

CIPD

Report
May 2026

HR Practices

in Ireland 2026

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Report

HR Practices in Ireland 2026

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Introduction and key findings

The *HR Practices in Ireland* report, conducted in conjunction with the Kemmy Business School, University of Limerick, provides annual benchmarking data and insights into trends and challenges in the people profession in Ireland and gives recommendations on how practitioners can navigate the challenges they face.

The 2026 report addresses key priorities and explores how organisations and the people profession are responding to a demanding operating environment. Ongoing AI disruption, persistent skills shortages, evolving hybrid working norms, and growing expectations around employee wellbeing and inclusion in a volatile macro environment demonstrate how HR's strategic contribution is more critical than ever before.

Key findings

- **HR is increasingly recognised as a strategic partner and a cultural leader**, with 87% of respondents agreeing that HR contributes to wider strategy, and 80% reporting an improved perception of HR within organisations. This is an important shift, positioning HR to influence and support wider organisational delivery and ways of working,
- **Recognition of HR's role in evidence-based decision-making rose sharply**, from 69% in 2025 to 84% in 2026. This suggests that the profession is increasingly turning to data to inform meaningful decisions. For example, data can be used to model Target Operating Model scenarios, inform risk registers, and guide governance score cards.
- **AI and digital transformation are now key organisational change drivers.** In 2025, organisations ranked automation, technology and AI second on their list of key change drivers. In 2026, automation, technology and AI have risen to the top of that list for 65% of respondents. Digital transformation presents the opportunity to optimise productivity and profitability, both key drivers of sustainable performance.
- **Digital capability is a core challenge.** HR capability is not keeping pace with AI development. Only 19% of respondents believe that leadership is fully equipped to lead in an AI-enabled environment, while 31% report that HR lacks capability to optimise AI technologies. Some 67% of HR professionals identified AI skills for HR as their **top professional development priority**. Capability analysis is critical to identify gaps and ensure that digital resources and skills are aligned with organisational priorities.
- **Leadership continues to be identified as the top capability gap**, with 61% identifying insufficient line manager capability and capacity as the top constraint on HR's impact. This highlights a need for investment in line manager capability development. Teams are now mainly blended across distributed locations and, in some cases, are made up of both tech platforms and humans. Strategies for developing team leader capability should take account of these changing ways of working.

- **Skills shortages remain severe and persistent**, with 91% of organisations continuing to experience skills shortages. Learning models need to be accessible to enable anytime, anywhere learning. Skills-based, lived experiences of real organisational scenarios are an optimal way to deliver impactful learning outcomes.
- **The talent landscape continues to be shaped by a combination of digital skill gaps, leadership deficits, and ongoing cost-of-living pressures**, affecting recruitment and retention. 73% agree that remote and flexible working improves productivity and attracts talent. As with any operating model, flexible working needs to work for all stakeholders: employees, employers, customers, and investment partners. A comprehensive approach should be adopted to ensure that all perspectives are considered and that flexible working models are sufficiently agile to adapt to changing needs.
- 82% of organisations report that they are **embedding financial wellbeing practices** for employees (with 51% noting an increase in uptake). This indicates a growing recognition among employers that supporting financial resilience is becoming a critical component of workforce attraction, retention, and sustainability in the current cost-of-living crisis. Sign-posting public support facilities and resources ensures that employees are informed and encourages personal ownership of financial wellbeing, while also fulfilling the employer’s duty of care.
- **61% of organisations now report having a strategy on sustainable people practices**, up from just 18% in 2025. This is an important upward trend, since supporting sustainable organisational success is the core purpose for all HR functions.

2

Impact of the people profession

The 2026 findings highlight HR’s continuing evolution as both a cultural leader and a strategic partner, while also pointing to areas where its impact can be further strengthened.

HR’s role in adding value

The people profession continues to deliver strong value across core people priorities, with HR teams agreeing they add value in a range of ways (Figure 1).



| | | |
|--|---|-----|
|  | Leads the wellbeing agenda | 88% |
|  | Contributes to strategic direction | 87% |
|  | Contributes to job design and organisational development | 86% |
|  | Provides evidence-based insights for decision-making | 84% |
|  | Leads change effectively | 84% |
|  | Design and management of total rewards, compensation and benefits | 82% |
|  | Integrates people practices into the sustainability agenda | 74% |
|  | Champions a people-centred approach to technology and AI | 71% |

Role in evidence-based decision-making

It is vital for the profession to demonstrate its value through clear, empirical evidence of impact on the organisation. Positively, in this year's survey, 84% of respondents agreed HR provides evidence-based insights for decision-making, a significant improvement from 2025 (69%), suggesting the profession is becoming more meaningfully guided by data. While this remains a core contribution aligned with the [Profession Map](#), only 34% strongly agree, highlighting ongoing opportunity to strengthen impact in this area.

Reputation of HR in organisations






Encouragingly, HR's standing within organisations has improved, with 80% of respondents reporting a stronger perception of HR within organisations, with reputation gains most pronounced in larger organisations and in sectors undergoing rapid digital transformation.

Top constraints on HR

In previous *HR Practices in Ireland* surveys, we have seen three factors consistently limiting HR's ability to deliver value: line manager capability, budget constraints and inadequate systems and technology.

1. Since reporting began in 2020, line managers not having sufficient time for people management has consistently been at the top of the list of HR constraints. This is the single biggest barrier identified in 2026, with the challenge growing as 61% of respondents are now citing it, a jump of 10% from 2025.
2. Budget constraints were cited by 57% of respondents and growing year on year, which could be due to a rise in the cost of living and increasing business costs in Ireland.
3. Some 37% of respondents flagged inadequate systems and technology as restricting their ability to operate effectively.

Figure 2: HR's top constraints

| | | |
|---|---|------------|
|  | Capacity and capability of line managers | 61% |
|  | Budgetary constraints | 57% |
|  | Inadequate systems/technology | 37% |
|  | Not enough people on the HR team | 34% |
|  | Level of capability to optimise technologies such as AI | 31% |

Areas to strengthen impact

Capability gaps remain, most notably in technology, leadership and analytics, with 61% citing the capacity and capability of line managers a constraint, 37% citing inadequate systems/technology, and 31% reporting a lack of capability to optimise technologies such as AI (Figure 2). Perceptions of how HR champions a people-centred approach to technology have fluctuated over previous years: 77% in 2023, 53% in 2024, 63% in 2025 and rising to 71% this year (Figure 1). Despite this improvement, gaps in technology leadership and analytics remain the weakest areas for HR (Figure 2).

Recommendations

The biggest blockers to HR impact are manager capacity, uneven technology and AI capability, and weak people data, so organisations need a clearer operating model and tighter execution:

- **Target Operating Model (TOM):** Define the HR TOM needed to deliver the organisation's strategy, with clear service ownership, capacity planning and a people risk register (with RAG status) covering line manager capability, data quality, and technology/AI readiness.
- **Productivity and performance management:** Reset expectations and measures for performance in hybrid environments, strengthening manager capability, role clarity and objective-setting; track productivity outcomes consistently.
- **AI and digital:** Invest in people analytics, data literacy and responsible AI capability within people function and leadership teams so HR can lead on people-centred AI governance rather than defaulting to IT/finance.
- **Strategic workforce planning (SWP):** Move from reactive delivery to capability-building by using skills taxonomies, skills-gap analysis and succession plans aligned to organisational goals, prioritising leadership and digital skills shortages highlighted in the survey.

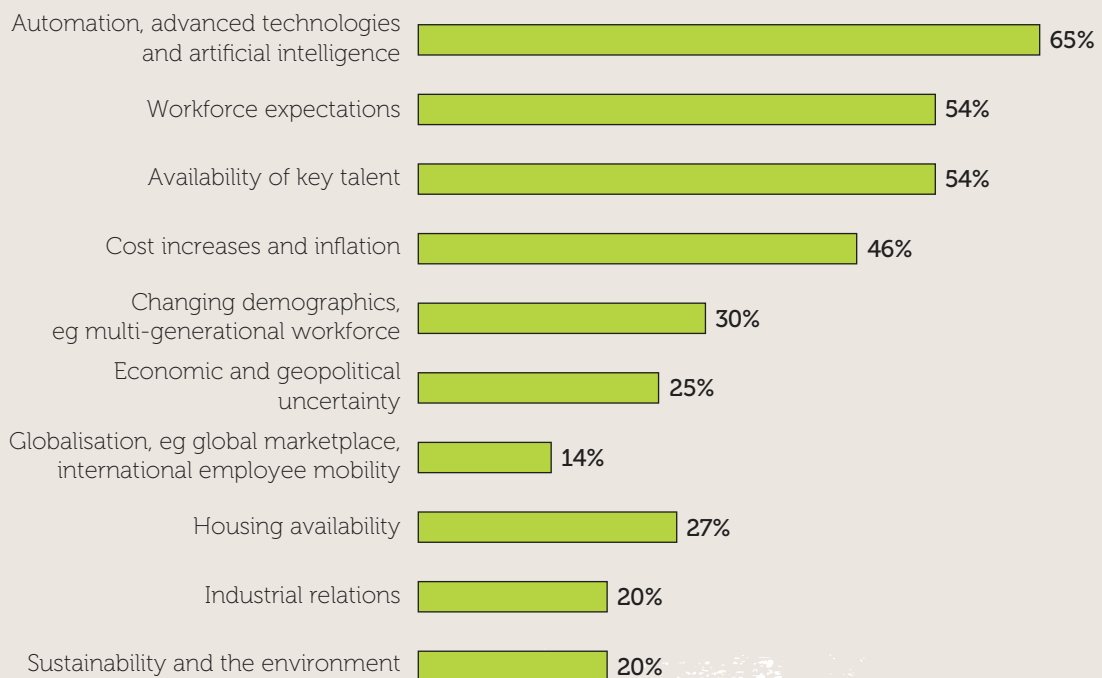
- **Culture and engagement:** Relieve the single biggest constraint, which is line managers' limited time for people management. Simplify processes and spans of control, clarify responsibilities and accountabilities, and enable managers with tools, coaching and minimum standards for core people practices.
- **Legislative landscape:** Strengthen HR data foundations (definitions, audit trails, and quality controls) to support compliance and reporting requirements, in line with EU AI legislation, to improve evidence-based decision-making.

3

External drivers and top priorities for HR and organisations

Organisations are navigating a complex external environment. For the third consecutive year, automation, technology and AI tops the list of external change drivers (65%), but talent availability (54%) and workforce expectations (54%) remain persistent pressures (Figure 3). Financial pressures, changing demographics and housing remain relevant, but given the ongoing nature of these challenges, they are not seen as the immediate organisational disruptors they have been previously.

Figure 3: What are the key external drivers for change for your organisation over the next two years?



How people strategy delivers organisations' goals

In a notable shift from 2025, HR priorities are now more closely aligned with what organisations identify as their most pressing concerns.

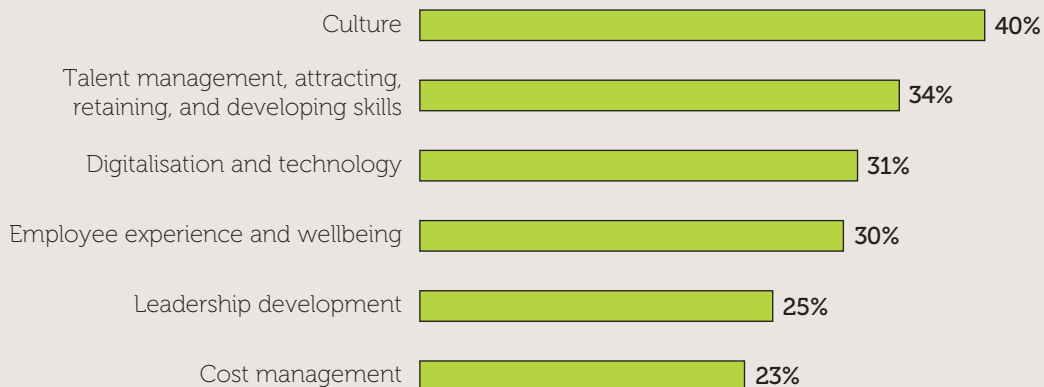
HR's top three priorities for 2026 are:

- culture (40%);
- talent management and skills development (34%); and
- digital transformation and AI (31%).

These priorities (Figure 4) reflect the operational and strategic pressures of organisations. The closing gap between HR and organisational priorities is an encouraging sign of the profession's growing strategic relevance.

Interestingly, leadership skills are cited as a capability gap and a constraint on HR to deliver, yet they are not given as a top priority.

Figure 4: What are the top three priorities for HR in supporting the organisational strategy over the next two years?



Recommendations

With HR and organisational priorities now closer, the opportunity is to hardwire alignment into goals, governance and organisation design decisions so culture, skills and digital investment deliver measurable outcomes.

- **People strategy aligned to business strategy:** Frame the people plan around the organisation's strategic outcomes (growth, cost, risk, customer, innovation) and show the contribution of culture, skills and technology in measurable terms.
- **Culture and engagement:** Treat culture as an operating requirement, set clear behavioural expectations, measure engagement and manager effectiveness, and use the data to drive targeted interventions rather than broad campaigns.
- **Performance and productivity:** Strengthen performance management for hybrid work by improving goal-setting, feedback cadence and accountability; support managers with practical tools and time to do people management well.

- **AI and digital:** Establish cross-functional governance for responsible AI, with HR leading on policy, skills, job impacts and communication. Prioritise clear, consistent workforce data as the foundation.
- **Strategic workforce planning and capability:** Shift from vacancy-filling to capability-building through skills taxonomies, workforce forecasting and internal talent pipelines, particularly for leadership and digital skills.
- **Organisational design and development:** Use organisation design to improve agility and efficiency, simplify layers, redesign work around value streams, and deliberately plan where automation removes transactional work and where people move up the value chain.

4

Digital transformation and AI readiness

Findings on top priorities, key external drivers and constraints all feature automation and AI as top concerns.

For the third year in a row, automation, technology and AI have been leading external drivers of change (Figure 3). There is a clear convergence around automation and AI as a critical issue, with its importance rising for both organisations and HR. Organisations have moved from seeing it as a secondary concern in 2025 to their dominant driver of organisational change in 2026, while HR has also shifted it upwards in its ranking as a priority, though less sharply.

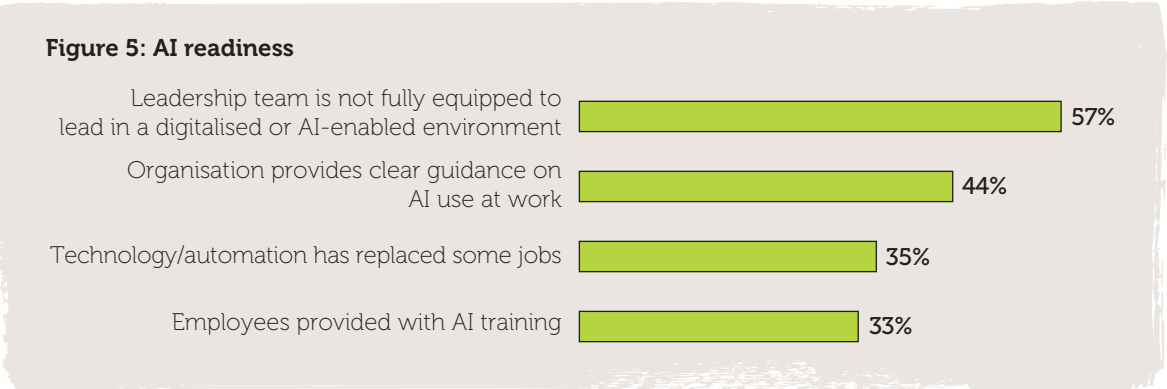
This widening emphasis is not matched by capability and AI readiness. A significant proportion of HR respondents report limitations in their ability to optimise technologies such as AI, creating a gap between strategic importance and delivery, with fewer than 6% of organisations surveyed having fully embedded AI into all HR activity and 31% of respondents stating it as a constraint to deliver value (Figure 2).

Across organisations more broadly, AI use is most developed in customer-facing (19%), administrative and corporate service functions (16%). Uptake is weakest in people-centred or highly regulated environments, suggesting a focus on lower-risk, productivity gains before moving into more complex, trust-sensitive use cases.

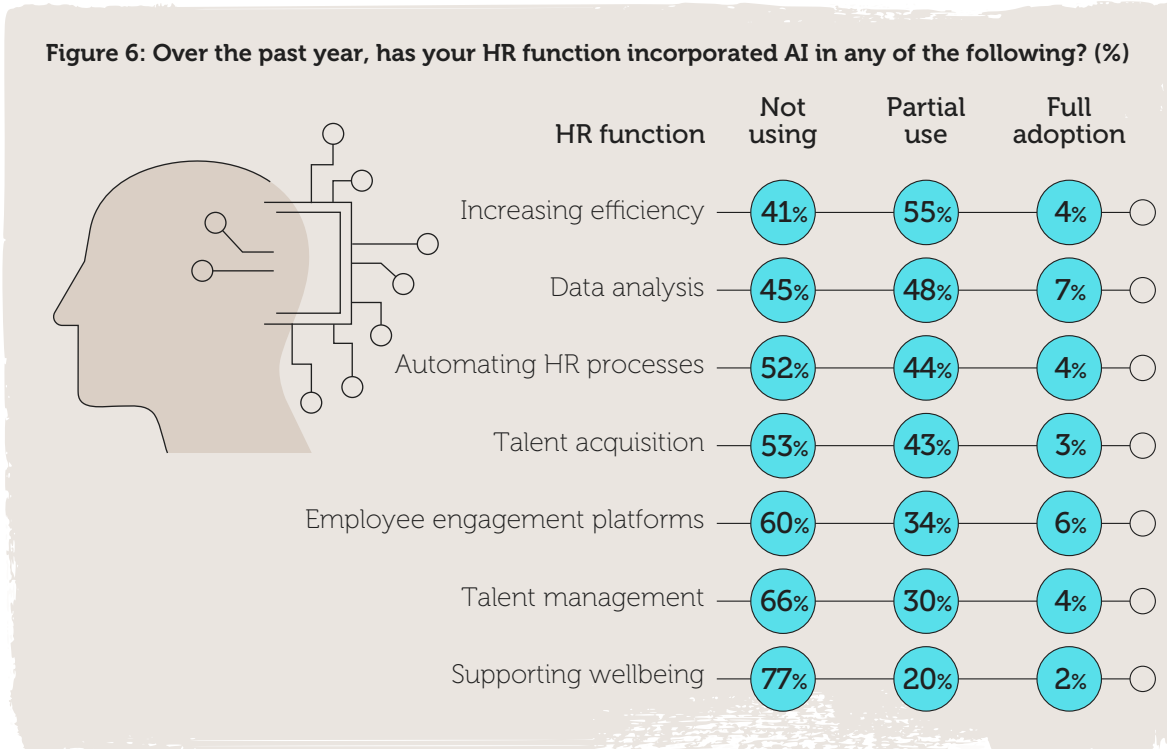
Given the speed at which AI is evolving, the data captured in this report should be viewed as a snapshot in time, reinforcing the need for the people profession and HR leaders to prioritise the skills and capabilities required to build a highly adaptable workforce that can respond strategically to ongoing technological change. Agility and resilience are key to successfully adopting AI.

AI readiness

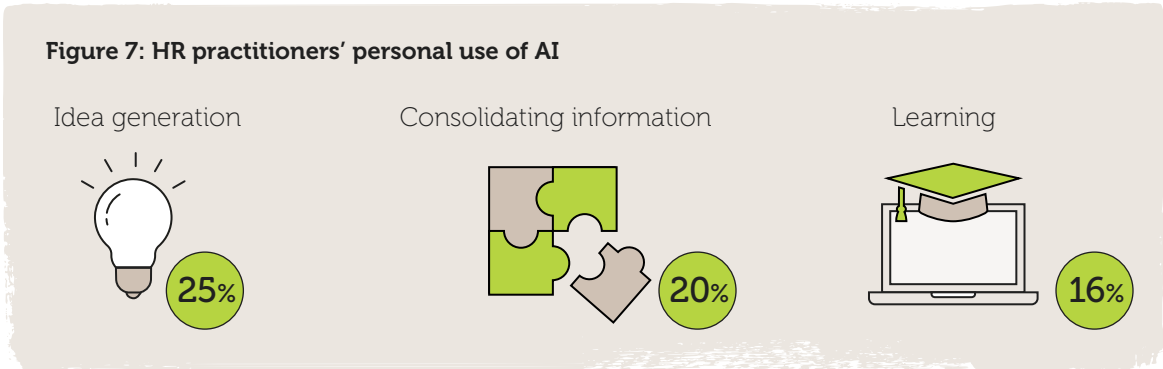
Only 44% of organisations have clear guidance on AI use at work, 33% have provided employees with AI training and, critically, only 19% report that their leadership team is fully equipped to lead in a digitalised or AI-enabled environment, with 57% stating this is not currently the case (Figure 5). Interestingly, 35% of respondents indicated that technology/automation has replaced some jobs, and increasing from 21% in 2025 and making this a trend to monitor.



Within HR, AI adoption is still in its infancy. Full adoption is minimal (Figure 6): 7% in data analysis, 6% in engagement platforms, and the strongest partial adoption is in increasing efficiency (55%), use in data analysis (48%) and automated HR processes (44%), and in talent acquisition (43%). Areas like wellbeing (77%) and making predictions (72%) remain largely unsupported by AI. This slow adoption is likely due to capability gaps and the sensitive or complex HR nature of these functions, with data protection concerns.



Interestingly, HR professionals themselves are beginning to use AI, mainly for idea generation (25%), consolidating information (20%) and learning (16%) (Figure 7).



Notably, 67% of HR professionals identified AI for HR as their top professional development priority, up 8% from 2025.

Recommendations

AI is moving faster than HR readiness, and without governance, capability and clean data, organisations increase compliance risk and miss productivity value.

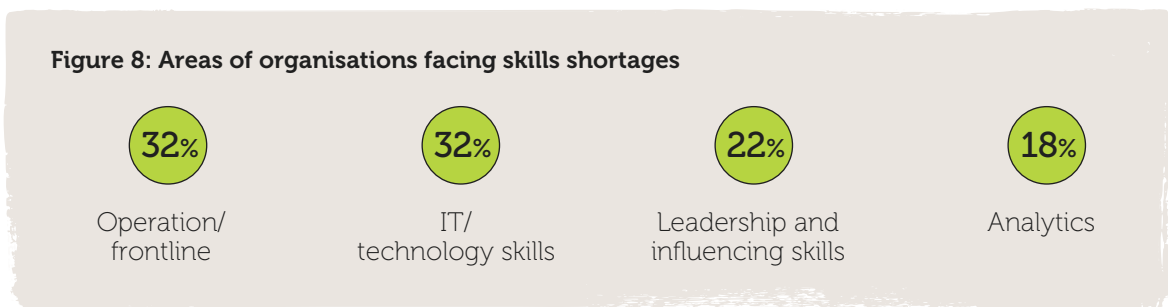
- **Business case:** Create a business case to demonstrate how AI can support the organisation. Incorporate employee feedback and ensure that the business case adopts a holistic view, looking beyond just how AI can support efficiency and towards how AI can support sustainable workforce and business strategy.
- **Roadmap and adoption:** Create a staged AI readiness roadmap for HR; start with efficiency and data analysis use cases, then scale into more sensitive areas only when governance, data and capability are in place.
- **Strategic workforce planning and organisation design:** Assess which roles and tasks are likely to be automated or augmented, and develop transition plans (job redesign, redeployment, reskilling) to manage the shift towards higher-value work.
- **TOM and data foundations:** Treat data quality as a core operating requirement: standardise workforce data definitions and controls so HR can produce clear, trusted insights for decision-making, compliance and AI-enabled processes.
- **Capability for the future:** Prioritise AI literacy for all employees and role-based training for HR, people managers and leaders, closing the gap between the strategic importance of AI and the capability to implement it.
- **Legislative landscape and responsible AI:** Put in place a clear, accessible AI at work policy and governance model in line with EU AI legislation and guidance. Ensure that the policy covers appropriate use, accountability, data protection, bias controls, and oversight for high-risk use cases in people processes.

5

Talent management, skills and workforce turnover

Skills shortages remain a persistent and significant challenge, with 91% of organisations experiencing some form of shortage, a figure that has not dropped below 80% since 2021. The talent landscape continues to be shaped by a combination of digital skill gaps, leadership deficits, and ongoing cost-of-living pressures affecting recruitment and retention.

The areas most acutely affected are operations and frontline roles (32%, down 5% from 2025), IT and technology skills (32%, down 2% from 2025), and leadership and influencing skills (22%, staying the same as 2025) (Figure 8).



Leadership being identified as a current shortage and as the **top future capability gap** is particularly significant, demonstrating that organisations recognise they are not adequately developing the leaders they will need. Meeting future organisational requirements in this space is a concern, with this risk area unchanged since 2025.

L&D approaches are modernising rapidly

This year's survey findings showed a shift in L&D approaches since 2025.

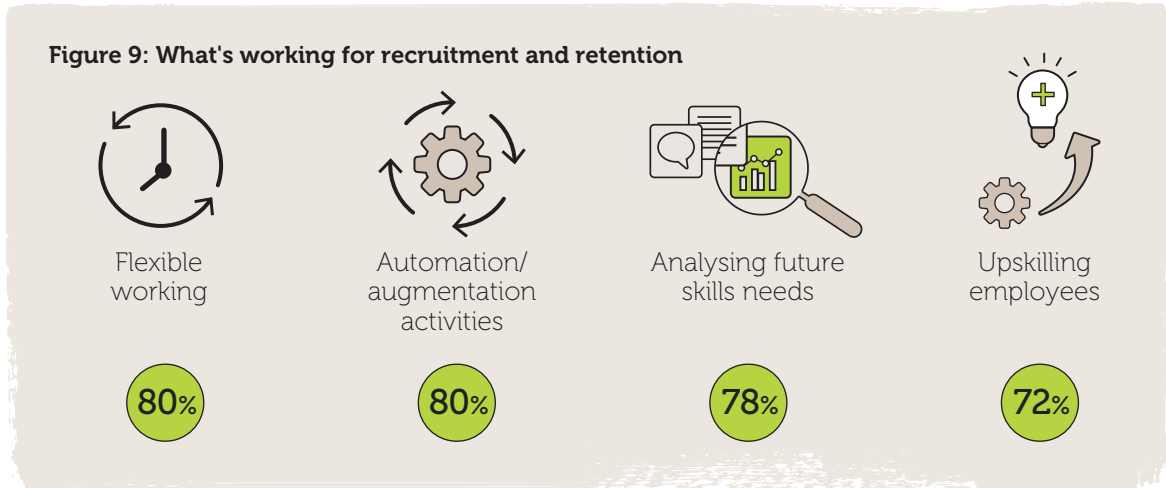
Short, focused delivery methods (34–38%) and self-directed learning (29–33%) are the leading formats. AI-supported L&D is in early stages but growing, with 11–14% of organisations using it. The survey showed 66% of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing that remote and flexible working limits informal learning, with 34% disagreeing or strongly disagreeing.

Recruitment and retention

Skills shortages and changing macro environments continue to put recruitment practices, workforce planning and employee turnover in the spotlight, with 80% reporting it is difficult to retain talent.

The housing crisis continues to impact recruitment negatively, with 73% reporting increased difficulties, up from 67% in 2025. Cost pressures are also pronounced, with 75% citing the cost of living as a challenge, while 63% highlight rising employment costs linked to measures such as auto enrolment, statutory sick pay and pay transparency.

In response to skills shortages in the domestic labour market, 68% of organisations report recruiting from a wider geographical area. However, this brings its own challenge, with nearly half (47%) citing ongoing difficulties related to work permits and visas. Alongside these changes, 80% of organisations report recruiting a more diverse workforce, unchanged from 2025.



Flexible working remains the most impactful talent strategy, cited by 80% of respondents as a high-impact approach, followed by analysing current and future skills needs (78%) and upskilling employees (72%) (Figure 9). These findings reinforce the importance of treating flexible working not just as an employee benefit, but as a strategic workforce tool.

Hybrid working is here to stay

We are seeing the debate around hybrid working shifting from “should we?” to “how do we manage it well?” Most organisations have now settled into structured models, though challenges around culture, informal learning and manager capability persist.

Fully remote work remains limited, while hybrid working continues to be most strongly associated with higher productivity outcomes, with **74% agreeing that remote and flexible work improves productivity**; however, 48% of line managers find it more challenging to manage productivity (Figure 10). Our findings reveal organisations are experimenting with using onsite time more intentionally for collaboration, coaching and culture-building, while maintaining the productivity gains of remote work.

Some 26% of organisations have increased (or will increase) mandated days onsite, with 71% reporting stability. This is consistent with 2025 data, suggesting return-to-office pressure remains steady rather than escalating in Ireland, unlike trends seen in the UK and US.

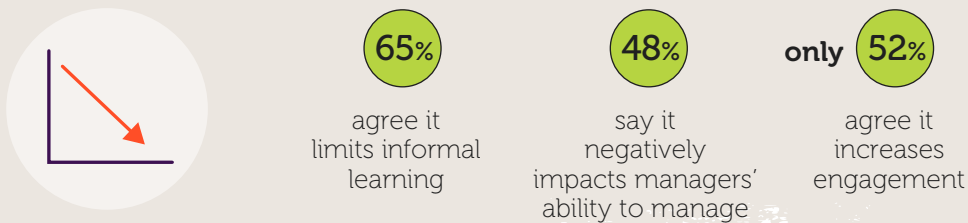
Sixty-six per cent of organisations report that hybrid working delivers the highest productivity, yet only 37% have updated their employment contracts to reflect these arrangements. Attendance expectations are managed inconsistently (43% address non-attendance through disciplinary processes, while 39% do not, and 18% are unsure). Additionally, 37% of respondents still do not know what measurable impact hybrid working has had on their productivity outcomes.

Figure 10: Perceived strengths and weaknesses of hybrid working model

What hybrid working does well



Where it falls short

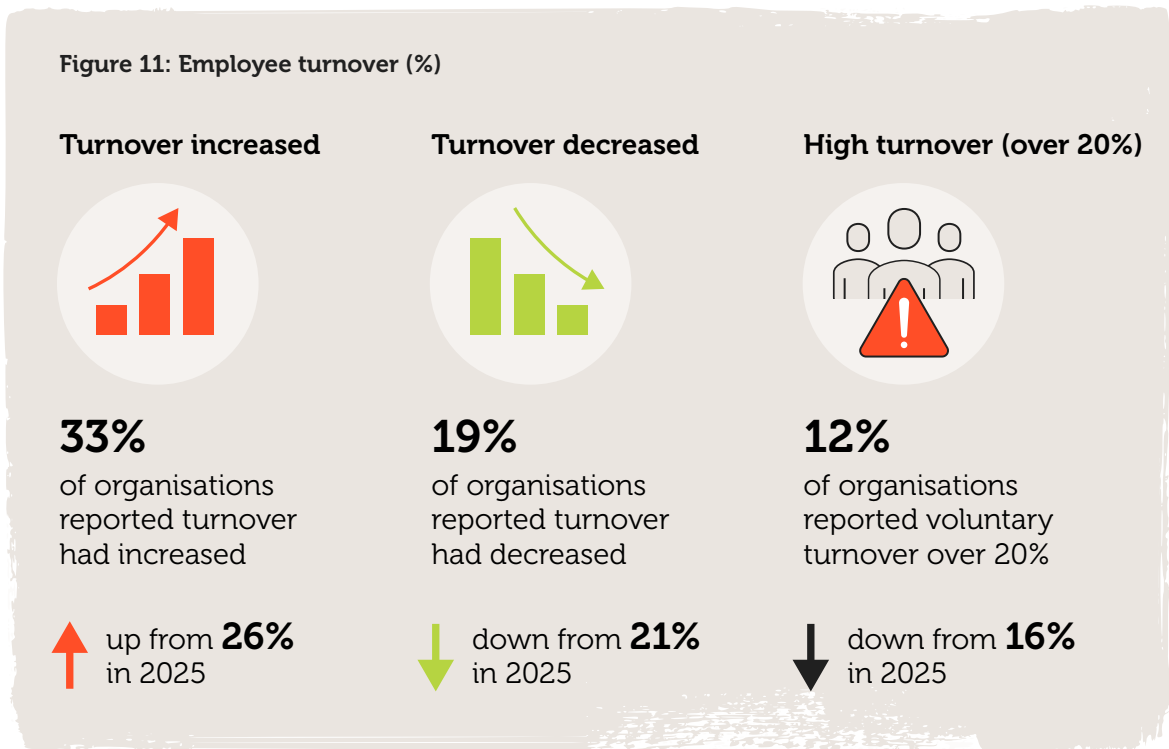


Right to request remote work

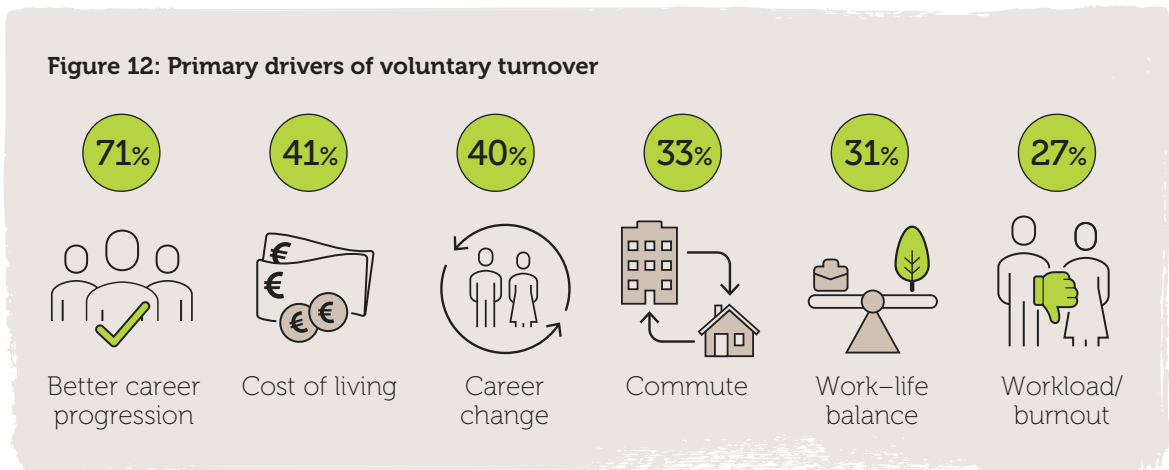
Since March 2024, most organisations report no change in approval patterns across remote working (69%), flexible working (63%) and alternative working patterns (68%). While increases in approvals were more evident for flexible (27%) and alternative ways of working (26%), refusal rates remained higher for remote working, with 60% approving fewer than 30% of requests. Refusals were largely due to role suitability (37%) and perceived business impact (17%). Where requests were approved, they were most commonly framed around wellbeing and work–life balance (29%), and retention (22%). The data suggests that most organisations consider the four-week period sufficient for reviewing both types of applications.

Employee turnover

Voluntary turnover presents a mixed picture. This year 33% of respondents reported that turnover had increased, up from 26% in 2025, while 19% reported a decrease, a drop from 21% in 2025. The most prevalent turnover rate has grown to under 9% for 33% of organisations, up from under 5% last year. Positively, turnover at the highest levels decreased this year, with 12% reporting a voluntary turnover over 20%, compared to 16% in 2025.



The primary drivers of voluntary turnover are better career progression opportunities elsewhere (71%), commute (33%), work–life balance conflict (31%), cost of living (41%) and workload or burnout (27%) (Figure 12).



While career progression continues to overtake cost of living as the leading driver, cost of living has jumped to the second key driver. With 75% of organisations indicating that the cost of living is impacting their recruitment, the data points to a labour market where financial security is increasingly shaping employee decision-making in a constrained economic environment.

Importantly, as motivations for career progression are often closely linked to opportunities for pay growth, this suggests that progression and financial considerations are not distinct factors, but interconnected drivers of workforce mobility. In this context, it is notable that 82% of organisations report embedding financial wellbeing practices for employees (with 51% noting an increase in

uptake), indicating growing recognition among employers that supporting financial resilience is becoming a critical component of attraction, retention and workforce sustainability.

Despite these challenges, relatively few organisations use predictive or advanced data approaches to anticipate turnover risk (13%). Most rely instead on employee surveys (54%) and one-to-one conversations (62%).

Recommendations

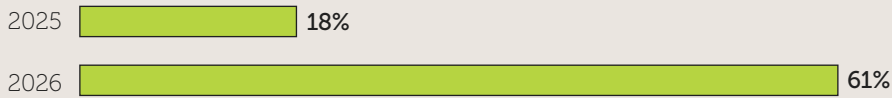
Skills shortages and turnover will persist unless organisations build internal capability, clear career pathways, targeted development and earlier, data-led retention actions.

- **Strategic workforce planning:** Build a workforce plan grounded in a clear skills taxonomy, skills-gap data and scenario planning, linking recruitment, internal mobility and succession planning to the capabilities the business needs next.
- **Capability and L&D:** Prioritise leadership and digital/AI capability development, with practical pathways for line managers to lead hybrid teams, manage performance and support engagement.
- **Culture and engagement:** Reduce avoidable turnover by strengthening career-pathing, transparent progression criteria and internal mobility so career progression is achievable inside the organisation, not only by leaving it.
- **Performance and productivity:** Set clear performance expectations and feedback that work in hybrid settings, ensuring fairness and consistency across locations and roles to avoid proximity bias.
- **People analytics and digital:** Increase use of predictive and diagnostic analytics (turnover, absence, engagement drivers) so interventions are earlier and targeted, moving from reactive responses to proactive risk management.

Huge increase in organisations having a strategy on sustainable people practices

Environmental, social and governance (ESG) and Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD) reporting demands will drive greater rigour in this area over the next few years. While only 3% cite it in their top HR priorities and just 20% identify it as a key external driver, 74% of respondents agree that HR adds value by integrating people practices into the sustainability agenda. This implies that sustainability is being embedded quietly and practically, even where it hasn't been claimed as a strategic priority. This is a striking shift from 2025: 61% of organisations now report having a strategy on sustainable people practices, up from just 18% last year.

Figure 13: Organisations with a sustainable people practices strategy



Recommendations

As sustainable people practices scale, HR needs to lead and support governance and data to meet ESG/CSRD expectations.

With more organisations now reporting a sustainability strategy, HR should strengthen the Target Operating Model (TOM), data and governance capability to meet ESG/CSRD reporting expectations for those organisations in scope – translating sustainable people activity into credible, decision-useful metrics and evidence.

- **TOM and accountability:** Clarify HR’s role, ownership and decision rights for sustainable people outcomes, and ensure this is embedded in core governance (risk, audit, workforce planning and reporting cycles).
- **Workforce capability and culture:** Integrate sustainability into job design, leadership expectations, reward decisions and day-to-day people practices so it is experienced consistently, not treated as an add-on.
- **Data and reporting readiness:** Improve the quality and consistency of people data (definitions, controls, audit trails) so sustainable people practices reporting is robust and defensible, supporting both CSRD requirements and wider people analytics.

The CIPD [Sustainable HRM Skillnet People Practices framework](#) provides a practical foundation to support HR in delivering a sustainable workforce aligned with organisational strategy.

6

Wellbeing and productivity

Productivity improved for 60% of organisations over the past year, remaining consistent with 2025

Hybrid working, digitalisation and improved workforce enablement are cited as the primary drivers for productivity, reinforcing the role of work design and flexibility in supporting performance.

Among the organisations integrating AI, the majority report productivity benefits, with 60% seeing a moderate uplift and a further 9% reporting significant gains. However, the fact that 39% report no change highlights the uneven and still uncertain return on AI investment, suggesting that productivity gains are less about technology adoption alone, and more about how effectively it is integrated into roles, processes and decision-making.

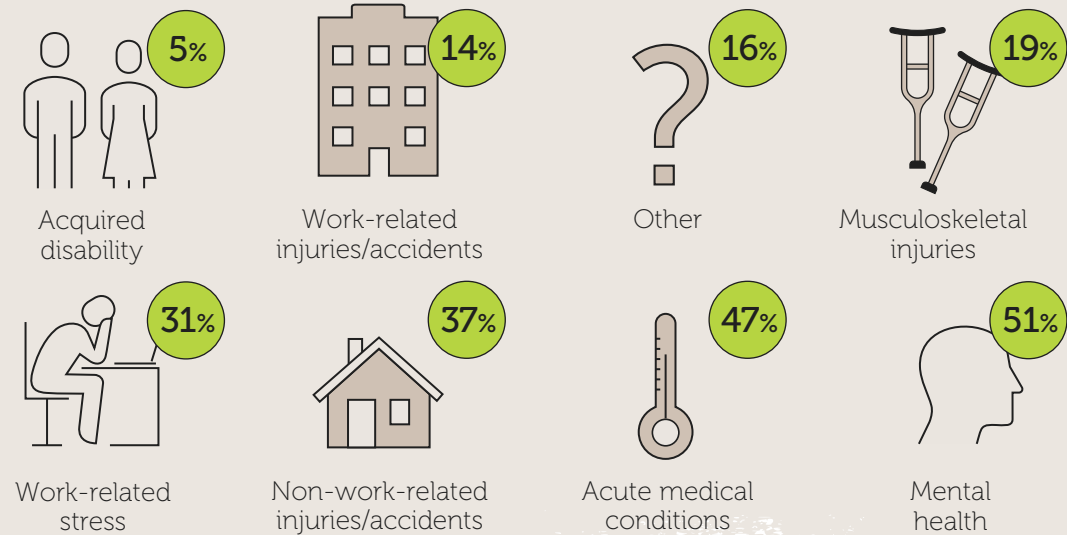
Absence rates and reasons for absence

Figure 14: Absenteeism rates

Absenteeism rates

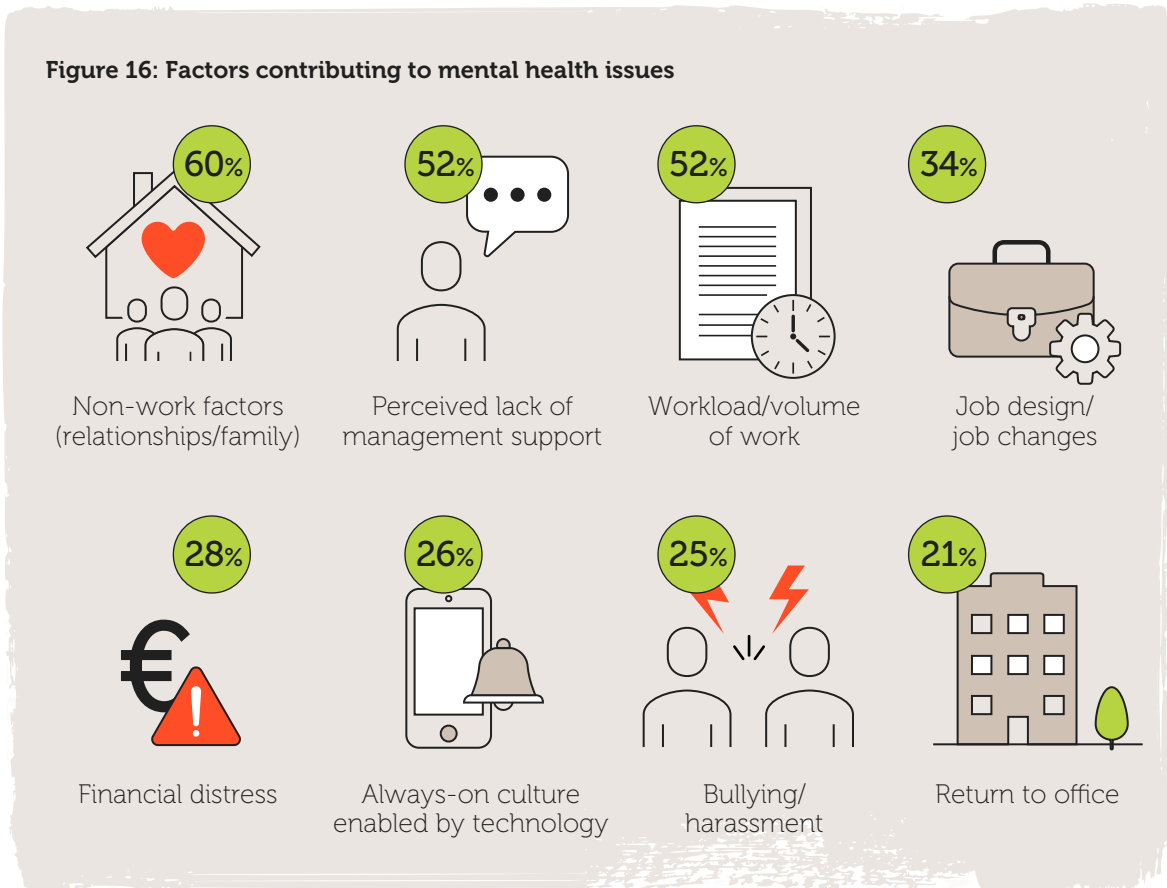


Figure 15: The most common causes of absenteeism



Wellbeing pressures, however, continue to undermine progress within productivity levels. Over a third of organisations reported that wellbeing has become more challenging in the past year and 28% reported increased absenteeism.

Mental health (Figure 16) is the leading cause of absence, cited by 51% of respondents, with non-work-related issues (60%), workload (52%), perceived lack of management support (52%), job design or job changes (34%), financial distress (28%) and always-on culture enabled by technology (26%) identified as the primary contributing factors.



The 2026 data shows that employee strain is shaped by both personal and professional pressures. Non-work factors are most prominent, with family and relationship pressures cited by 60%, while financial distress affects 28% of respondents, up 2% on 2025 and likely reflecting ongoing cost-of-living pressures.

Within the workplace, workload and volume of work (52%) and a perceived lack of management support (52%) remain key contributors to mental health concerns. Despite a right to disconnect, over a quarter (26%) also cite an “always-on” culture enabled by technology, which may reflect both hybrid working management challenges and uncertainty around the implementation of emerging technologies such as AI. Taken together, these findings reinforce the need for stronger people management capability, clearer expectations around roles, and people-centric policies as part of responsible and ethical technology adoption.

Flexible and remote working continues to play a positive role, with 86% agreeing it improves wellbeing and 72% agreeing that it contributes to an inclusive workplace, reinforcing its value beyond recruitment and retention.

Strong inclusion infrastructure is in place across most organisations, with 78% using inclusive recruitment strategies and 69% saying remote working supports an inclusive workplace.

Recommendations

Wellbeing is now a performance risk: workload, management support and “always-on” tech culture are undermining sustainable productivity unless work and management practices are redesigned.

- **Productivity and performance management:** Define what “good performance” looks like in each role and team, align objectives to organisational goals, and measure outcomes consistently across hybrid settings.
- **Culture and engagement:** Make wellbeing a core part of how work is led and organised: psychological safety, respectful behaviour, and clear team norms rather than a standalone initiative.
- **TOM and manager capability:** Treat line manager time and skill as a material constraint; simplify people processes, provide practical tools and coaching, and set minimum standards for manager practice in performance, absence and wellbeing.
- **Organisation design and job design:** Address root causes of strain through workload and role redesign, clarifying priorities and removing low-value work (including via automation where appropriate) to protect capacity for higher-value work.
- **AI and digital:** Ensure technology adoption supports sustainable productivity, set expectations on “always-on” behaviours, implement right to disconnect guidance, and assess tech/AI impacts on workload and stress.
- **Data:** Use workforce data (absence, engagement, turnover, workload indicators) to target interventions, track impact and make the business case for investment.

Methodology

The CIPD conducted this survey of members and people professionals in Ireland in November 2025 in partnership with Kemmy Business School, University of Limerick. A total of 330 responses were received, with 77% of respondents CIPD members. The majority of respondents work in the private sector (61%), with 35% in the public sector and 6% not-for-profit.

Organisation sizes ranged from under 50 to over 3,000 employees. 15% were employed in organisations of 1–50 employees, 23% had 51–250 employees, 14% had 251–500 employees, 14% had 501–1,000 employees, and 34% of respondents’ organisations had 1,000+ employees. Overall, 55% of respondents worked in teams of five or under (18% being an HR team of one), while 37% worked in teams of 20+.

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