

AI literacy



From obligation to strategic advantage

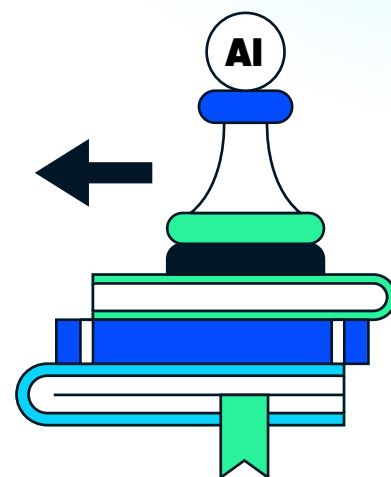
Artificial intelligence is moving fast, including in Flanders. But are Flemish companies and employees ready for AI to be used so extensively? **Investing in AI literacy is now crucial:** to take advantage of the opportunities AI offers, companies and their employees also need the right **competencies**. We distinguish **three perspectives on AI literacy**, and while each has its own important focus, they are most powerful when combined.

In numbers

AI is being adopted very quickly by companies in Flanders. **In 2025, 58.8% of Flemish companies used AI**, almost double compared with 2023.¹

Far-reaching, business-transforming adoption, however, often remains limited. Knowledge remains a bottleneck here: **33% of employees** report not knowing how to use AI effectively for productivity gains² and **more than 70% of organisations** report struggling with a lack of knowledge about AI technologies, the ethical and legal framework, and more practical application skills.³

AI literacy therefore remains a work in progress for Flemish companies and the active workforce.



AI adoption is moving fast, but being held back by a lack of knowledge

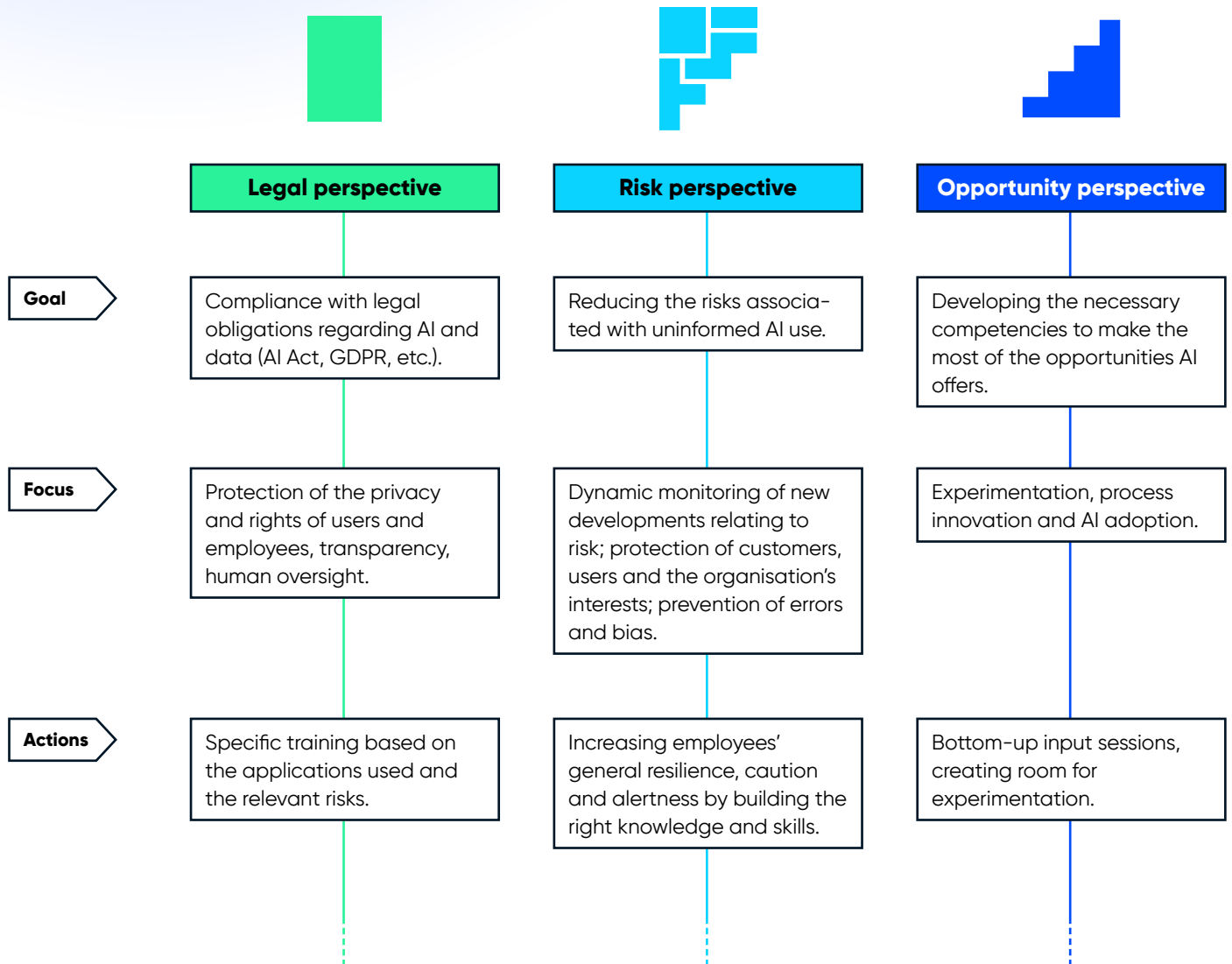
¹ Thomas Standaert et al., *AI-barometer. Adoptie en gebruik van artificiële intelligentie bij Vlaamse bedrijven. Situatie 2025* (Vlaamse overheid, Departement Werk, Economie, Wetenschap, Innovatie & Sociale Economie (WEWIS), 2026), <https://www.vlaanderen.be/publicaties/ai-barometer-adoptie-en-gebruik-van-artificiele-intelligentie-bij-vlaamse-bedrijven-situatie-2025>.

² Lieven De Marez et al., *Imec. digimeter.2025 Digitale trends in Vlaanderen* (Imec, 2026), <https://www.imec.be/sites/default/files/2026-03/imec.digimeter-2025-rapport.pdf>.

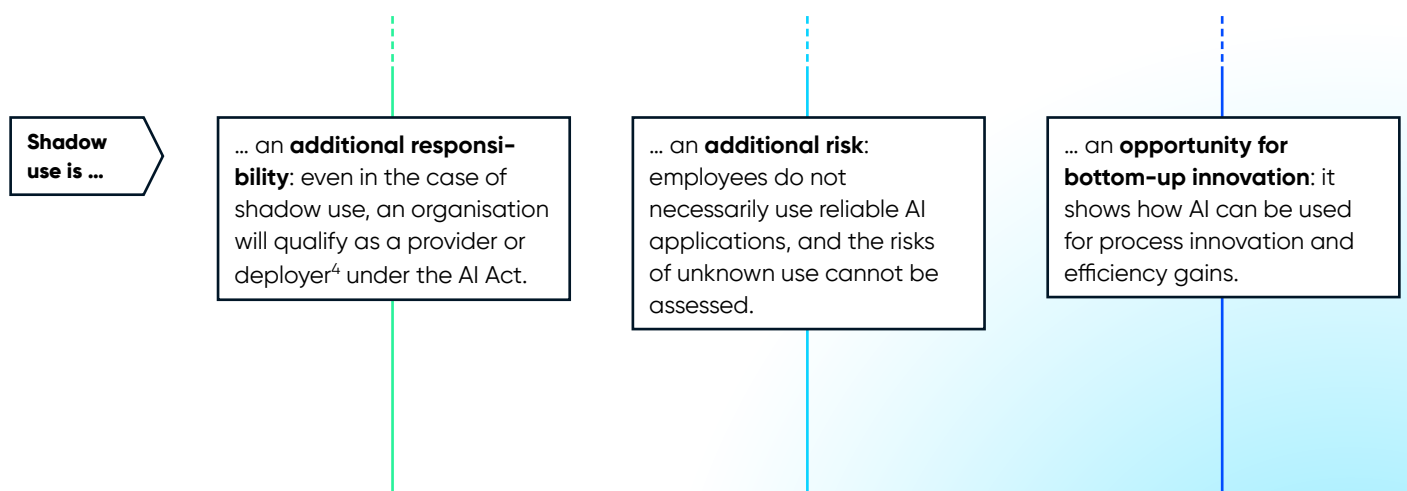
³ Standaert et al., *AI-barometer. Adoptie en gebruik van artificiële intelligentie bij Vlaamse bedrijven. Situatie 2025*.

The three perspectives

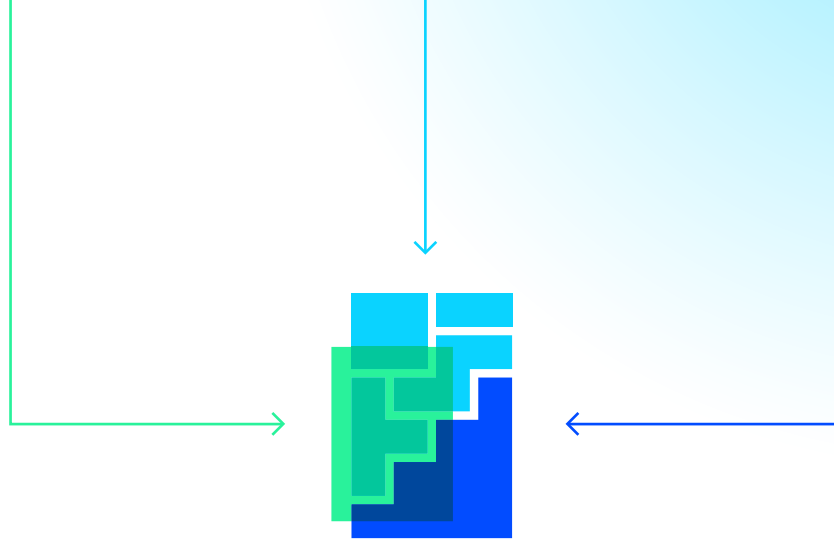
AI literacy consists of a range of competencies, but the emphasis you place when developing those competencies can produce different results. We distinguish **three perspectives** on how AI literacy is developed, each placing a slightly different emphasis in its approach.



To clarify the distinction between these three perspectives, let's briefly apply them to so-called shadow use. This is where employees use AI applications without the knowledge of management or the IT department.



“The provider is whoever develops (or has developed) the AI system and places it on the market or puts it into service under their own name or brand. The deployer is whoever uses such an AI system within their own organisation, under their own responsibility, without developing it themselves or offering it under their own name. In short: the provider builds and brings to market; the deployer puts it to use.



Three-in-one

The different perspectives **can overlap**: AI literacy actions will often come down to training staff. But the **focus differs**:

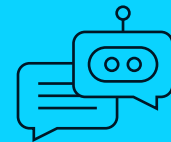
- The legal perspective: compliance with specific legal requirements through targeted training;
- The risk perspective: enabling employees to dynamically identify and minimise risks;
- The opportunity perspective: less focus on risks, more on opportunities in terms of efficiency and new use cases.

This has real consequences:

- Focusing solely on legal requirements and rules, in turn, leaves little capacity to respond to risks not covered by law.
- Focusing solely on risks will leave an organisation less able to experiment and explore its innovation potential.
- And those who see only opportunities may become blind to the dangers.

The perspectives are complementary: each captures an important emphasis, but none is strong enough on its own. An organisation that wants to be ready for AI needs **all three perspectives together**.

“ Despite the overlap, the perspectives have a different impact



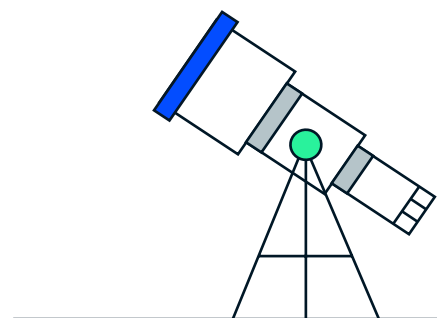
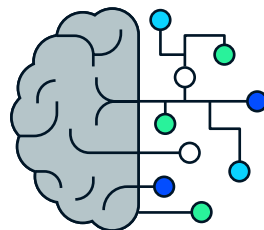
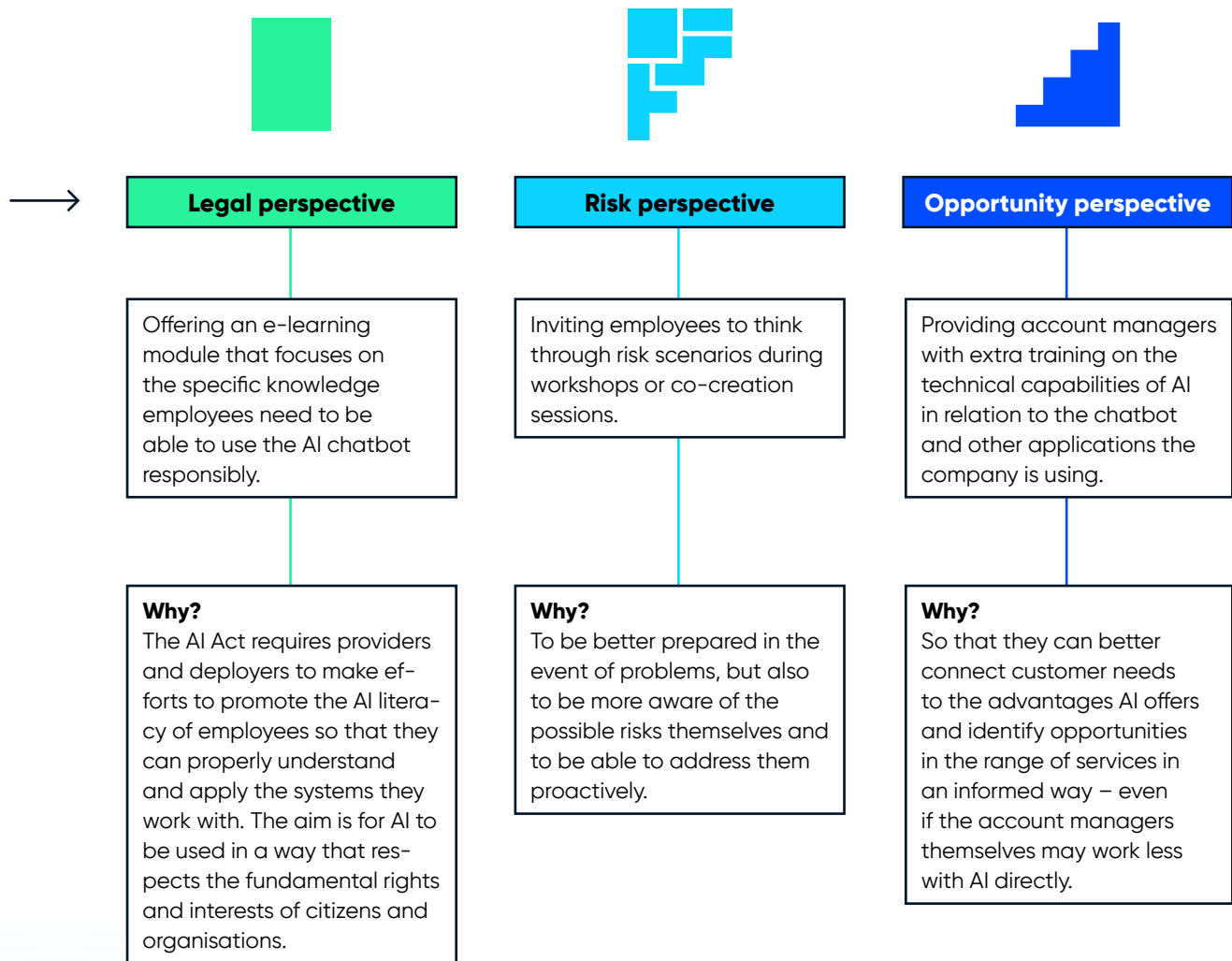
An example

How might a marketing company approach AI literacy from these three perspectives

Take, for example, the (fictional) agency Goesting Marketing. Let's say they develop an AI chatbot to support customer service. The chatbot can be used externally so that customers can ask their questions directly to the chatbot, but it can also be used internally by employees to find information. Goesting Marketing offers the chatbot to customers but also uses it themselves.

What could working on AI literacy from the different perspectives involve here?





The above examples show how the different perspectives can lead to different outcomes, and why combining perspectives offers the strongest guarantee that AI will be used successfully and responsibly.

This brAlnfood is based on the [AI Literacy Vision Paper](#) (only available in Dutch). Other publications and tools from the Knowledge Centre Data & Society on this topic can be found on the [topic page](#).