

Up2Date 2026: from AI insights to impact

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From practical AI applications on the shop floor to new skills and European regulations

Companies no longer view AI as a technology, but as a means of creating value. The 1,489 participants in the Up2Date 2026 webinar series therefore mainly chose practical sessions on using AI, such as ‘AI in HR’ and ‘AI on the shop floor’. Webinars on industrial AI, AI skills, AI readiness, and European AI legislation were also popular, as they too answered the most frequently asked questions: How do we get started? Which applications really work? And how do we remain compliant with the law?

Get started straight away

Download the Up2Date presentations here

Up2Date, the recent online knowledge event organised by Agoria and Sirris, comprised no fewer than 110 webinars. Together, they attracted 6,086 viewing sessions by 1,489 unique participants from more than 800 companies.

Using AI to solve specific problems

Artificial intelligence was a common thread throughout the webinar series. And that makes perfect sense today, as the technology is being used for workforce management, production processes, energy management, cybersecurity, compliance and much more. Departmental boundaries are increasingly giving way to cross-functional collaboration.

Participants found practical solutions in sessions such as ‘AI in HR’. HR professionals learnt how an HR agent can answer repetitive questions about leave, payslips or working from home based on approved sources, and how it can refer more personal or sensitive questions to the HR team. At the same time, attention was paid to the limitations: privacy, confidentiality, and the importance of human review.

‘AI on the shop floor’ brought AI to life on the production floor through digital work instructions, image analysis for quality control and support for process optimisation. Other sessions explored the subject in greater depth. Experts discussed, for example, multimodal AI, which combines camera images, sensor data, and information from business systems to detect anomalies more quickly, and predictive maintenance, which can prevent unexpected downtime.

No one needs to start big

Less obvious applications were also covered. In the session on forecasting with generative AI, the speakers compared open-source models with existing industrial forecasting tools, without the need for training or a team of data scientists. Another session showed how AI helps identify energy consumption and waste in production processes.

Speakers lowered the barrier to entry by emphasising that no one needs to start big. Most value is created through small, incremental steps.

Download the presentations from the digitalisation and AI sessions

Human expertise remains crucial

Although AI took centre stage, human expertise remains crucial. After all, success lies in combining technology and people. That is why companies are focusing strongly on existing and new skills. The sessions based on the Agoria AI Skill Shift studies showed that AI and digitalisation are changing the roles of operators, maintenance managers, and OT professionals. The same applies to ICT roles such as developers, data analysts, and cybersecurity experts. Companies were provided with skills matrices to map the skills within their own teams and develop targeted training.

Employees also have a place in the companies of tomorrow, which is why it is important for organisations to engage in dialogue with them rather than talk about them. Engaged and committed employees create added value, take less sick leave, stay longer, and contribute to innovation. The sector benchmarks on sickness absence and staff turnover (including early attrition and the retention of specific target groups) attracted many participants, as did the session on respectful conversations with employees on sick leave and the sessions on new regulations and employer accountability relating to mental well-being and retention.

Download the presentations from the HR sessions on skills, well-being, absence and retention

Companies seek clarity on regulations

Finally, participants sought guidance amid a growing stream of European regulations. They want to know what is changing, when, and what exactly they need to do. The shift in needs is striking. In the past, companies wanted to know whether they had to do something; today, they want to demonstrate that they are doing it properly.

The Cyber Resilience Act (CRA) topped the list, as the deadline of 11 December 2027 is rapidly approaching. For companies, the challenge lies not only in understanding the CRA, but also in translating its requirements into design, reporting, and follow-up processes in good time.

The sessions on vulnerability management and the new CRA standards were also well attended. In addition, companies received advice on NIS2: companies that start from their actual business risks can set priorities more effectively and avoid unnecessary complexity and costs.

The AI Act and the new Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR) were also explained. Machinery manufacturers also received specific information on the new Machinery Regulation. It revises many standards and adds new ones, including on the cybersecurity of machinery.

Download the presentations from the compliance sessions on the CRA, Machinery Regulation, NIS2 and PPWR

Conclusion

Up2Date 2026 brought together 1,489 participants from more than 800 companies. Businesses want to understand AI, but above all, put it into practice. From smart manufacturing and new skills to cybersecurity and European regulations: practical knowledge helps companies take targeted

steps and turn innovation into tangible value.

From insight to impact

Up2Date brought together expert knowledge, real-world examples and practical tools. How you turn these insights into action depends on your company's needs. What matters is that you don't have to figure everything out on your own.

Create AI impact with Sirris

Want to discover where AI can create value for your business? Sirris helps you identify opportunities, test technologies and develop practical applications. Together, we turn insights into innovation.

Discover how Sirris can support you

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