Fronce



French corporates judge startup collaboration most crucial in uurope

French corporates place the highest strategic importance on startup collaboration in Europe, with 91% considering it crucial to their success, according to Sopra Steria Next's Open Innovation Report 2025.

This commitment is delivering results, with 71% of collaborations reaching their objectives always or most of the time, making them the third most successful country in Europe.

In cybersecurity, French firms lead the continent, with 59% having launched such startup partnerships – the highest level in Europe. However, their AI collaboration rate remains at the European average (57%), despite strong ambitions. Among those already working with AI startups, 71% view them as integral or key to implementing their AI strategy – one of the highest levels in Europe.

Yet, a critical challenge remains – 48% of French corporates struggle to find the right startups to collaborate with, the only



of French corporates view startup collaborations as crucial to their strategy – highest in Europe



of French corporates identify finding the right startup as the most challenging phase of the Open Innovation process - the only country in Europe to rank this as the most difficult phase.

country in Europe to rank this as the most difficult phase of Open Innovation.

To translate ambitions into leadership, French firms must move beyond recognising the value of startups and secure the best partners in an increasingly competitive landscape.

Q: How important is startup collaboration for your organisation's strategy? Companies answering Very Important (Mission Critical) and Important, but not Mission Critical.

of French corporates judge startups as key partners in development of their Al strategy - Fourth highest in Europe

Highest level of corporates

to view startup collaborations as Mission Critical or Important to strategy

50%	53%	77%	81%	90%	91%	80%
Denmark	Sweden	Spain	UK	Belgium	France	Average

2. Highest number of corporates to identify the Finding the Right Startup phase to be the greatest challenge

25%	38%	29%	48%
Denmark	Spain	switzerland	
36%	42%	40%	FRANCE
NORWAY	germany	average	

Q: Which phase(s) of startup collaboration do you find the most challenging? Companies selecting Finding the Right startup.

Fourth highest number of corporates
to judge startups as key partners for executing their AI strategy

41%	47%	75%	71%
NORWAY	switerland	germany	
74%	81%	70%	FRANCE
italy	uk	average	

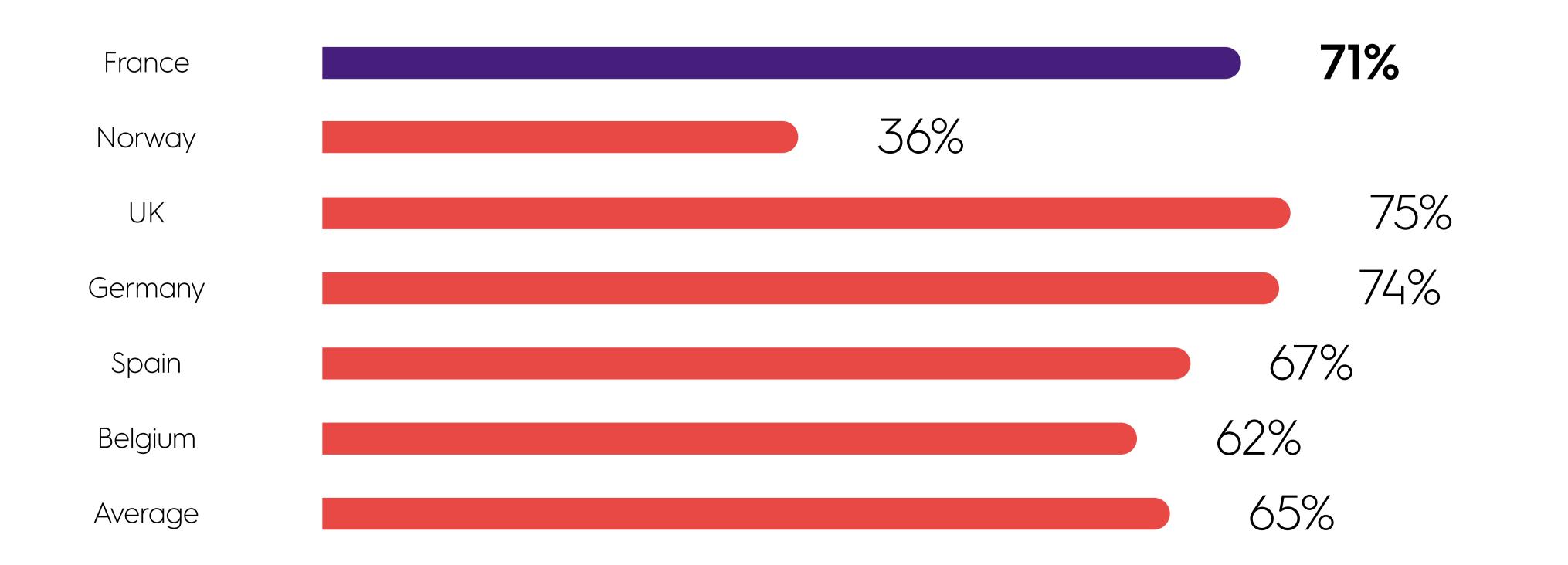
Q: What future role do you see for startups in the ongoing development and implementation of your organisation's AI strategy? Companies selecting As Key Partners in Driving Innovation and As Integral to your AI development Process.





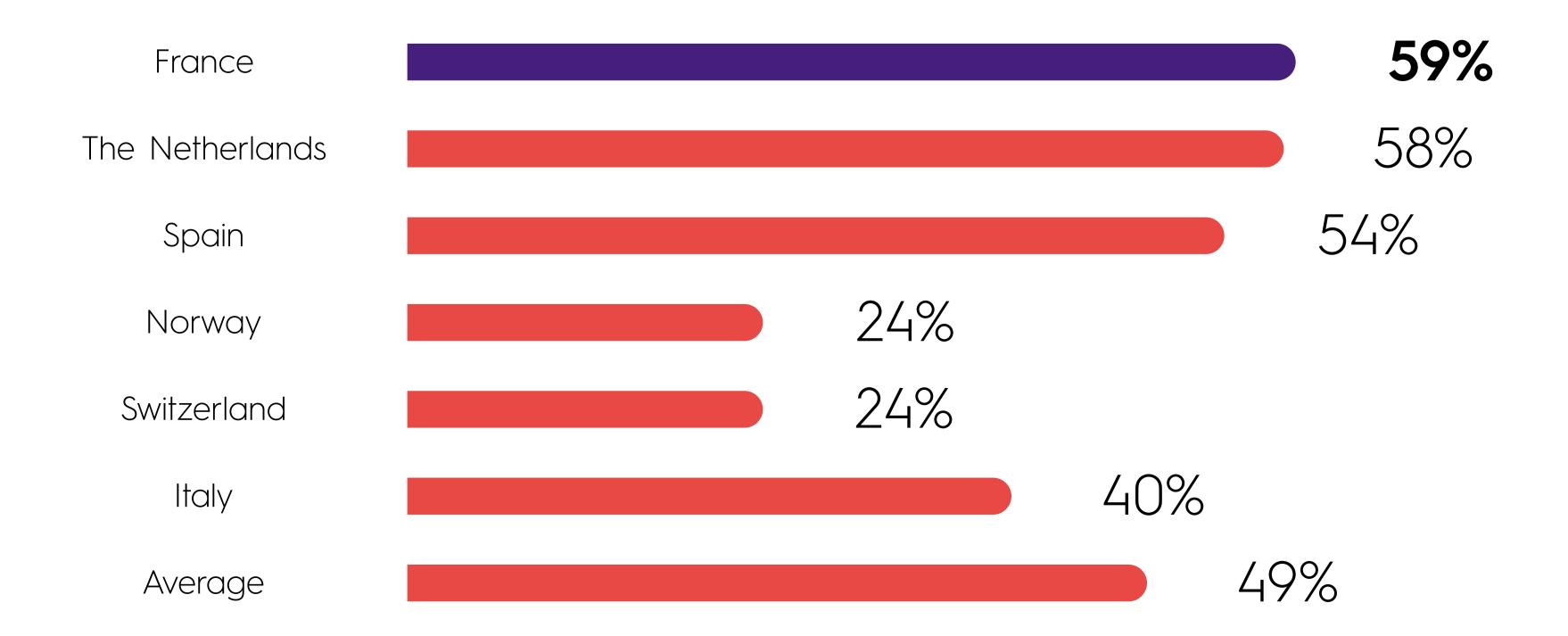
to achieve objectives in collaborations

Q: Overall, how often in your collaborations with startups did you achieve your objectives? Companies answering Always or Most of the Time.



who have conducted cyber security collaborations in the past 2 years

Q: In which area(s) have you collaborated with startups within the last 24 months? Companies identifying Cyber security.





This survey was conducted among 1,643 public and private sector organisations and startups in 12 European countries: United Kingdom, France, Italy, Spain, Germany, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, and Switzerland.

soprasteria Next