

Ewout Hollegien CFO, a.s.r.



In this interview, Ewout Hollegien, CFO of a.s.r., shares his insights on the geopolitical climate, agility and dynamics, sustainability and CSRD obligations; offering a concise look into critical financial and strategic topics, for our CFO Survey Spring 2024 Report.

The current geopolitical climate is fraught with volatility, seeding widespread uncertainty in the global business landscape. Such unpredictability necessitates high levels of corporate agility, as companies must pivot swiftly in response to sudden shifts. This landscape often begets a trend of deglobalisation, as organisations strive to mitigate risks by re-evaluating their international footprints and supply chains in the face of changing geopolitical dynamics.

In the last two years, economic pressures led to curtailed innovation spending, but with the economy rebounding, GenAI is emerging as a key catalyst for productivity, especially as labour participation decline in relative and

absolute terms as a consequence of demographic development across the globe. GenAI, like other emerging technologies, follows the same trend as the moon landing. The true value lies not just in the destination but in the innovations sparked along the journey. A narrow focus on immediate business outcomes may inhibit broader potential.

Sustainability is increasingly recognised as a collective endeavour, both within the economy at large, as well as more specifically within the financial services industry. You can see this by the fact that very similar choices and goals are being set throughout the industry.

It's become integral to decision-making processes across the board, from broader economic strategies

to specific digitalisation initiatives. Moreover, tools like Generative AI to facilitate Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD) compliance exemplifies how advanced technology is being harnessed to support this all-encompassing commitment to sustainable development.