# **Evolving Data Dynamics:** A 2024 Report on Trends, Challenges, and Investment

The big issues in 2024 for data leaders are here: Collaboration with stakeholders, driving the right priorities, spending, AI, measuring success, earning trust across the organization, and keeping data secure.

dbt Labs, a leader in accelerating data development, wanted to understand how data professionals and teams are tackling issues, creating insights, shipping products, and growing their organization.

dbt surveyed 456 data analysts and leaders about the top opportunities, technologies, and challenges facing their organizations.

The margin of error for this study is +/- 5.6% at the 95% confidence level



**North America** 

In a trend that holds up across regions, analytics engineers can expect to earn considerably more than their data analyst counterparts—and usually more than data engineers as well.

In North America, 78% of all analytics engineers earned over \$100k/year, compared to a slightly lower 61% of all data analysts and 66% of all data engineers earning over \$100K/year. However, data engineers were the most likely practitioners (6% of data engineers) to earn over \$200K/year.

# Europe

What is your annual salary (in USD)?



In Europe, meanwhile, 37% of analytics engineers earned over \$100k/year, compared with 29% of data analysts and 31% of data engineers.



In the rest of the world (South America, Africa, Asia and Oceania), 21% of analytics engineers earned over \$100k+/year, while no data analysts or data engineers reported doing so.

\*We recognize "rest of world" is not a great term; we've grouped it this way because of a limited sample size of respondents from these regions.

# The day-to-day of a data practitioner

Data practitioners carry a wide range of responsibilities, and the variety of those tasks expanded from last year. The top ways data practitioners spend their time:





Building reports and dashboards

#### Which of the following best describes how you spend most of your time?



# **Challenges for data teams**

We asked respondents to tell us the top three challenges they faced when preparing data for analysis. Here's what we learned:

#### What do you find most challenging while preparing data for analysis? Select up to three.



### Many data team members want clearer goals

Responses were polarized on whether goals are clearly defined for their data teams. About one-third of data team members (33%) strongly or somewhat disagree that their organization sets clear enough goals for them. Worryingly, this number holds steady across individual contributors and data team managers. Only 14% of data professionals "strongly agree" that their organization sets clear goals for their team.



#### Which of the following best describes how you spend most of your time?

#### The economy has affected budgets for many data teams

Although "no change" was still the most prevalent single answer, 41% of data professionals say that recent changes to the macroeconomic environment have negatively affected the size of their data team's budget.



## Data teams seek to build more trust

Asked to evaluate how important some potential priorities were to their own organizations, an emphasis on increasing data trust emerged as the #1 focus area.

### Please rate the importance of the following objectives for your organization in 2024: [increase trust in data and data teams] 60%



Who is moving to a decentralized

## Data mesh draws serious interest at the enterprise

While the concept of data mesh burst onto the industry's radar only recently, decentralized architectures have been in vogue for some time. Today, these architectures draw consideration across companies of various sizes, but the largest enterprises are far more likely to be using them.

Over 60% of data teams from large companies (5,001+ employees) are currently using or considering a decentralized data architecture such as data mesh.



# Al

There are signals of a growing trend in AI adoption among data practitioners, with an increasing number managing data for AI model training and incorporating generative AI into their daily workflows.

A third of respondents currently use generative AI in some form, and there's a strong expectation of future benefits it might help create—including for self-serve data exploration.

## Teams are starting to manage data for AI training

While a large gulf remains, the majority of data teams currently manage data for AI model training or expect to in the next 12 months.





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