management function?



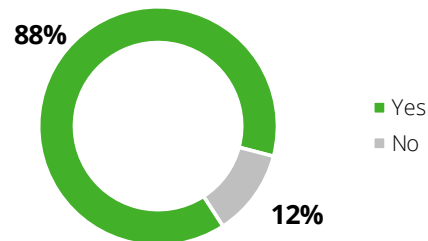
...did the risk management area meet difficulties in data exchange/ collaboration with other areas?



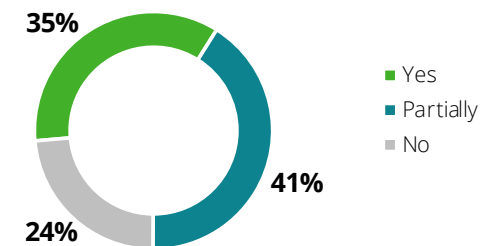
...did the company respect the Business as Usual deadlines?



...did the top management request additional information/ higher frequency?



According to the current workload, do you feel the risk management function/ area is understaffed?



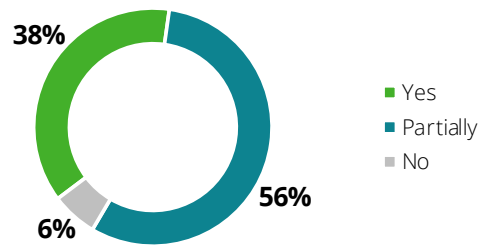
Indicators, emergency plan and methodologies



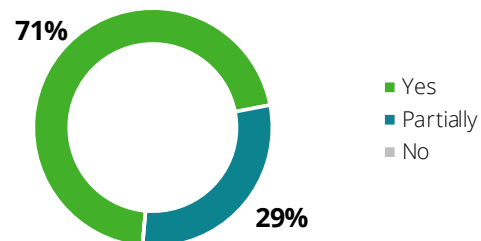
During the Covid-19 emergency...

Almost all respondents agree that the **early warning indicators have been able to identify the impacts of the Covid-19 crisis**, at least partially. Moreover, the emergency plans the companies put in place have worked (at least partially) as expected. However, the risk management function has met significant difficulties regarding the methodologies for defining a **scenario analysis** and the **calculation of regulatory requirements** (where applicable); yet, no significant difficulties have been encountered regarding risk reporting, risk measurement, and risk assessment.

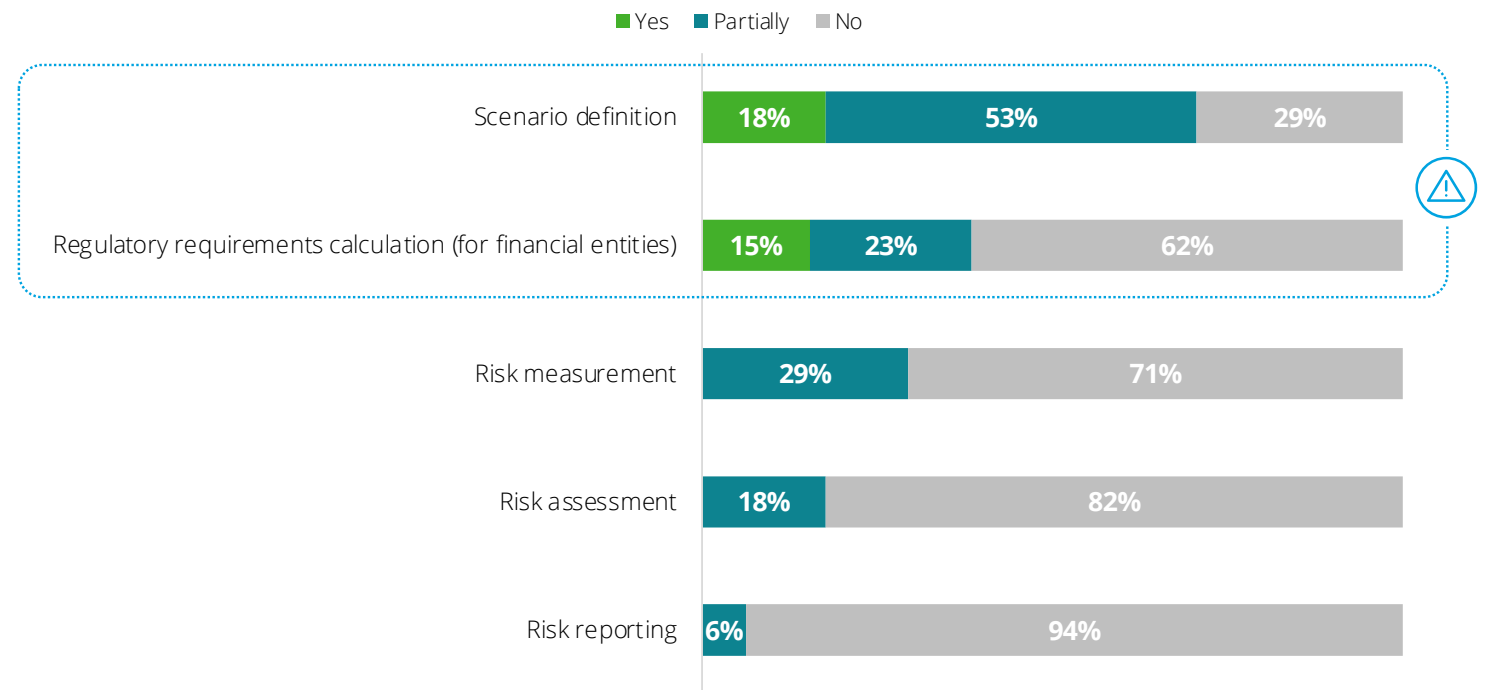
...have the early warning indicators for risk worked correctly, identifying the impact of the Covid-19 crisis?*



...has the emergency plan worked as expected?



...has the company faced difficulties in the methodologies used in the following areas?



*Percentages do not consider the answers «N/A»

Lessons learned from the Covid-19 emergency

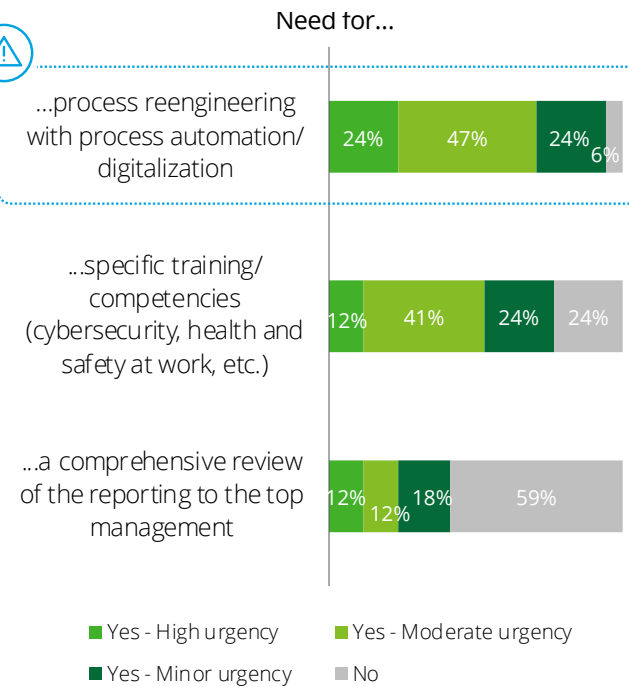


Because of the COVID-19 emergency...

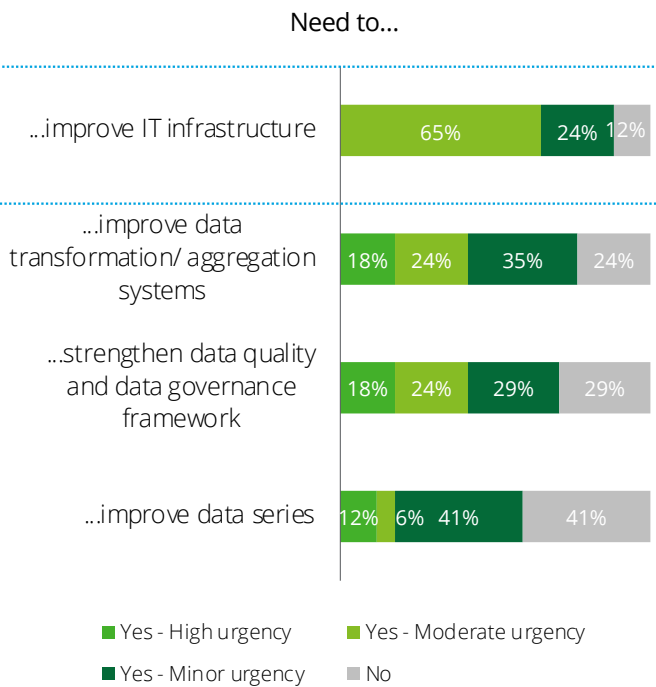
Due to the Covid-19 emergency, **new needs have emerged** in the following areas: organization, data management, and risk methodologies. In particular, there is a significant need for improvement in these areas:

- For **organization** → need for process reengineering through automation and digitalization.
- For **data management** → need to improve the IT infrastructure.
- For **methodologies** → need to review/develop business continuity and emergency plans.

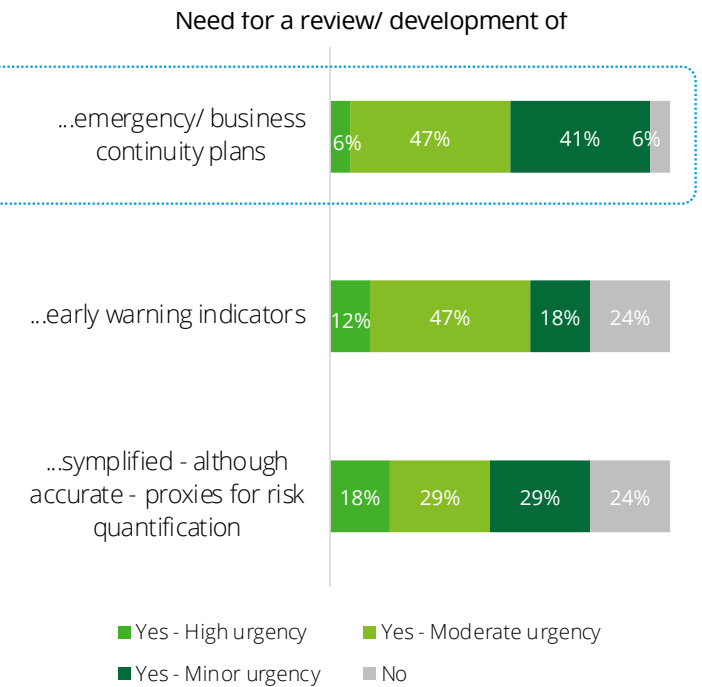
...have new needs emerged regarding the organization?



...have new needs emerged regarding data management?



... have new needs emerged regarding methodologies?



Conclusions

The Covid-19 emergency has put under stress risk management functions. They must face and manage new uncertainties in terms of people's health and safety, and costs. New risks and challenges have been added to the existing ones. Whereas at the beginning of 2020, attention was mainly focused on climate change and environmental risks – as pointed out by edition after edition of the WEF Global Risks Report itself - today, these should be managed under the new scenario and challenges pushed forward by Covid-19. As further uncertainty spreads, CROs and their staff need more information and support. Today, their main challenges are scenario definition and regulatory requirement calculation, while they appear more confident in methodologies such as risk assessment, risk measurement, and risk reporting.

Information technologies and digitalization are a risk category that companies should consider and protect, especially in terms of cybersecurity, and an enabler that can help and support the activities and efficiency of the function and the organization. The number of cyberattacks is increasing on the one hand; however, on the other, CROs are asking for more process automation and an enhanced IT infrastructure to support data management.

In the first half of 2020, the number of severe cyber attacks raised by 7% compared to the same period in 2019, with a significant impact in 53% of the cases.

Rapporto Clusit 2020



Indeed, the current digital infrastructure and tools appear to be less effective in managing emerging new challenges and risks. According to Deloitte's global survey "[Beyond the hype - Global Digital Risk Survey](#)," 60% of the respondents rate the effectiveness of current risk management tooling as five (or less) out of ten, with 24% using in-house developed tools and only 6% new technology start-up solutions. Moreover, around one-fifth of organizations leverage disruptive technology for core stages of the risk management lifecycle, 19% for risk identification, 21% for risk monitoring, and 17% for risk reporting.

As emphasized in another recent Deloitte report on risk management - "[Rebooting risk management - Making risk relevant in a world remade by COVID-19](#)"-, Covid-19 has also highlighted that the current risk programs used by enterprises are still calibrated to address mainly well-known financial, operational, cyber, compliance and legal risks, rather than low-probability events with higher potential impacts. In this context, the current emergency can be a chance to re-align the programs to better face and manage uncertainties like those encountered during the health emergency. The current situation can allow CROs and risk managers to rethink and reshape their role within the organizations, providing the skills, tools, and methodologies necessary to drive and support the enterprise through uncertain times.

Contacts

CRO program



Alessandro Di Lorenzo

Deloitte Risk Advisory Partner
CRO Program Leader
adilorenzo@deloitte.it



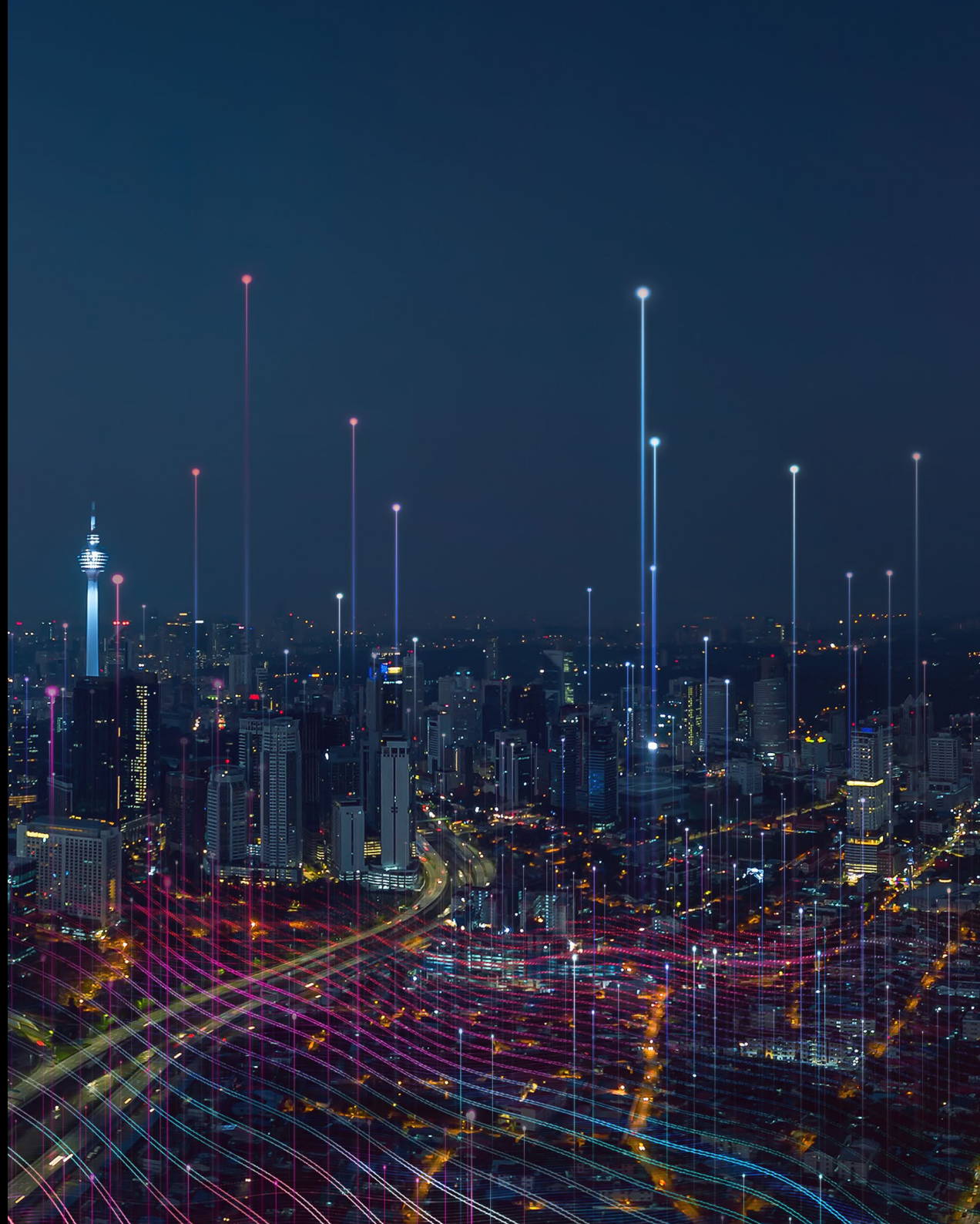
Ilario Cadringer

Deloitte Risk Advisory Director
CRO Program Deputy Leader
icadringer@deloitte.it

Research & Editorial

Camilla Bellini

Clients&Industries
Eminence and Market Insight
Specialist Deloitte Italia
cabellini@deloitte.it





Deloitte refers to one or more of Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu Limited (“DTTL”), its global network of member firms, and their related entities (collectively, the “Deloitte organization”). DTTL (also referred to as “Deloitte Global”) and each of its member firms and related entities are legally separate and independent entities, which cannot obligate or bind each other in respect of third parties. DTTL and each DTTL member firm and related entity is liable only for its own acts and omissions, and not those of each other. DTTL does not provide services to clients. Please see www.deloitte.com/about to learn more.

This communication contains general information only, and none of Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu Limited (“DTTL”), its global network of member firms or their related entities (collectively, the “Deloitte organization”) is, by means of this communication, rendering professional advice or services. Before making any decision or taking any action that may affect your finances or your business, you should consult a qualified professional adviser. No representations, warranties or undertakings (express or implied) are given as to the accuracy or completeness of the information in this communication, and none of DTTL, its member firms, related entities, employees or agents shall be liable or responsible for any loss or damage whatsoever arising directly or indirectly in connection with any person relying on this communication. DTTL and each of its member firms, and their related entities, are legally separate and independent entities.