

WILLIAM FRY

William Fry
Technology Report
2026: A new era of
vast transformation



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Executive summary



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This is the third edition of the William Fry Technology Report following our earlier reports in 2016 and 2021. The past decade has been defined by relentless technological disruption and innovation, and the next several years are poised to accelerate that pace. It comes at a time when Ireland holds an unusually strong position globally in terms of disruptive technologies: hosting the European headquarters of 16 of the top 20 global technology companies and ranking fourth globally for AI adoption and usage according to the Microsoft AI Diffusion Report 2025. Separate research from Microsoft and Trinity College Dublin in 2026 underlines this pivotal time of opportunity for Ireland and suggests that AI alone could contribute more than €250 billion to Irish GDP over the next decade.

Our survey, conducted by IPSOS B&A in March 2026, informs this most recent William Fry Technology Report and reveals three core themes shaping how organisations are responding to this current era of vast transformation:

- The regulatory framework has advanced faster than most Irish-based organisations expected, with legal and regulatory considerations now sitting alongside technology transformation and procurement when it comes to deciding on investments in new technologies. Organisations welcome a uniformity of approach across the EU and are awaiting further regulatory guidance to provide the level of certainty needed, rather than viewing regulation as a barrier to innovation.
- The issue of return on investment has moved sharply into focus, with most large organisations still considering how to extract real value from the new technologies (such as AI solutions) they are testing.
- Ireland remains a jurisdiction of choice for data and technology investment, offering long-established stability and a pro-business environment (amongst other things).

Current technology use across Irish-based organisations spans a broad range, from machine learning and generative AI to natural language processing, computer vision, neural networks,

robotics, AI agents and distributed ledger technologies such as blockchain, all integrated with cloud, cybersecurity and data infrastructure.

Our report identifies a notable adoption gap between large, well-resourced Irish-based organisations that have built the legal, contractual and operational foundations to deploy AI and disruptive technologies at scale versus medium sized Irish-based organisations that have yet to begin their journey. How to address and close that gap is arguably the single most important strategic question facing medium sized Irish organisations over the next 5 years. It also intersects with a immediate concern that runs through this year's findings: organisations are looking for Ireland to have greater energy security and the data infrastructure that will underpin the obvious increased demands for compute over the coming decade.

Organisations face critical decisions in this new era of technology disruption and innovation, such as: establishing what business operations, products and services can be transformed; identifying and testing appropriate technologies; addressing the shortage of key skills; and managing concerns around cybersecurity and compliance with law and regulation.

This year's William Fry Technology Report highlights how Irish-based organisations are adapting to this new era.

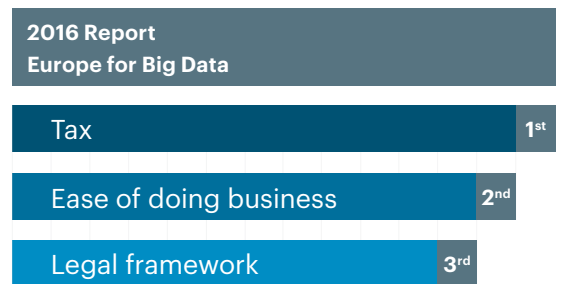
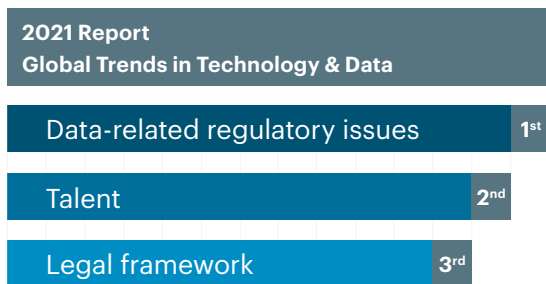
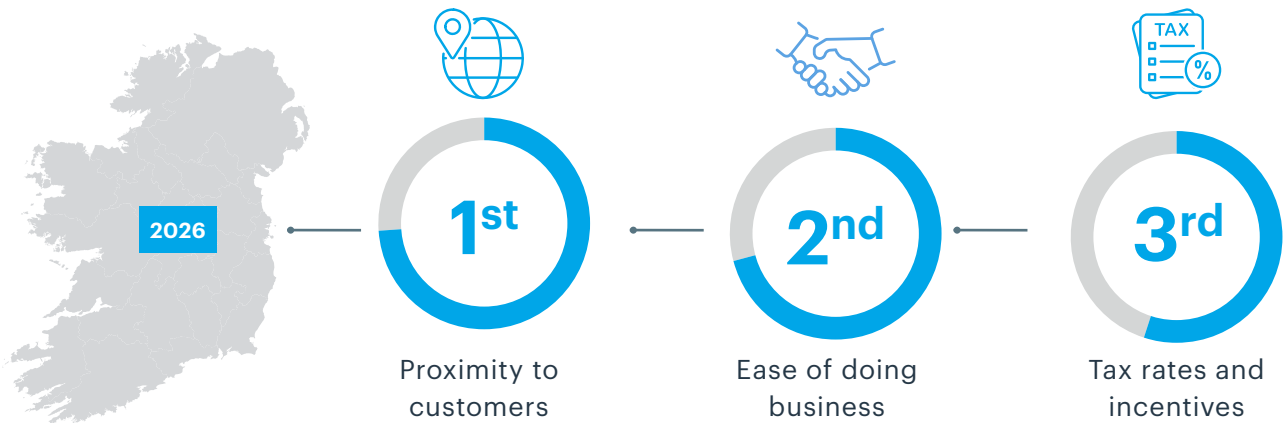
Key findings

Business location

Ireland is the jurisdiction of choice in Europe when choosing a location for AI and technology investment.

57%
rate Ireland as highly suitable, outperforming the UK and other major EU peers.

Shift in location drivers across our three technology reports - organisations now prioritise operational simplicity and market access:



Cybersecurity

Confidence in cyber readiness is low:

Only 17%

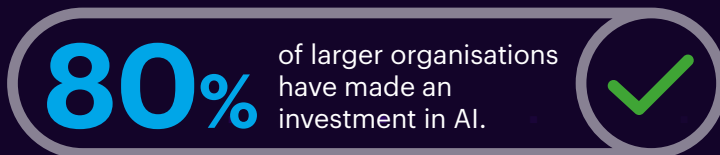
of organisations feel very or extremely confident that their cybersecurity keeps pace with AI-driven threats.



There is a clear capability gap between emerging AI risks and organisational cyber preparedness.

AI adoption

AI adoption is still at an early stage for most organisations:



69%



of larger organisations are concerned about getting a measurable return on the AI solutions they have already adopted.

Regulation

EU-wide rules are increasingly viewed as a source of certainty and consistency, rather than a barrier to innovation:



55%

report being unaware of EU regulation in data and technology, indicating that awareness remains the binding constraint for businesses who are not large organisations.



63% of organisations and 81% of larger organisations place legal and regulatory requirements at the top of their list of considerations when adopting new technology.

Nuclear energy

Energy demands have reignited the nuclear debate among business leaders:

50%



express support for nuclear energy if it facilitates AI and quantum infrastructure or lowers business electricity costs.



Organisations are increasingly pragmatic on energy, but social licence remains fragile.