FAIR European Digital Innovation Hub

Research Report 2026

Utilisation of AI in Finnish Companies 2026

A follow-up survey on AI adoption, business benefits, barriers, regulatory awareness, and recruitment needs among Finnish companies actively utilising artificial intelligence.

Data collection: Taloustutkimus Oy | Sample: n=200 | Field work: December 2025 – February 2026

Contents

1. Introduction

Artificial intelligence has emerged as one of the most strategically significant technologies for business competitiveness. Its development is rapid: technologies continue to evolve, new approaches such as agent-based AI are becoming more widespread, and the regulatory environment governing AI use is changing continuously. For companies, this represents both new opportunities and new demands. At its best, AI can streamline operations, support decision-making, improve customer experience, and generate entirely new products, services, and business models. At the same time, adoption can be hampered by skills gaps, resource constraints, data challenges, uncertainty about benefits, and interpretive difficulties related to regulation.

The FAIR European Digital Innovation Hub (FAIR EDIH) supports Finnish companies in adopting and scaling their use of AI. FAIR offers companies a broad range of expert services, test environments, support with funding applications, networking and matchmaking, and training. The purpose of this research is to produce up-to-date information on how AI is currently being utilised in Finnish companies, what benefits have been gained, which factors are impeding broader adoption, and what support services companies consider necessary. In addition, the study examines companies' familiarity with AI-related regulation, the resources and costs associated with compliance, and recruitment needs related to AI capabilities.

The research focuses on companies in which AI is already in established use within their business operations, or in which AI is being systematically and purposefully piloted. The study thereby provides insight specifically into those organisations where AI utilisation has moved from interest to practical implementation. The findings help identify where companies currently stand, what support they need next, and what conditions are required for effective and responsible AI adoption in Finland.

2. Research Objectives

The objectives of this research are:

- To assess what business benefits Finnish companies have achieved through the use of AI
- To identify the key barriers, obstacles, and factors limiting broader AI adoption
- To determine what services, forms of support, and collaboration models companies consider attractive in promoting AI use
- To explore what future opportunities companies see in AI for developing their business
- To map companies' familiarity with AI-related regulation, and the resources and costs associated with compliance
- To determine companies' recruitment needs in relation to AI expertise in the near future

3. Research Implementation

3.1 Methodology

This study is a follow-up to a survey conducted by FAIR in 2021. Data collection was carried out by Taloustutkimus Oy using computer-assisted telephone interviews (CATI), conducted either from Taloustutkimus's telephone centre or remotely by trained interviewers working from their own homes. The average duration of a single telephone interview was approximately 17 minutes.

3.2 Data Collection Period and Field Monitoring

Data collection took place between 3 December 2025 and 3 February 2026. Three trained telephone interviewers participated in the project. Fieldwork was validated by ensuring that data collection was carried out in accordance with the project guidelines, the research questionnaire, and general requirements. For validation purposes, 5% of telephone interviews were listened to, and at least 75% of each interview was checked.

3.3 Target Population and Sample Size

The study was targeted at companies where AI is in established use within their business operations, or where AI experiments or piloting are being conducted in a systematic and purposeful manner. Companies that do not actively utilise AI in their business were excluded from the target group.

The primary target group comprised senior decision-makers in companies utilising AI. The secondary target group consisted of companies' AI specialists and IT management. The achieved sample size was in line with the target: n=200. The sample has not been weighted.

3.4 Quotas and Sample Construction

Guiding interview quotas were established based on industry classifications selected for specific sectors. The majority of the industries studied were selected on the basis of the 2021 survey. The most recent study also includes MedTech and HealthTech companies operating in Finland. Guiding quotas were set by company size (number of employees) and geographical region (major area classification).

The sample was constructed using the Alma Insights Analysaattori decision-maker database.

3.5 Data Processing and Reporting

Research findings are presented primarily in graphical form. Cross-tabulations and all verbatim responses are available in a separate Excel appendix.

The research design was led by Dr Teemu Moilanen (FAIR). The research project at Taloustutkimus was managed by Senior Insight Manager Juha Lemmetyinen. Cross-tabulations and data validation were carried out by analyst Taru Virolainen. Analysis of open-ended questions was conducted by Teemu Moilanen. Presentation graphics were produced by Senior Analyst Veli-Pekka Lötjönen.

4. Respondent Profile

The survey included n=200 respondents. The sample covers companies that actively utilise or systematically pilot AI in their business operations. The respondent profile encompasses a range of industries, company sizes, and revenue classes, providing a representative cross-section of Finnish AI-active companies.

Sectors represented include: Specialised business services, Information and communication, Other professional activities, Management consulting, Technical and R&D activities, and MedTech/HealthTech companies (which were added as a new group in this study).

Note: MedTech/HealthTech is not an official industry classification. Companies were selected on the basis of a trade association membership list. This group was not included in its current form in the 2021 survey.

4.1 Length of AI Use

The survey asked respondents how long their company had been using AI-enabled solutions. Full chart data is available in the separate Excel appendix. Key finding: the vast majority of respondents (85%) have adopted AI within the past three years, indicating that for most companies, AI utilisation is a relatively recent development.

5. Business Benefits of AI

Respondents were asked, in an open-ended format, what business benefits their company had achieved through the use of AI. Responses were collected thematically and ordered by frequency of mention.

5.1 Benefits Identified – Part 1

73 % 1)

Streamlining of internal processes and time savings

AI benefits are felt primarily in making work smoother and saving time on everyday routines and internal processes. Typical gains include a reduction in manual work, faster throughput times, and more easily completed basic tasks – without the benefit necessarily yet appearing directly in financial terms.

28 % 2)

Documentation, reporting and meeting notes

AI adds value in documentation, reporting, and meeting practices. Typical benefits arise from summaries, minutes, transcription, and the distillation of key information so that knowledge becomes more quickly and comprehensively usable.

25 % 3)

New business / AI as part of a product or service

Cases where AI generates new business or is directly part of a product or service being sold. The focus is on revenue, new customers or projects, and the embedding of AI capability within the company's value proposition and competitive advantage.

24 % 4)

Information retrieval and expert work (background research, regulations, standards)

AI provides benefit in information retrieval and background research for expert work, particularly when quickly compiled understanding of a large body of material is required. This also includes the identification and structuring of regulations, standards, and other 'interpretive' information.

21 % 5)

Quality improvement

AI improves quality or reduces errors, including quality assurance, proofreading, checking, and producing more consistent or more polished outcomes.

21 % 6)

Faster software development and improved quality

The key outcome is faster coding, testing, and debugging, or improved quality, often facilitated by tools that make developers' day-to-day work easier.

5.2 Benefits Identified – Part 2

19 % 7)

Sales & marketing (content, proposals, emails)

AI helps produce, shape, or target messages and materials. Examples include marketing copy, emails, proposal preparation, and other commercial work support.

19 % 8)

Analytics, forecasting and pricing

Benefits arising from data analysis, prediction, measurement, or pricing development. AI helps identify relevant signals in data, produce indicative calculations, or improve the basis for decision-making.

8% 9)

Creativity

AI acts as a sounding board for ideation, design, content creation, and problem-solving, helping to generate new perspectives, alternatives, and business ideas, whilst also accelerating the execution of creative work.

5% 10)

Financial management & compliance

AI automates checks and supports rule-based operations in financial administration and compliance work. Typical examples include accounting routines, purchase invoice processing, and KYC and anti-money laundering obligations.

8% 11)

Images, visualisation & media (images, 3D, video)

AI produces value in creating and editing images, visualisations, or other media. Benefits may be seen in better or more rapidly produced visuals, greater versatility of materials, or new technical possibilities such as support for 3D modelling.

4% 12)

No benefits yet / difficult to measure (early stage)

Responses where benefits have not yet been realised or are difficult to verify, despite use having already begun. The focus is on early-stage experimentation, work still in progress, or the absence of measurement, with the impact remaining at the level of assumptions or expectations.

5.3 Selected Verbatim Responses

Open-ended question. All responses are listed in the separate Excel file.

> *"Remote management of products. Generative AI has been used across all operations, improving efficiency in all departments."*
>
> **Industry: Mechanical and process design; AI in use for 4 years or longer**

> *"Stylising and translating texts in a supporting role. Background research on matters and regulations."*
>
> **Industry: Architectural services; AI in use for 1–3 years**

> *"It's hard to see whether any benefits have materialised yet. We're still waiting. AI use is strong, but there is no concrete evidence yet. It's been in use for such a short time that we cannot determine the value of the benefit. Possibly by 2026."*
>
> **Industry: Software design and development; AI in use for 1–3 years**

> *"In accounting firm operations: accounting law, tax law and their interpretations are used daily. The Association of Finnish Accounting Firms' AI service is actively used daily and is tailored specifically for this purpose. The anti-money laundering customer due diligence system – Visma's KYC software, which continuously scans sanctions lists, is AI-driven."*
>
> **Industry: Bookkeeping and financial statement services; AI in use for less than one year**

> *"In sales, proposal evaluations, matching our own staff CVs to client tenders. Sales monitoring and analytics, software development, and project tracking."*
>
> **Industry: Other management consulting; AI in use for 1–3 years**

5.4 AI Benefits Recognised Across the Industry

Respondents were also asked to assess the extent to which AI benefits have been recognised across their industry in general. Full chart data is available in the separate Excel appendix. The findings indicate broad industry-level recognition of AI's potential, whilst also revealing variation between sectors in terms of how mature and widespread this recognition is.

6. Barriers and Obstacles to AI Adoption

Respondents were asked, in an open-ended format, what barriers or obstacles they had identified with respect to their company's use of AI. Responses were collected thematically and ordered by frequency of mention.

6.1 Barriers Identified – Part 1

33 % 1)

Skills and knowledge gap (SKILLS)

The organisation does not yet have sufficient familiarity with AI's possibilities, limitations, or practical approaches. This also often manifests as a difficulty in identifying appropriate use cases and building realistic steps towards adoption.

29 % 2)

Data security, data protection, confidentiality, data residency (SEC PRIVACY)

Concerns about what data can be fed into AI, where data is stored, and who can access it. This theme is particularly prominent in relation to customer data, trade secrets, and other sensitive material.

28 % 3)

Regulation, compliance, sector-specific regulatory requirements (REG COMPLIANCE)

External obligations and sector-specific requirements that restrict the use of AI or require substantial clarification and documentation work before adoption. This often presents as uncertainty about what is permitted and how compliance can be demonstrated.

26 % 4)

Time and resource constraints (RES TIME)

Insufficient time, people, or capacity is found for adopting and utilising AI amidst the pressures of day-to-day operations. Typically this means that familiarisation, piloting, and roll-out remain undone or progress very slowly.

24 % 5)

Costs, budget, ROI/return risk (COST ROI)

Development and integration work, external expert assistance, or licences are perceived as too costly relative to the available budget. In addition, uncertainty about whether a clear return will be achieved on investment slows decision-making.

21 % 6)

Resistance to change, attitudes, slow adoption, culture (CHANGE CULTURE)

Human and cultural factors that slow the adoption of new tools. The theme manifests as caution, fear of making mistakes, unwillingness to change routines, or uneven progress between teams.

6.2 Barriers Identified – Part 2

11 % 7)

Technical reliability, hallucinations, operational dependability (TECH RELIABILITY)

Doubt about whether AI-generated responses and outputs are sufficiently accurate and consistent. This often leads to reluctance to use AI in business-critical tasks without human verification, reducing the perceived benefit.

10 % 8)

Difficulty selecting and comparing tools; fragmented vendor landscape (VENDOR MARKET)

The market is fragmented, there are many players, and evaluating a suitable solution is difficult. Uncertainty about which tool is fit for purpose, secure, and cost-effective slows progress.

9% 9)

Customer restrictions/readiness; caution within the network (CUSTOMER CONSTRAINTS)

AI use is restricted by concerns and policies held by clients, legal advisers, or the collaboration network. Adoption is therefore not solely an internal decision, but is influenced by external expectations, requirements, and clients' maturity.

5% 10)

Integration and systems challenges; data in silos (INTEGRATION LEGACY)

AI cannot be seamlessly integrated into existing systems, data is siloed, or no ready-made solution can be found. As a result, utilisation remains an isolated experiment rather than becoming effectively embedded in daily processes.

4% 11)

IPR, ethics, authenticity/morality (IPR ETHICS)

Concerns about whether AI use infringes copyright, to whom data fed in or content generated 'belongs', and where the boundary of acceptable use lies. The theme also relates to questions of authenticity and when AI use is perceived as problematic from a values or reputational standpoint.

6.3 Proportion of Companies Experiencing Barriers

Respondents were asked whether they perceive any internal or external factors impeding or slowing the widespread use of AI in their company's operations. Full chart data is available in the separate Excel appendix.

6.4 Selected Verbatim Responses on Barriers

Open-ended question. All responses are listed in the separate Excel file.

> *"Developing AI systems is quite laborious and not cheap – that is a barrier."*
>
> **Industry: Mechanical and process design; AI in use for 4 years or longer**

> *"In the media sector, one must be very careful, and that is one barrier. There are certainly a great many barriers, because the media sector is heavily regulated in terms of what can and cannot be done. The teams handling AI have very strict rules."*
>
> **Industry: Television programme production; AI in use for less than one year**

> *"The precision and reliability of AI-generated responses and materials. Reliability is not at a sufficient level. AI meeting notes are a useful support, but they are by no means an official document – they require human verification. Cost is a barrier or constraint: integrating AI into business with external expert support is something we have not been able to afford."*
>
> **Industry: Other technical services; AI in use for 1–3 years**

> *"GDPR-related issues, for example. Certain data or confidential information cannot be entered. Data must be anonymised or transformed. Some clients have an outright ban on its use."*
>
> **Industry: Advertising agencies; AI in use for 1–3 years**

> *"Morality. To what extent do we use AI? That is the question we are grappling with. On the one hand, AI must be used. On the other hand, authenticity must be upheld."*
>
> **Industry: Graphic design; AI in use for 1–3 years**

> *"Data security concerns have been a major issue. Clients' understanding – or lack thereof – of AI tools. Their concerns that work done for them will deteriorate or be compromised by the use of AI."*
>
> **Industry: Patent offices; AI in use for 1–3 years**

7. Attractiveness of Enabling Services

Respondents were asked, first in an open-ended format, whether any externally provided services came to mind that could promote broader AI use within their company. Subsequently, they rated a pre-defined list of services on a five-point scale (1 = not at all attractive … 5 = very attractive).

7.1 Spontaneous Responses on Desired Services

Open-ended question. Selected responses:

> *"We have fairly good internal resources and expertise internally. No external services come to mind. We do review AI tools and software, but not services as such."*
>
> **Industry: Other management consulting; AI in use for 1–3 years**

> *"Nothing comes to mind. Perhaps services related to legislative familiarity."*
>
> **Industry: Software development; AI in use for 4 years or longer**

> *"Various consulting services. If you want to customise AI tools for yourself, you generally need an external service provider. Consultancy-based ideation on how AI could be better utilised."*
>
> **Industry: Patent offices; AI in use for 1–3 years**

> *"There are many partners, but you need to invest money. Small companies can't invest in them. There could be training on which AI tools are safe and trustworthy to use, but such training isn't available free of charge. If you needed to throw tens of thousands at it, you wouldn't start experimenting."*
>
> **Industry: Bookkeeping and financial statement services; AI in use for 1–3 years**

> *"An AI consultancy that integrates AI tools into business systems, but the hit rate isn't yet sufficient. There should be a risk-free way to experiment. There should be a service that improves something by, say, 30 per cent, and if that is achieved, an invoice is sent. It should be at the implementer's own risk; we cannot take that risk ourselves."*
>
> **Industry: Other technical activities; AI in use for 1–3 years**

7.2 Rated Attractiveness of Specific Services

Average scores on a scale of 1–5 (1 = not at all attractive … 5 = very attractive). Scores above 3.5 are shown in bold.

Service	All n=200	Under 20 staff n=79	20–49 staff n=60	50–99 staff n=36	100+ staff n=25
AI skills development within your company (e.g. AI courses and training)	**3.58**	3.38	**3.67**	**3.69**	**3.80**

Service	All n=200	Under 20 staff n=79	20–49 staff n=60	50–99 staff n=36	100+ staff n=25
Rapid prototyping and testing	3.26	3.01	3.32	3.47	**3.60**
AI skills development (e.g. general AI advisory and information events)	3.25	3.14	3.35	3.42	3.12
Meetings with Finnish AI-developing companies	3.23	3.09	3.23	3.39	3.44
Development environment trials	3.17	3.00	3.33	3.28	3.16
AI-related application consulting	3.15	–	–	–	–
Support for applying for AI-related funding	2.63	–	–	–	–
International networking with AI companies	2.81	–	–	–	–
Meetings with European AI research organisations	2.28	–	–	–	–

Note: Sub-group data not available for all service items. Full cross-tabulation available in the separate Excel appendix.

8. Future Opportunities

Respondents were asked, in an open-ended format, what opportunities their company sees in the use of AI for business development. Responses were collected thematically.

8.1 Future Opportunities Identified – Part 1

51 % 1)

Process efficiency and automation (PROC AUTOMATION)

Process efficiency and automation refers to opportunities to accelerate day-to-day operations by transferring routine tasks and work stages partly or fully to AI. The goal is to shorten throughput times, reduce manual work, and free up time for more productive tasks.

34 % 2)

General / unspecified opportunities (UNKNOWN/GENERAL)

AI is seen as a major opportunity, but specific use cases have not yet been identified.

20 % 3)

New products and business models (NEW PRODUCTS)

New products, services, and business models are seen as opportunities to create new offerings and revenue, in which AI is part of the product, service, or an entirely new value proposition. The theme also encompasses service extensions, building competitive advantage, and new ways of packaging expertise for clients.

18 % 4)

Development of data analytics (DATA ANALYTICS)

Data, analytics, forecasting, and decision support describe opportunities to refine company data into more actionable intelligence through analytics, predictive models, and optimisation. AI is expected to assist with decision-making, identify anomalies and trends, and produce more targeted insights to guide operations.

9% 5)

Quality improvement (QUALITY IMPROVEMENT)

AI will be used to reduce production errors, carry out inspections, monitoring, and anomaly detection. The core idea is that quality improves and risks decrease, resulting in greater value delivered to customers.

8.2 Future Opportunities Identified – Part 2

9% 6)

Accelerated software development (PROC AUTOMATION)

AI can support coding, testing, debugging, and the implementation of technical solutions, including agents and integrations. The opportunity is frequently seen as faster development work, improved quality, and the ability to build new features more nimbly.

9%
7)

Improved operational functions (OPERATIONS)

Operational functions, production, maintenance, and field operations describe opportunities to improve practical operations such as production management, quality monitoring, predictive maintenance, and field work efficiency. AI aims to make operations more proactive, less susceptible to disruption, and better guided in real time.

8%
8)

Strengthened creative work (CREATIVITY DESIGN)

AI can act as a sounding board and production tool in developing ideas, conceptualisation, and the creation of content and visualisations. The opportunity often relates to more rapid experimentation and the generation of alternatives, which strengthens the creative process.

7%
9)

More efficient sales and marketing (SALES MARKETING)

AI can support lead generation, the production of proposals and sales materials, and the targeting and testing of marketing communications. The opportunity is often seen as a more efficient sales process and a more systematic approach to customer acquisition.

7%
10)

Improved customer service (CUSTOMER SERVICE)

Customer service, customer experience, and personalisation describe opportunities to improve the service received by customers, for example through chatbots, self-service, and faster support. AI can also help personalise content and service journeys so that customers experience a more relevant and seamless service.

6%
11)

Skills development and more meaningful work (HR SKILLS)

AI is seen as a means to raise staff capabilities and change the nature of work. AI is expected to support learning, improve the quality of expert work, and free up time for more meaningful and valuable activities.

8.3 Selected Verbatim Responses on Future Opportunities

Open-ended question. All responses are listed in the separate Excel file.

> *"Plenty of opportunities from an efficiency perspective. As we do creative and expert work, the hope is to reduce manual work. That is an area where we have development potential and where AI could be utilised."*
>
> **Industry: Other management consulting; AI in use for 1–3 years**

> *"Huge opportunities that are not yet identified. In the future, considerably more use than now, because responses still need to be treated critically."*
>
> **Industry: Laboratory and medical equipment; AI in use for 4 years or longer**

> *"It would be healthy if the AI hype died down; genuinely useful business applications would then emerge. At the moment, visibility is poor because of the situation."*
>
> **Industry: Software design and development; AI in use for 4 years or longer**

> *“I consider AI a truly significant factor in the sector. It will disrupt the entire industry over the coming years.”*
>
> **Industry: Bookkeeping and financial statement services; AI in use for 1–3 years**

> *“We see it as essential to get to grips with this during the current year; otherwise we won’t be in the game. This is something everyone must engage with. No one can fall behind. I believe AI should be used across all operations: in sales, in our own activities, and in client projects.”*
>
> **Industry: IT hardware and software consulting; AI in use for 1–3 years**

9. AI Regulatory Awareness and Compliance Costs

AI regulation is developing rapidly. This section of the study maps companies' familiarity with regulation, as well as the costs and resources associated with compliance.

9.1 Familiarity with AI Regulatory Areas

Respondents were presented with AI-related regulations and regulatory frameworks, and they assessed their own level of knowledge of each on a five-point scale (1 = not familiar at all … 5 = very familiar).

Regulatory area	All n=200	Med/HealthTech n=36	Specialised bus. svcs n=29	Info. & comm. n=49	Other prof. act. n=22	Mgmt. consulting n=27	Tech. & R&D n=37
GDPR	**4.15**	**4.17**	**3.90**	**4.41**	**4.18**	**4.30**	**3.84**
MDR (Medical Device Regulation)*	**4.06**	**4.06**	–	–	–	–	–
IVDR (In Vitro Diagnostic Device Regulation)*	3.11	3.11	–	–	–	–	–
AI Act (EU AI Act)	2.49	3.00	2.31	2.88	2.36	2.48	1.70
Data Act	2.37	2.69	2.00	2.94	2.32	2.15	1.78
Cybersecurity Act	2.31	2.78	2.07	2.82	2.27	1.89	1.70
Digital Services Act	1.92	1.97	1.66	2.47	1.91	1.85	1.41

**) Asked only of companies whose industry is Med/HealthTech (n=36)*

Scores above 3.5 are shown in bold.

9.2 Familiarity with AI-Enabling Actors and Initiatives

Respondents were also presented with AI-related matters and actors that support or enable companies' use of AI. Their level of familiarity was measured on a five-point scale.

Regulatory area	All n=200	Med/HealthTech n=36	Specialised bus. svcs n=29	Info. & comm. n=49	Other prof. act. n=22	Mgmt. consulting n=27	Tech. & R&D n=37
EHDS (European Health Data Space)*	2.25	2.25	–	–	–	–	–
Data Governance Act	1.90	2.14	1.69	2.42	1.67	1.70	1.46

Regulatory area	All n=200	Med/HealthTech n=36	Specialised bus. svcs n=29	Info. & comm. n=49	Other prof. act. n=22	Mgmt. consulting n=27	Tech. & R&D n=37
AI Regulatory Sandbox	1.70	1.92	1.59	2.00	1.48	1.70	1.32
AI Factory	1.46	1.69	1.34	1.65	1.19	1.30	1.35

**) Asked only of companies whose industry is Med/HealthTech (n=36)*

9.3 Resources Used for AI Regulatory Activities

Respondents were asked how much AI regulatory activities currently consume their company's resources. Full chart data is available in the separate Excel appendix. Key finding: Technical and R&D sector companies have, on average, fewer separately designated personnel responsible for ensuring AI regulatory compliance.

9.4 Working Time Spent on AI Regulation (Past 12 Months)

Respondents were asked to estimate the total working time their company had spent on AI regulatory tasks over the previous 12 months – such as investigating, planning, documenting, or reporting on the AI Act, AI-related GDPR, or other AI regulation – selecting from the following options:

The question was put to companies that had identified AI regulatory activities as consuming their company's resources (n=166). Full chart data is available in the separate Excel appendix.

Notable findings:

- 5–19 hours over the past 12 months was reported more frequently than average by companies with an annual turnover of €1–2 million.
- 20–99 hours over the past 12 months was reported more frequently than average by companies with an annual turnover of €20–99 million.
- No particular sector stands out significantly from the others.

9.5 Financial Expenditure on AI Regulatory Activities (Past 12 Months)

Respondents were asked to estimate the monetary expenditure their company had incurred in relation to AI regulatory activities over the previous 12 months. The sum may include, for example, external procurement such as legal services, expert or consultancy support, audits, and certifications, as well as staff salaries where these relate directly to AI projects.

The question was put to companies that had identified AI regulatory activities as consuming their company's resources (n=166). Full chart data is available in the separate Excel appendix.

10. Recruitment Needs

Respondents were asked whether their company intends to recruit AI talent within the next year. Full chart data is available in the separate Excel appendix.

A notable finding is that companies employing fewer than 20 people are significantly less likely to intend to hire AI specialists than was the case in 2021. Furthermore, small companies differ significantly from the overall result.

Approximately one third of all companies surveyed (n=200) plan to recruit AI talent within the next year, indicating that AI is increasingly viewed as a strategically important area of investment.

11. Key Findings and Conclusions

01

AI adoption is accelerating, but still a relatively recent phenomenon

The vast majority of AI-active Finnish companies (85%) have adopted AI within the past three years. This suggests that AI has moved from experimentation to practical application, but in many organisations utilisation is still at a relatively early stage.

02

Greatest benefits to date from operational efficiency, though some companies are already using AI to create new business

The most common business benefits relate to streamlining internal processes (73%). At the same time, for a quarter of companies (25%), AI has generated new business and new products, indicating that for some companies AI is already being used as a tool for growth and renewal.

03

Key bottlenecks: skills, resources, data security, and limited regulatory awareness

The most frequently identified barriers relate to skills and knowledge gaps (33%), data security (29%), regulation and compliance (28%), lack of time and resources (26%), and costs and uncertain return expectations (24%). The findings show that AI adoption challenges are not merely technical – they are also linked to organisational readiness, leadership, and working practices.

04

Companies have a clear desire to strengthen AI expertise and deepen their capabilities

The most attractive AI-enabling services are those related to skills development and rapid prototyping. Moreover, a third of companies plan to recruit AI specialists within the next year, indicating that AI is increasingly viewed as a strategically important area of development.

05

The significance of AI regulation is recognised, but regulatory awareness remains low

GDPR is clearly the best-known regulatory framework, but familiarity with other AI-related regulation is still limited. Only a quarter of companies (25%) are moderately or well acquainted with the EU AI Act, suggesting that regulatory knowledge is not yet keeping pace with the growing prevalence of AI use.

12. Contact Information

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This report presents findings from a survey conducted by FAIR EDIH in partnership with Taloustutkimus Oy. Data collection period: December 2025 – February 2026. Sample: n=200 Finnish companies actively utilising artificial intelligence.