

Manufacturing in Ireland 2023

Unlocking Ireland's manufacturing potential for the next manufacturing evolution



“Ireland’s manufacturing sector is high-tech, high-end, global, and offers incredible value.”

Sharon Higgins,
Executive Director,
Membership and Sectors, Ibec

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Foreword by Sharon Higgins,
Executive Director, Membership and Sectors, Ibec

“In a world marked by global shifts and unpredictable events, Ireland has solidified its position as a dependable hub for business.”

This report underscores the pivotal role of manufacturing in Ireland’s economic ecosystem. It is a call to action to ensure our policy environment is fine-tuned to our evolving needs. The world may be uncertain, but with the right policies with recommendations in this report, we can deepen investment and innovation, securing a prosperous future for all.

Manufacturing is at the heart of Ireland’s economic success.

In a world marked by global shifts and unpredictable events, Ireland has solidified its position as a dependable hub for business. The world we live in today poses unique challenges, but our journey so far, filled with many similar challenges in the past, has prepared us for anything. There is lots to be done, but as we face these global shifts, Ireland’s resilience and adaptability make it stand out in the global landscape.

This report on Manufacturing in Ireland 2023 stands as a testament to the sector’s strength. As unpredictable as the world seems right now, Ireland has withstood storms of equal size, ranging from economic downturns to geopolitical issues. The backbone of the country’s resilience? A thriving manufacturing sector.

The numbers speak volumes. Each year, the manufacturing sector adds an impressive €13.4 billion in wages and employment taxes. Ireland’s manufacturing sector set new records, exporting goods worth €208 billion in 2022. Additionally, it shoulders a significant portion of our nation’s corporation tax revenue at over 44%, or more than €10 billion, ensuring that our Government has the resources to support essential public services.

Ireland’s manufacturing sector is high-tech, high-end, global, and offers incredible value. Beyond that, our manufacturing sector’s yearly injection of €22 billion through its local spending, not only sustains our domestic industries, but also fosters economic growth across the board.

Between 2012 and 2022, Irish-owned manufacturing exporters experienced a significant sales surge of 76%, while the foreign direct investment (FDI) manufacturers increased their exports by 66%. This growth emphasises the sector's ability to flourish amidst global challenges.

According to Ibec's latest survey, the manufacturing industry is committed to sustainability and digital technology. These represent the future of growth. We are also welcoming an exciting new era. Ireland is well-placed to use the potential of Artificial Intelligence (AI), robotics, and other cutting-edge technologies. Our investments in research and development, with 29% expecting to increase investment in R&D in the short term, along with our technology ecosystem, place us in a position to be frontrunners in these new developments.

This report also delves into key policy issues essential for Ireland's manufacturing success, as well as recommendations for how to make Ireland even more attractive as a manufacturing hub.

On the skills front, while we have a world-class formal education system, there's a growing need to emphasise lifelong learning and continuous upskilling. This has become especially crucial in the digital age, where roles evolve rapidly.

Our trade environment and strong relationships, especially with major players, like the single market and the US, have also been pivotal.

Sustainability, trade, innovation, digital transformation, taxation, and regulation are critical areas of focus now too. We must continually evolve to stay ahead of international competition.

But attractiveness as an investment destination isn't just about business policies, it also revolves around strong social infrastructure such as broadband and other amenities, while areas like housing demand serious attention. Ensuring that these facilities are strong and accessible is vital to make Ireland a great place to live and work.

Currently, the most pressing challenge for businesses is the rising costs. Considering inflation and labour demand, it is essential that we maintain a stable footing and remain as cost competitive as possible.

This report underscores the pivotal role of manufacturing in Ireland's economic ecosystem. It is a call to action to ensure our policy environment is fine-tuned to our current and future needs. The world may be uncertain, but with the right policies and recommendations in this report, we can deepen investment and innovation, securing a prosperous future for all.



Sharon Higgins
Executive Director,
Membership and Sectors
Ibec

Foreword by Paul Duffy

Ibec President and Senior Vice President at Pfizer Global Supply

“Manufacturing in Ireland represents a central pillar of economic growth and employment, driven by its skilled workforce, strategic advantages, and steadfast Government support.”

Manufacturing in Ireland: A pillar of growth and opportunity

Manufacturing plays a pivotal role in Ireland’s economy, employing over 275,000 people and contributing more than 11% to total employment. The sector’s growth is driven by the dedication and innovation of the Irish workforce, who have continued to enhance their skills over the years. Ireland’s manufacturing base extends beyond major cities, fostering regional development and offering substantial economic benefits.

The manufacturing industry also boasts an impressive export record, with €208 billion worth of goods exported in 2022. The combination of our skilled workers, our strategic location, and our stable and supportive Governmental policy all come together to make Ireland an attractive gateway to Europe. As the only English-speaking country in the EU following the UK’s departure, Ireland is well-positioned as a hub for European trade.

The continued availability of talented people is critical to the growth of the industry and with Ireland currently experiencing close to full employment, it is important that we can attract a steady influx of talent to sustain the industry and facilitate its transition toward digitalisation and sustainability. Immigration policies have played a crucial role in addressing this resource need and with this continued growth, it is critical we stay focused on the provision of good services and infrastructure to sustain it into the future.

The industry is evolving quickly with the integration of new technologies like advanced automation and artificial intelligence. To maintain our leadership in manufacturing capabilities, Ireland must adapt to these changes. Ibec

plays a key role in advocating for the sector, working closely with the education system and the Government to ensure access to vital skills and training.

Manufacturing stands as one of Ireland's most resilient sectors, having played a vital role for decades. However, we should not get complacent and must continue our focus to ensure its continued growth and success. In the face of a changing landscape, manufacturing can continue to be a cornerstone on which we continue to build our economy.

Finally, manufacturing in Ireland represents a central pillar of economic growth and employment, driven by its skilled workforce, strategic advantages, and steadfast Government support. To maintain its position, the sector must adapt to emerging technologies and address workforce and infrastructure challenges. Ireland remains committed to the growth and prosperity of its manufacturing industry.

Paul Duffy

Ibec President and Senior Vice President at Pfizer Global Supply



Manufacturing in Ireland by the numbers 2023

275,000

275,000 people -
11% of total employment.



€13.4 billion

€13.4 billion in wages and
employment taxes annually.



44%

44%, or over €10 billion of
corporation tax.



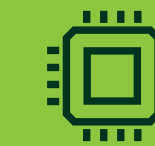
€22 billion

€22 billion spent each year
on goods and services from
suppliers in the Irish economy.



76%

Irish owned manufacturing
exporters grew sales by over
76% between 2012 and 2022.



66%

Inward FDI manufacturers
grew their exports by 66%
between 2012 and 2022.



€208bn

The state exported a record
€208 billion worth of goods
in 2022.



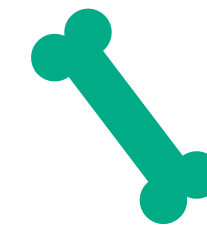
Manufacturing in Ireland – International rankings



No. 2
exporter of medical
devices in Europe



No. 2
exporter of contact
lenses in Europe



No. 2
exporter of orthopaedic
products in Europe



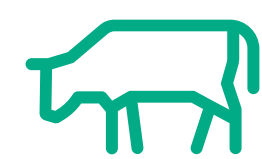
No. 3
exporter of complex
pharmaceutical goods
and medicines in Europe



No. 3
exporter of antisera
and immunological
products in Europe



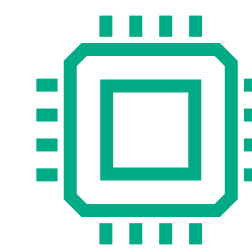
No. 2
exporter of
vaccines in Europe



No. 1
net exporter of dairy
ingredients, beef, lamb
and spirits in Europe



No. 1
exporter in Europe
of specialised
nutrition products



No. 6
exporter of data
processing machines

Irish manufacturing survey findings 2023



Key insights summary



Confidence is up. Manufacturers are cautiously more optimistic about the current business environment (70%) compared to 2022 (53%). They are similarly more optimistic about their own business this year (73%) compared to last year (65%).



The war in Ukraine significantly affected the sector last year, with energy shortages, rising costs, and supply chain disruptions. A year later energy is more stable, and supply chains are normalising, though prices are still high.

Short-term global growth expectations are however lower, with 39% of businesses anticipating weaker performance versus 32% last year.

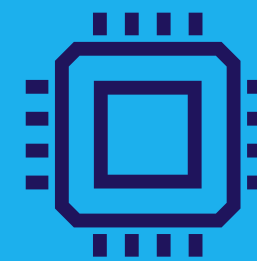
The recent Middle Eastern war has had severe human consequences, and its full economic impact remains uncertain.



Manufacturing businesses have slightly higher expectations in terms of profitability this year presumably as the cost of doing business is believed to be improving.



There is widespread participation in sustainability (85%) and digitalisation (68%) initiatives, with half of organisations involved in each of these expecting to save money as a result.



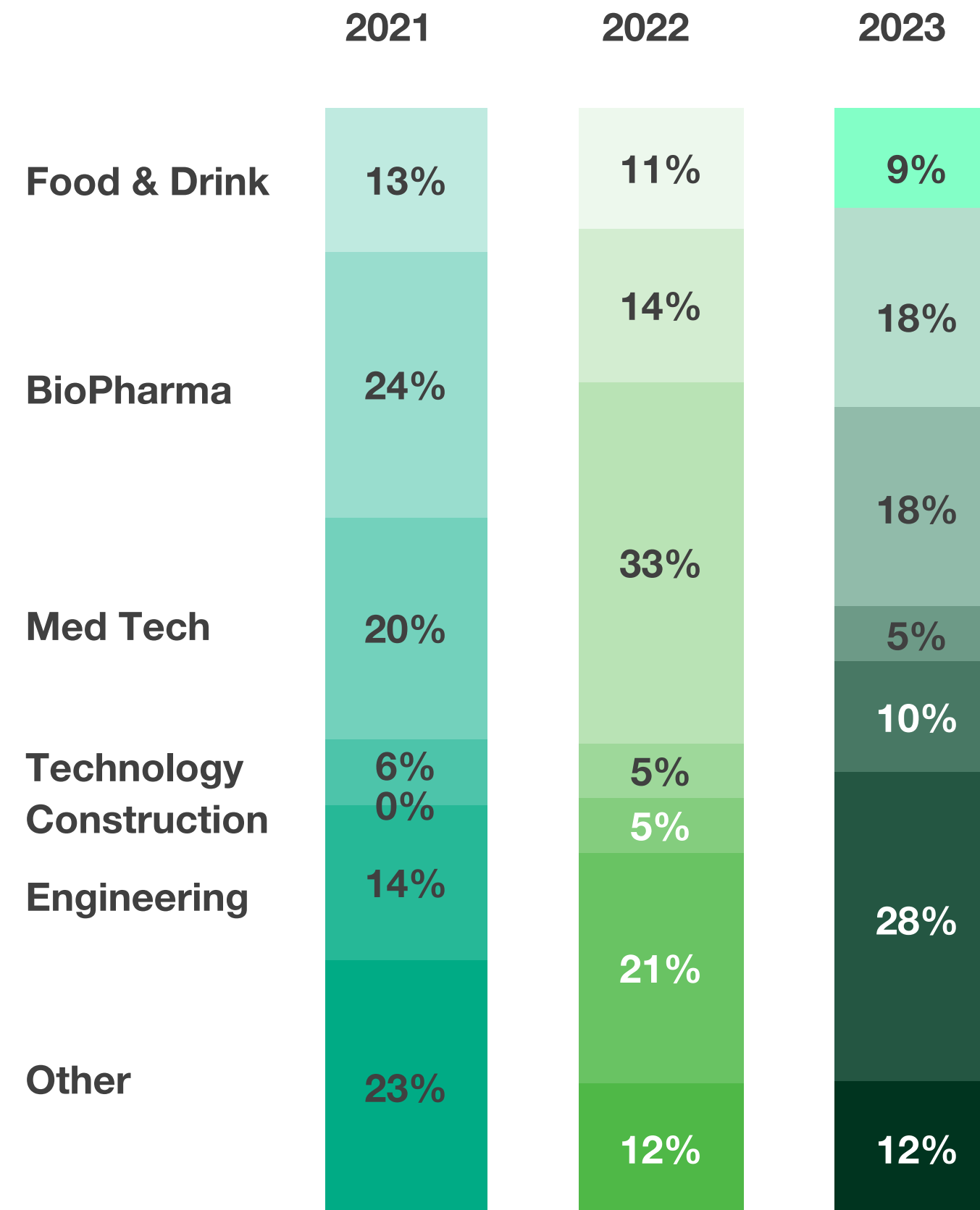
Attracting and/or retaining staff is identified by 67% of business leaders as a major challenge, with 72% expecting to see wage increases. This will pose a challenge for businesses over the short term, given full employment with 32% expecting to increase employee numbers, on top of the regulated labour cost increases scheduled in 2024.



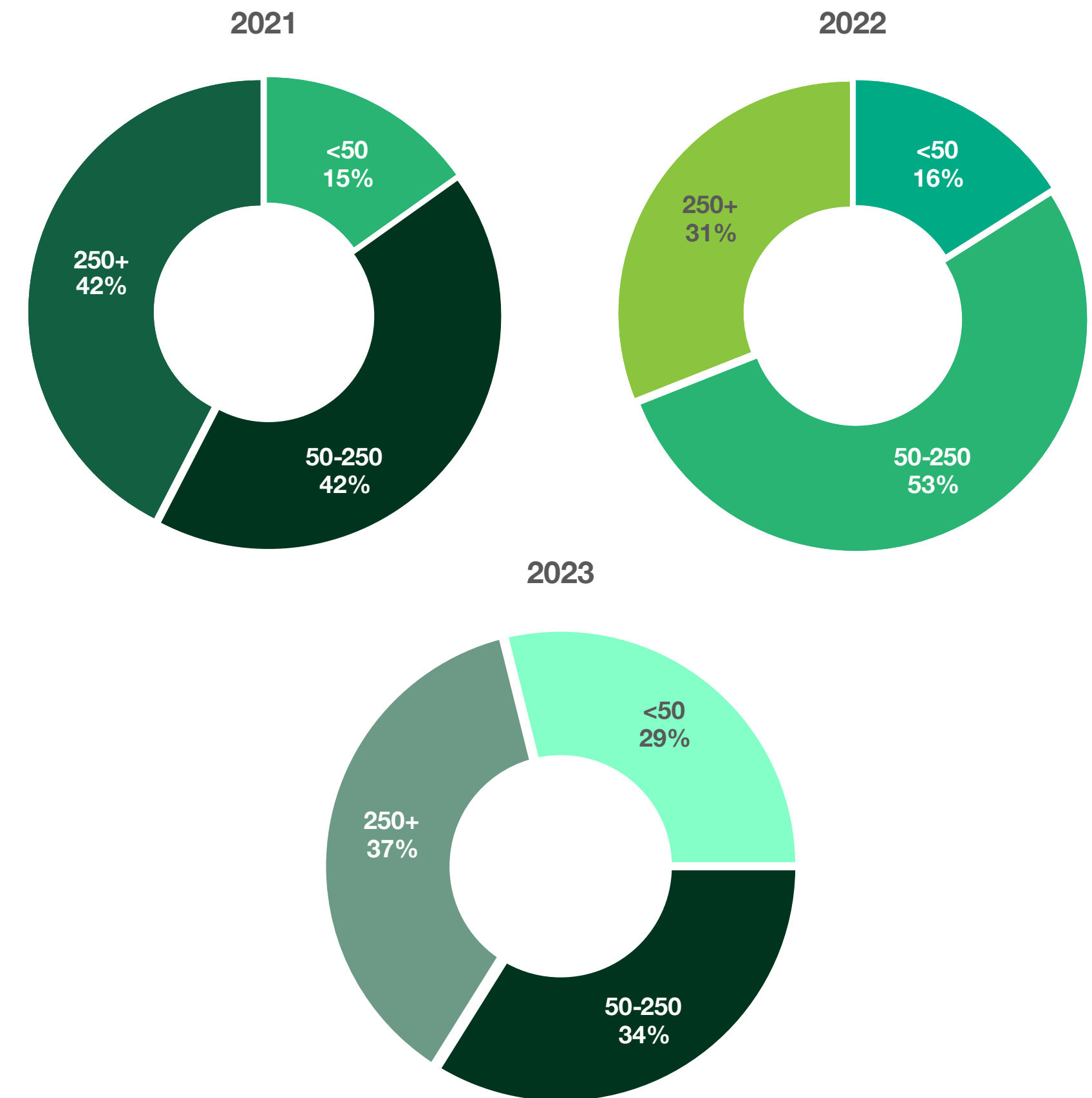
There is a marked uplift in R&D investment this year, with 29% of business leaders planning to invest compared to 21% last year.

Participant profile

A wide range of industry sectors and company sizes are represented in the 2023 report, consistent with previous years surveys.



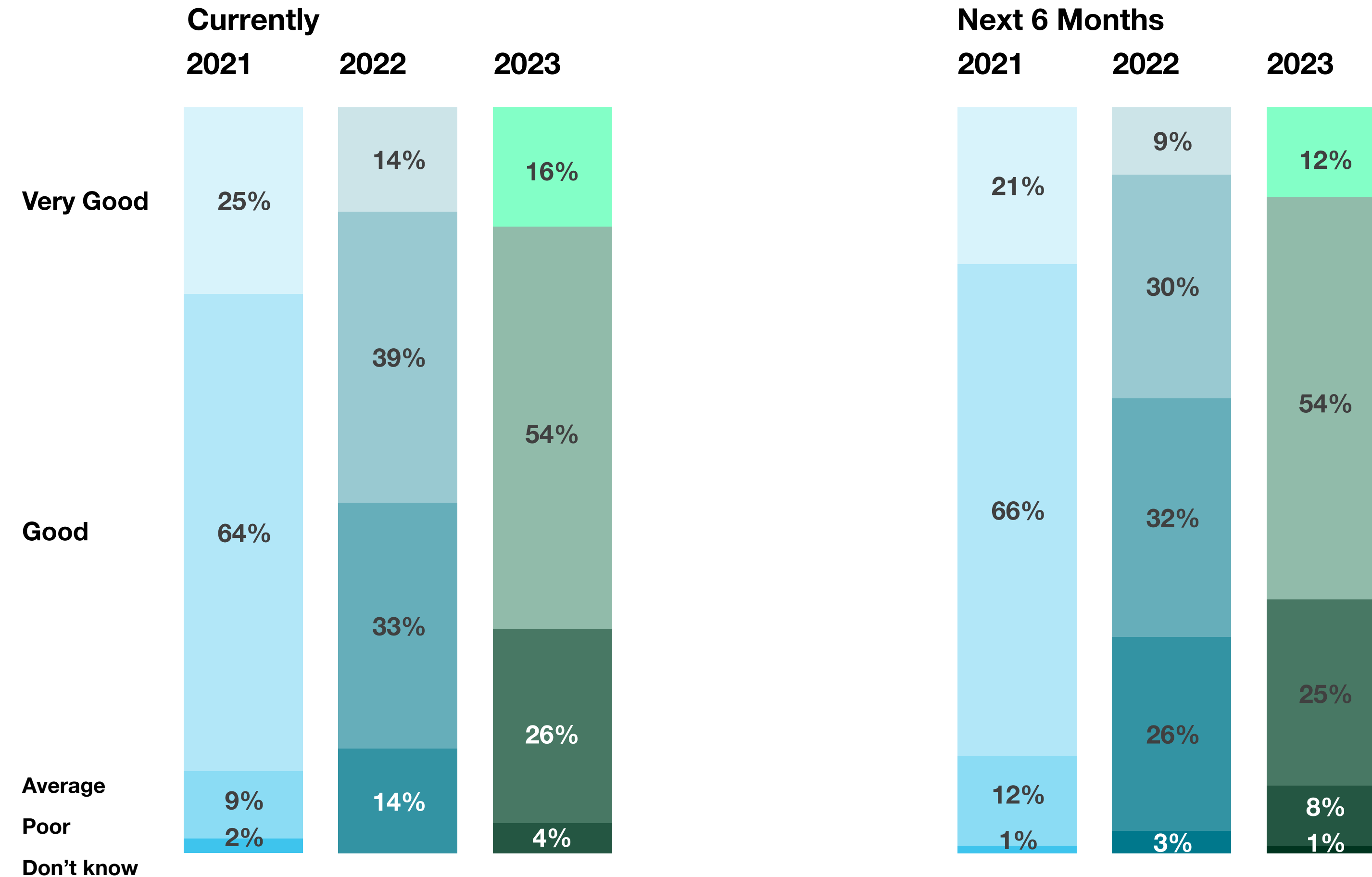
Which one of the following best describes your organisations main manufacturing activity in Ireland?



How many full and part-time employees does your organisation have in Ireland?

How CEOs feel about the manufacturing environment (2021 v 2022 v 2023)

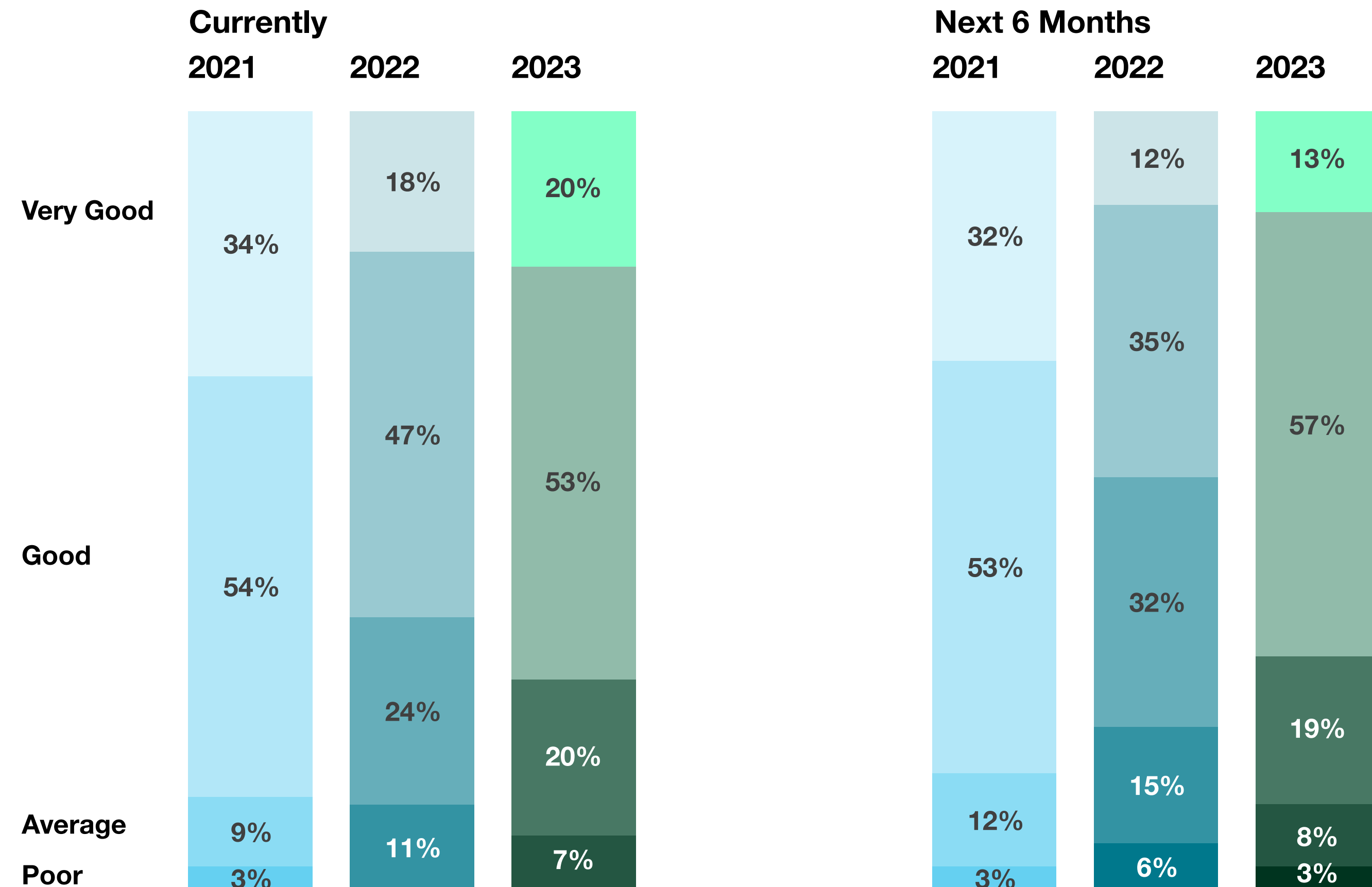
Manufacturers are cautiously optimistic about the current business environment compared to last year, (the very good and good rating has gone from 53% to 70%), however still not as high as 2021 where confidence was at 89%. Business leaders are more optimistic about the outlook for the next 6 month than was the case this time last year (the very good and good rating has gone from 39% to 66%).



How would you assess the manufacturing environment in Ireland as it is currently and how it will be over the next 6 months?

How CEOs feel about their manufacturing business (2021 v 2022 v 2023)

Business leaders are more optimistic this year in terms of their own business compared to last year (the very good and good rating has gone from 65% to 73%), however still not as high as 2021 at 88%. The outlook for this year remains positive over the next 6 months (with 70% rating it good or very good), and well ahead of perceived outlook over the same timeframe in 2022 (with 46% rating it good or very good).



How would you assess your manufacturing business in Ireland as it is currently and how it will be over the next 6 months?

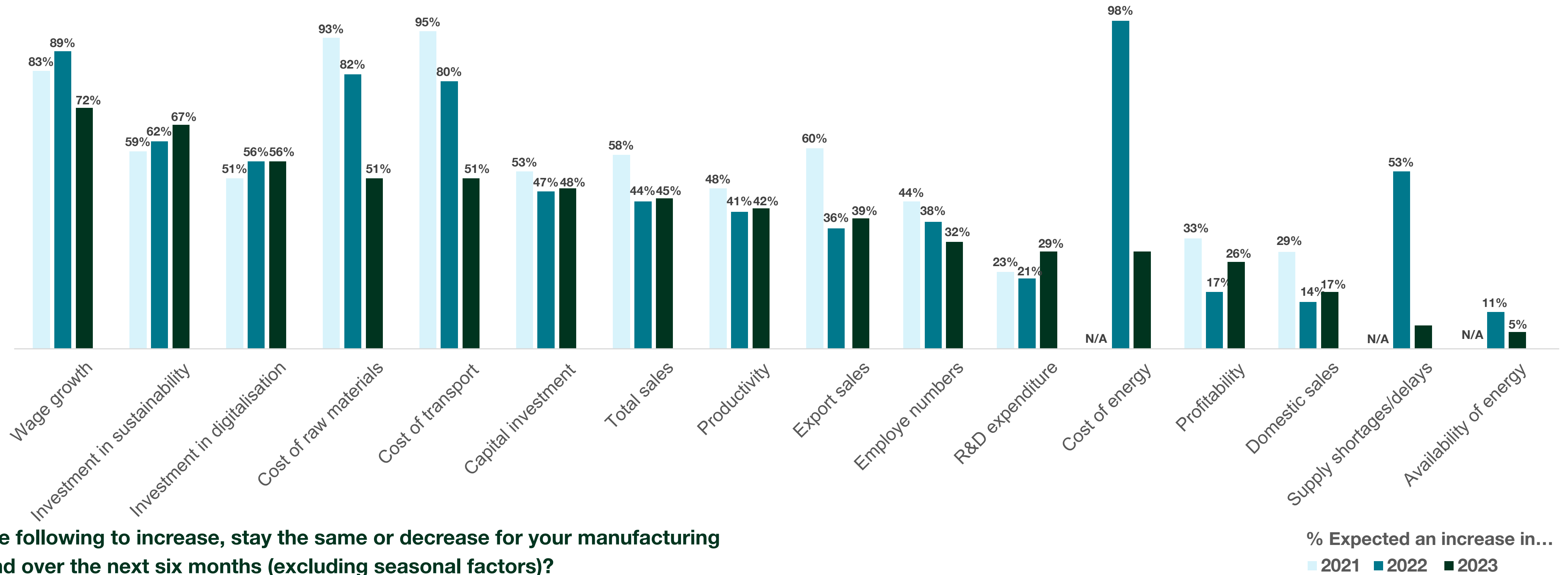
Expected outlook over the next 6 months

Although wage growth is expected to increase for 72% of businesses, that is a slight moderation on previous studies.

Manufacturing businesses have slightly higher expectations in terms of profitability, increased total and export sales compared to last year, presumably a consequence of the marked decline in expected energy cost increases and supply chain related issues.

On a positive note, businesses expect to increase investment in sustainability (67%), digitalisation (56%), capital investment (48%) and R&D (29%).

The graph below shows the different areas of the business where respondents expect to see increases.



Business challenges (2021 v 2022 v 2023)

Businesses face a range of major challenges (5.6 on average) with attracting and/or retaining staff and the cost of labour most widely mentioned. This will pose a major challenge for businesses in the next 6 months, given full employment with 32% expecting to increase employee numbers, on top of the regulated labour cost increases scheduled in 2024.

While the geopolitical circumstances that brought energy and supply chains to the fore in 2022 have abated, many of the challenges business faced in the past, while not as prominent, are still prevalent. There is an expectation of increased costs, in particular across energy (47%) and raw materials (39%) which have the potential to undermine our competitiveness if not managed.

More businesses (39%) expect weaker global growth to be a major challenge for their manufacturing business over the next 6 months, compared to 32% over the same time frame last year.

Which, if any, of the following do you expect to be a major challenge for your manufacturing business in Ireland over the next six months?

	2021	2022	2023
Attracting/retaining workforce	63%	62%	67%
Cost of labour	45%	74%	61%
Cost of energy	70%	94%	47%
Availability of housing for employees*	N/A	N/A	47%
Weaker global growth	8%	32%	39%
Cost of raw materials	57%	77%	39%
Sustainability measure	17%	20%	26%
Regulatory environment	18%	29%	25%
Managing carbon emissions	20%	20%	23%
Availability of raw materials	62%	68%	22%
Cyber security	20%	23%	20%
Trade uncertainties	22%	36%	19%
Transport/logistics costs	64%	62%	18%
Irish planning regulations	15%	24%	15%
Remote/hybrid working	7%	11%	14%
Increase digitalisation	15%	18%	11%
Access to capital/finance	4%	6%	10%
Access to EU/Government supports	6%	11%	10%
Availability of energy	28%	70%	9%
Land/plant costs	11%	5%	8%
Returning employees on-site	10%	9%	8%
Taxation environment	4%	11%	8%
Covid related issues	12%	9%	1%
Other	6%	5%	3%

*Availability of housing for employees is a new question added in 2023 survey.

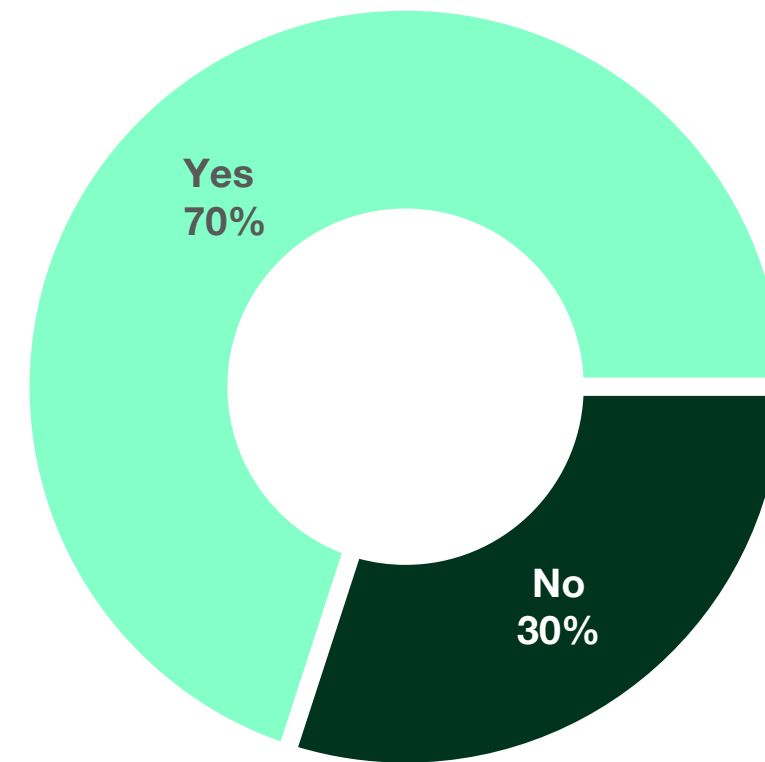
Digitalisation

Digitalisation refers to the use of digital technologies to change a business model and provide new revenues and/or value-producing opportunities.

Digitalisation, as defined, is a priority for 7 in 10 businesses and one that also increases with company size.

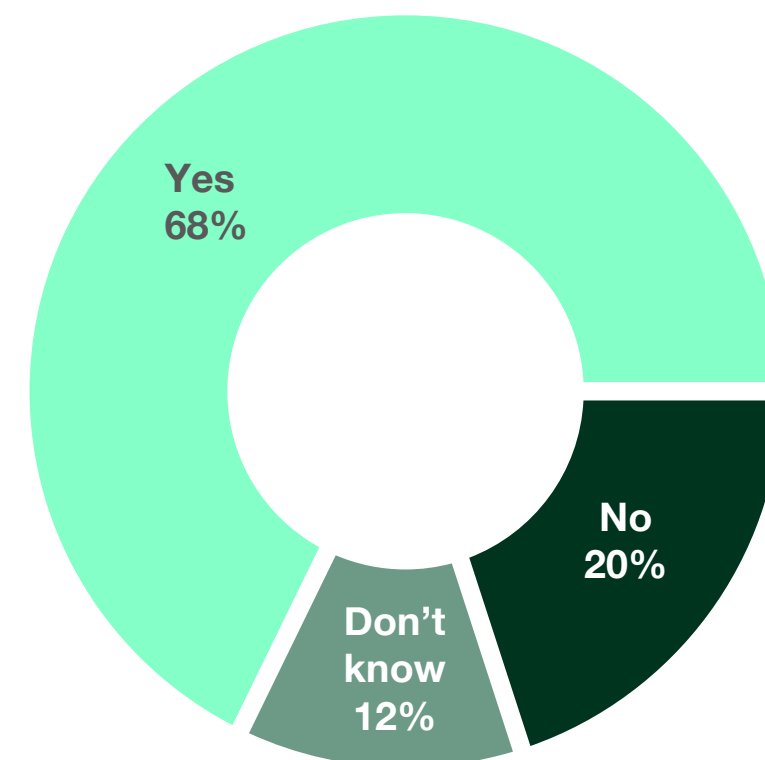
Plans to implement digitalisation match digitalisation as a priority, with increased efficiency and continuous improvement the main drivers for adoption.

2023



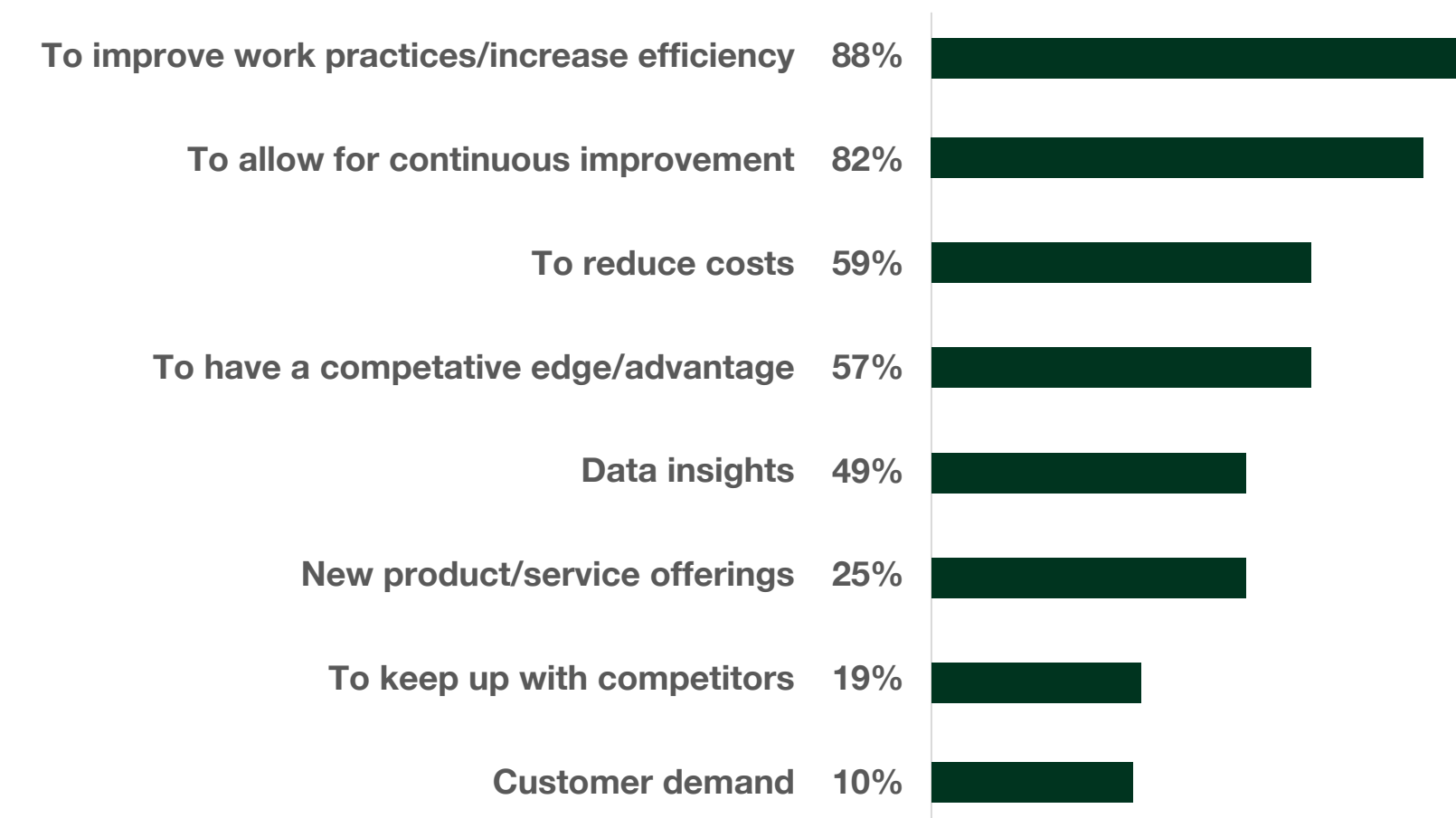
Is digitalisation, defined as “the use of digital technologies to change a business model and provide new revenues and/or value-producing opportunities” a priority for your business?

2023



Is your business introducing any digitalisation initiatives in Ireland in the next 1 to 2 years?

Reasons for initiatives



Why is your business introducing digitalisation initiatives in Ireland in the next 1 – 2 years?

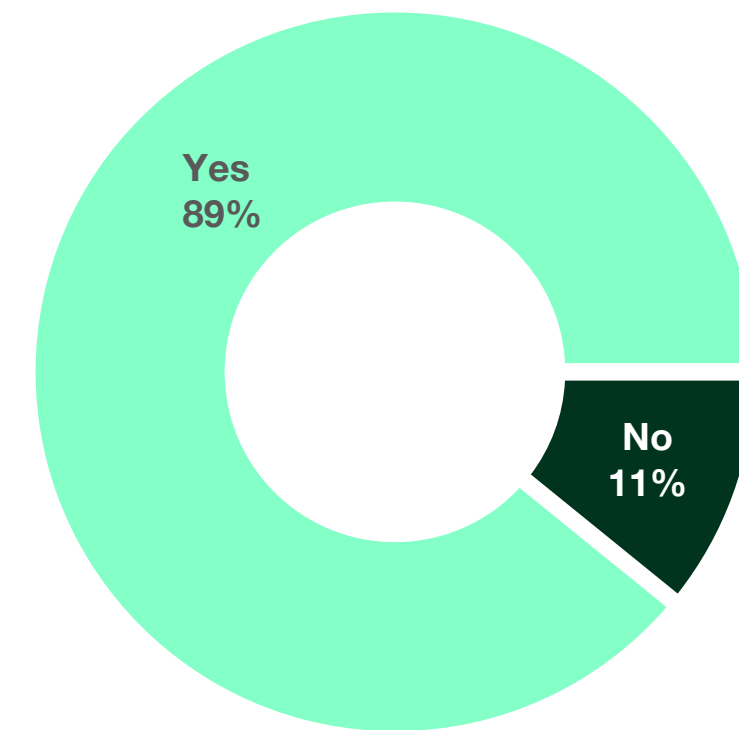
Sustainability

Sustainability can be described as the ability to develop without depleting natural resources or impacting on the environment.

9 in 10 companies agree that sustainability, as per the definition provided, is a priority for their business, and agreement levels increase with company size.

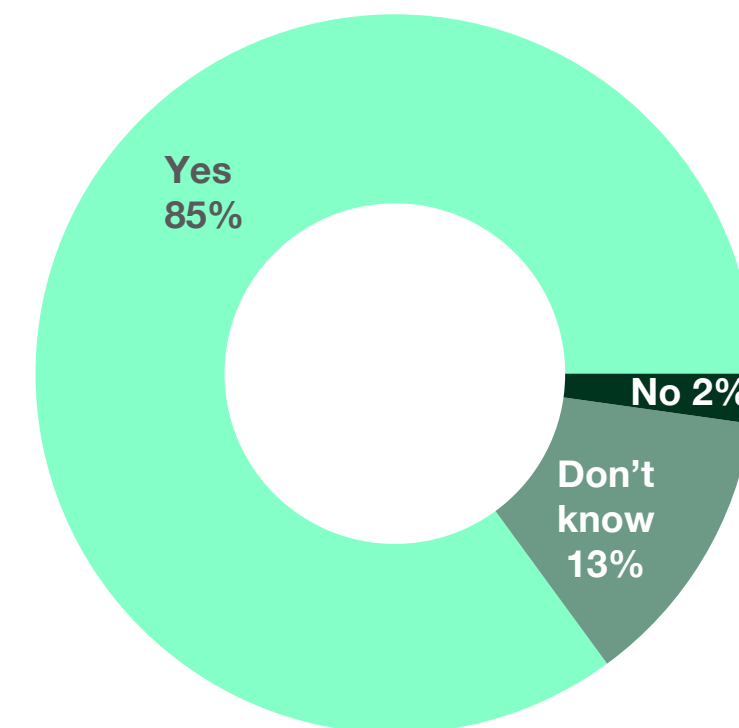
Given the priority attached to sustainability and impending reporting directives, 85% are introducing initiatives in the next 1-2 years that will lessen their environmental impact and address customer expectations.

2023



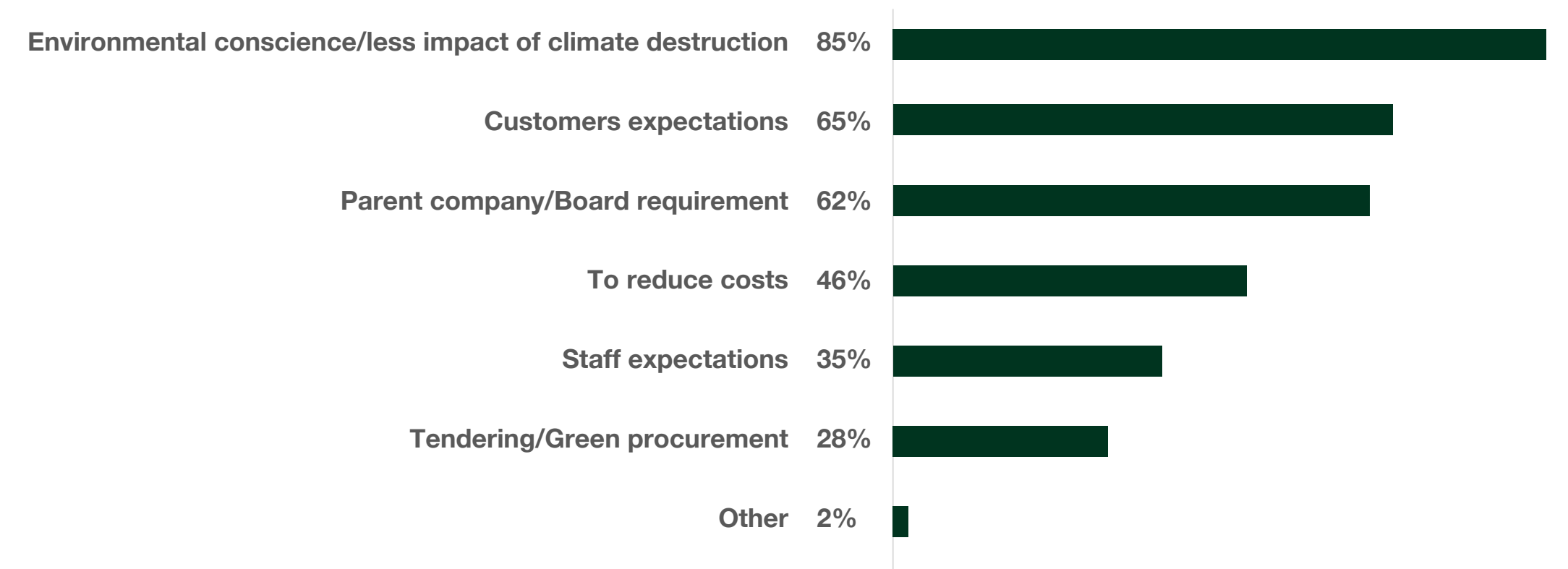
Is sustainability, defined as “the ability to develop without depleting natural resources or impacting on the environment” a priority for your business?

2023



Is your business introducing any sustainability initiatives in Ireland in the next 1 to 2 years?

Reasons for initiatives



Why is your business introducing sustainability initiatives in Ireland in the next 1 – 2 years?

Cost increases expected

72%

Nearly three quarters of all respondents expect increases in wage growth (72%).

51%

Just over half expect increases raw materials (51%).

51%

Just over half expect to see increases in transport (51%).

29%

Almost a third expect to see increase in cost of energy (29%).

Investment continues to be strong to enhance productivity

67%

Two thirds (67%) expect investment in environmental sustainability to increase.

56%

Half (56%) expect to increase investment in digitalisation/advanced manufacturing.

48%

Just under half (48%) expect to increase capital investment.

32%

One third, 32% expect to increase employee numbers.

29%

Nearly one in three expect to see increases in R&D expenditure.

The top challenges for manufacturers are:



Attracting and retaining talent (major challenge 67%) and cost of labour (major challenge 61%).



Availability of housing for employees (major challenge 47%).



Cost of energy (major challenge for 47%).



Weaker global growth (major challenge for 39%).



Cost of raw materials (major challenge for 36%).

The number 1 priority identified for companies is:

30%

Improving profitability (30%)

11%

Access to labour (11%)

9%

Increasing production (9%)

9%

Expansion in Ireland (9%)

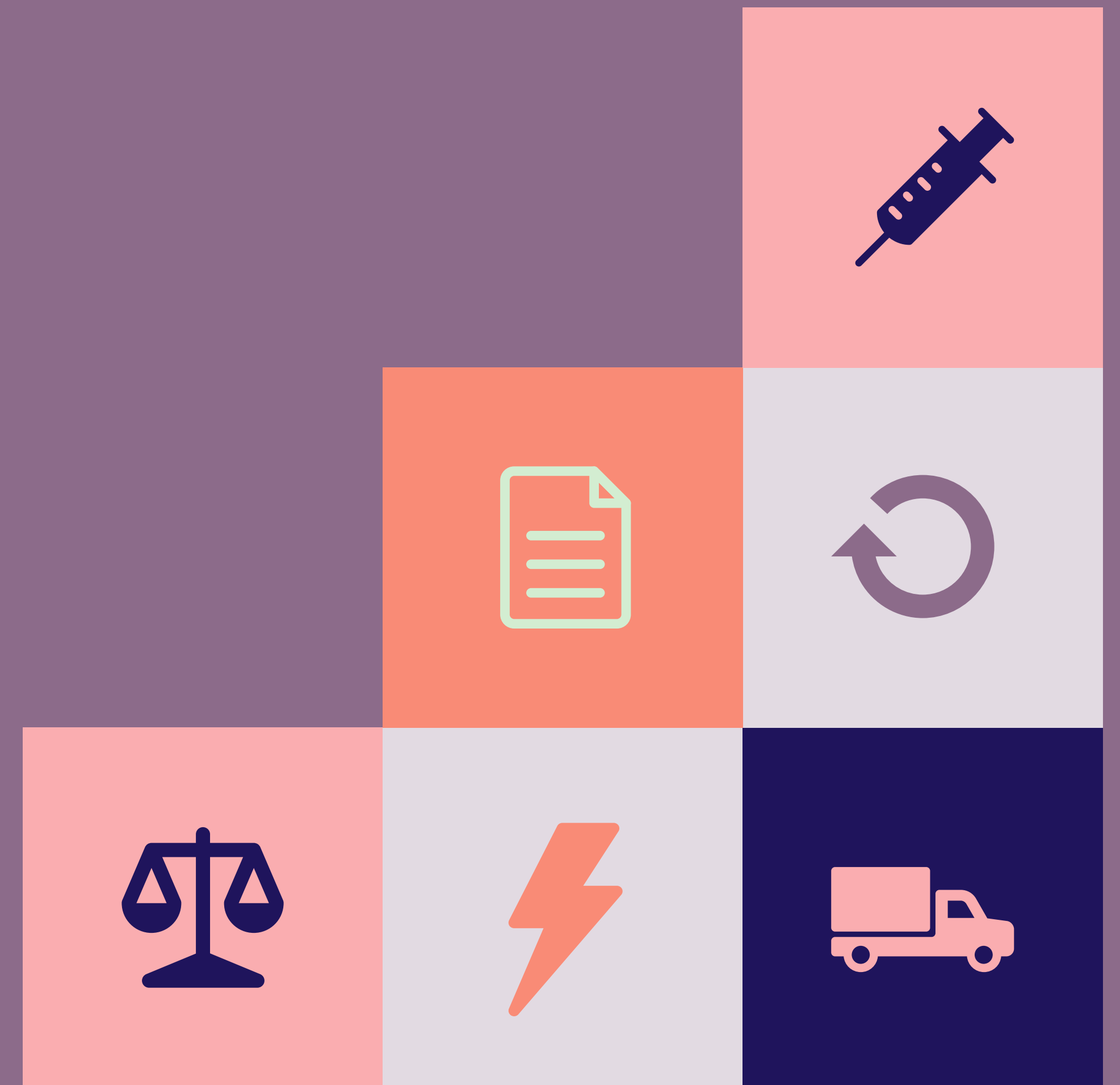
8%

Energy cost/efficiency (8%), with 26% citing it as a top 3 priority

5%

Cost of labour (5%) with 29% citing it as in the top 3 priorities

What manufacturing needs from policy makers



Recommendations to Government



Labour market and competitiveness

- Ensure supports for rising employment costs are in place. It is critical that the State effectively operationalises the comprehensive support programme put in place in Budget 2024 for companies who are struggling with the introduction of the living wage and other employment costs.
- The Government must produce a clear roadmap on other tax measures to ensure that the introduction of the living wage does not lead to high marginal effective tax rates for workers.



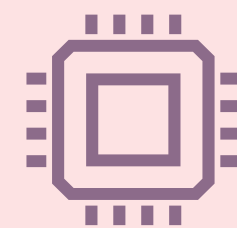
Taxation and incentives

- Continue to improve the R&D tax credit which would benefit from greater certainty around decision-making consistency and broader administration.
- Introduce accelerated capital allowances for advanced manufacturing. This should include computerised/computer-aided machinery and robotic machines.
- Simplify our corporate tax regime to reflect new realities. Ibec supports a move to a territorial system of taxation for Ireland on the basis that there are many wide-reaching policy benefits of such a move.



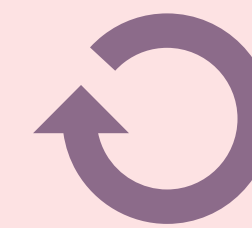
Talent and innovation

- Leverage the National Training Fund to support enterprise-led skills development and boost enterprise education engagement.
- Close the €307 million funding gap in higher education to deliver a sustainable funding model to support Ireland's universities to remain at the cutting edge.
- Deliver a sustainable funding model to support an integrated apprenticeship system, and to reduce anomalies between craft and consortia-led apprenticeship in relation to off the job training costs.



Digitalisation and advanced manufacturing

- Intensify political commitment to the digital agenda and work with business and other partners to lead and shape EU governance and conditions impacting further digital transformation of manufacturing.
- Develop, co-ordinate and adequately resource national cybersecurity and regulatory capacities in expected digital regulation, impacting advanced manufacturing.
- Introduce a new multi-annual 'National Digital Agenda Accelerator' Fund, with €500 million in the period 2024-2030.



Sustainability and energy

- Strengthen financial and advisory supports for Irish firms developing sustainability strategies in line with industry best practice and legislative requirements.
- Accelerate the transition to carbon neutrality by scaling up and expanding industry supports for renewables and energy efficiency.
- Ensure that the EU energy market reform proposals currently being developed by the European Commission take sufficient account of the cross-border nature of the all-island Single Energy Market. There will also be a continuing need to support Irish firms whose viability remains under threat due to energy costs.



Trade and international relations

- The EU should deepen the single market by creating a predictable regulatory environment that drives innovation, removes barriers, enforces existing rules and does more in the areas of services and capital.
- The EU must work with major trading partners to achieve WTO reform, and secure new and diversified bilateral agreements that support trade, including digital and data flows.

Labour market and competitiveness

The enormous growth of recent years has seen a corresponding change in our labour market, with record numbers now working in Ireland. With a tight labour market looking set to continue for the foreseeable future, we must ensure as many people as possible are supported into a diverse and inclusive labour force, our taxation system is reviewed to ensure Ireland is an attractive place to live and work, and that capacity pressures in areas including childcare, healthcare and security are addressed to deliver on quality-of-life issues.

With employers of all sizes across every sector now reporting difficulties in recruiting to fill vacancies, we must facilitate an increase in our labour force both through attracting skilled labour from abroad and further activation of our existing working-age population not yet in employment. This will require significant investment in areas such as childcare, transport, and education to remove the barriers which prevent people from seeking employment and ensure that Ireland is an attractive place to live and work. Improving our tax offering will be key to ensuring work is rewarded and Ireland continues to be a draw for international talent.



Recommendations

- **Ensure supports for rising employment costs are fit for purpose:** It is critical that the State puts in place a comprehensive support programme for companies who are struggling with the transition to the living wage and other government imposed employment costs. While the support package for labour costs in Budget 2024 are welcomed and will provide relief for some firms facing substantial increases including the 12% in National Minimum Wage (some Ibec companies are facing increases in labour costs of up to 25% by 2026), however, more targeting of supports will be needed with a multi-annual approach between now and 2026. In the immediate, it is crucial that this scheme becomes operational as quickly as possible, remains easily accessible and available to those who need it, and serves as the starting point for

a broader conversation about the transition to significant labour market changes over the coming years.

- The Government must also produce a **clear roadmap on other tax** (PRSI, USC, IT) and social welfare (Working Family Payment, Housing Assistance Payment, SUSI grants, childcare subsidies, etc) to ensure that the introduction of the living wage does not lead to high marginal effective tax rates for workers. As outlined in the 2022 University of Maynooth report a move to a €12.30 Living wage could lead to loss of between 29% of the increase through increased taxation and lost social supports (single earner, no kids) and 76% of the increase (dual earner, 4 kids). Budget 2024 must set out a plan to ensure an increasing wage floor does not interact with the tax and welfare system in such a way as to impact on people's incentive to work.

“Working with Labour Employer Economic Forum, Ibec will seek to support a coordination of tax and social welfare policies which can bring benefits to employees through improved public services or benefits.”

Maeve McElwee, Executive Director, Employer Relations, Ibec

Taxation and incentives

The coming years will see a significant change to our business tax model, not least the introduction of a minimum effective tax rate for large multinational enterprises (MNCs) from January 2024 and significant changes to our tax base. In this context, standing still is not an option. Tax will be less central to our offering in the future, but it will still be a lever of competition. It is imperative that both our offering for FDI and Irish headquartered multinationals is maximised to drive investment and growth. There will be a particular need to focus on tax simplification, investment in R&D and ensuring we maximise the attractiveness of our tax offering for highly skilled and mobile talent.

“We have an opportunity to provide innovative supports within the construct of a new international tax settlement. This can be achieved through improving our supports for the growth of indigenous manufacturers, providing tax incentives for technological and sustainability opportunities.”

Gerard Brady, Ibec Chief Economist

Recommendations

- **Continue to improve the R&D tax credit:** The current credit would benefit from greater certainty around decision-making consistency and broader administration. We should also remove or significantly increase the €100,000 or 15% limit on qualifying outsourced expenditure to Third Level Institutions and the restrictions on outsourcing to related parties. Continually review Appendix 1 (SI No. 434 /2004) R&D qualifying activities to ensure they keep pace with ongoing scientific progress.
- **Introduce accelerated capital allowances for advanced manufacturing:** This should include computerised/computer-aided machinery and robotic machines. Ireland has the second-lowest density of industrial robots in the EU15, despite them being strongly linked with increased productivity. Research by Micheals and Graetz (2018) has shown that growth in robot density (robots per worker) accounted for about one-sixth of productivity growth between 1993 and 2007.



Taxation and incentives (continued)

Recommendations

- **Simplify our corporate tax regime to reflect new realities:** Ibec supports a move to a territorial system of taxation for Ireland on the basis that there are many wide-reaching policy benefits of such a move. The merits of such a regime have been discussed in previous consultations over recent years, most notably the Coffey Review of Ireland’s corporation tax code. These include reduced complexity, lower administrative costs, and greater certainty for taxpayers. Indeed, Ireland is unusual as the only EU country left operating a global regime and one of only four OECD countries doing so. This undermines Ireland’s reputation for competitiveness vis-a-vis other regimes globally. We also strongly support the reform of Ireland’s interest deductibility rules. The increased complexity of Ireland’s interest deductibility rules combined with Anti-Tax Avoidance Directive (ATAD) rules, and a new layering of Pillar 2 will require simplification of the overall system to avoid it becoming vastly complex and restrictive compared to our competitors.
- **Introduce a low-carbon super deduction:** The accelerated capital allowance for energy-efficient equipment which has recently been extended to 2025 should be improved to ensure the uptake of low-carbon technologies. The capital allowances should be increased to a super deduction of 130% of capital outlay and significantly simplified – to bring forward investment in our low carbon future.



Talent and innovation

Innovation in manufacturing is changing people's lives, from smart communication technologies, digital health, new drug development and new food and diet solutions. Irish manufacturing is at the leading edge of this innovation, with an increasing number of global and European R&D centres locating here, with a strong focus on developing new opportunities for a digital future.

The availability of highly skilled people, and the ability to collaborate with research intensive universities gives confidence to global manufacturers to bring the world's most advanced technologies to Ireland. Co-locating R&D and production is a strategic choice that enables many organisations to step up the value chain. Ireland's offering must remain internationally attractive to secure global innovation projects that have a positive net benefit to cost ratio for Ireland.

New technologies including automation, AI, digitilisation and 5G are transforming the way goods and services are produced and distributed. The challenge is determining, developing, and deploying the skills that industry needs today and the new skills of the future.



Recommendations

- **Unlock the National Training Fund** to support enterprise-led skills development and boost enterprise education engagement. Unlock the surplus of the National Training fund, launch an industry led investment campaign that deliver key skills for a 21st century Ireland, including advice and skills supporting Industry 5.0 requirements.
- **Underpin the rollout of Impact 2030 under** Ireland's Research and Innovation Strategy with a commitment to increased multiannual investment in research and innovation to transform and drive innovation in the manufacturing sector. That includes closing the €307 million funding gap in higher education to deliver a sustainable funding model to support Ireland's universities to remain at the cutting edge.
- **Create a fit-for-purpose financial model for apprenticeships:** Deliver a sustainable funding model to support an integrated apprenticeship system, and to reduce anomalies between craft and consortia-led apprenticeship in relation to off the job training costs. To encourage more businesses and in particular SMEs to participate in apprenticeships, the new funding model for apprenticeships should cover the cost of off-the-job training for all employers.
- **Support lifelong learning for the innovative manufacturing sector and enabling ecosystem:** Ensure appropriate and sustained funding through government entities such as Skillnet Ireland, SOLAS and the HEA for upskilling in industry, to ensure it can meet current and future skills needs.
- **Develop a national skills strategy for manufacturing.** Identify the next generation skills required to support advanced manufacturing and invest in targeted supports and training programmes to ensure necessary pipeline of diverse talent.

Ibec's Better Housing, Better Business campaign

Ibec recently launched its Better Housing, Better Business campaign which outlines several recommendations to address the housing crisis. The crisis in the availability of affordable homes in Ireland is becoming the critical barrier to the continued growth and development of business investment. An inadequate supply of homes is the single largest impediment to attracting and retaining talented workers, without whom business investment and expansions are not possible.

Younger workers are financially pressed by ever-higher rents and dismayed by the receding prospect of homeownership. This ultimately spills over into issues around well-being and productivity in the workplace, as well as undermining Ireland's attractiveness to both internationally mobile workers and its competitiveness, which ultimately spills over into issues around well-being and productivity in the workplace.

Manufacturing leaders face a range of major challenges with availability of housing for employees mentioned by 47% of business leaders.



Digitalisation and advanced manufacturing

Our manufacturing is globalised, diverse, and smart. Digital readiness matters to competitiveness and resilience. The European Investment Bank (2023) found that “digitalisation drives firms’ resilience to economic disruption and climate change, and it has helped European businesses resist repeated shocks”. The EIB report that recent shocks have also accelerated digital adoption.

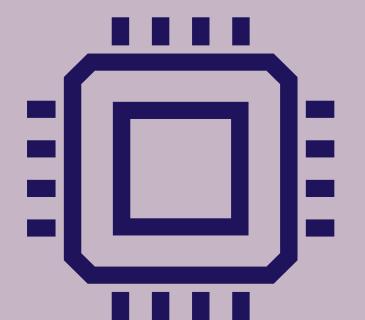
While progress is being made, we must address gaps in the state and rate of our digital readiness. Policy makers must lead, safeguard, and enable further digital, and data enabled opportunities across manufacturing.

Recommendations

- **Retain and intensify political commitment to the digital agenda and its implementation across manufacturing:** Ireland and the EU have committed to ambitious digital and green transitions to 2030. These ambitions share similarities and dependencies. Intensify work with business and other partners to lead and shape EU governance and conditions impacting further digital transformation of manufacturing.
- **Build regulatory infrastructure to support advanced manufacturing:** Develop, co-ordinate and adequately resource national cybersecurity and regulatory capacities in expected digital regulation impacting advanced manufacturing e.g., AI and data.
- **Introduce a new multiannual ‘National Digital Agenda Accelerator’ Fund:** Ireland needs to maximise its planned National Recovery and Resilience Plan and National Development Plan investment in digital

and needs to future proof trusted digital innovation, skills, adoption, and services across future Budgets and the latter half of this decade. We recommend a fund of €500 million in the period 2024-2030.

- **Build awareness amongst business about benefits of digital transformation:** Pay particular attention to supporting further: technology awareness and diffusion; strategic and technical skills development and training pathways; attracting/retaining mobile talent; and research commercialisation. Actively engage industry.
- **Address administrative and planning delays to digital infrastructure** with priority being given to strategic physical and institutional infrastructure that supports advanced manufacturing.



Sustainability and energy

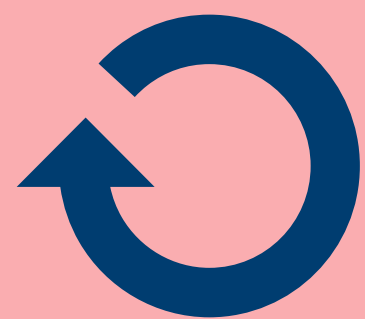
Corporate sustainability has taken on new meaning and importance in recent years. What was once primarily an environmental concern, now encompasses a wide range of environmental, social and governance (ESG) risks and opportunities.

Ibec's continuing Better Lives Better Business campaign is predicated on our belief that investment will increasingly flow to countries, regions or cities that prioritise quality of life. This imperative naturally favours businesses that champion the interests of all stakeholders, and that have a proactive approach to climate action, improved air and water quality, the circular economy transition, and biodiversity (including the marine environment). Government policy must be tailored to ensure firms meet their sustainability ambitions in a timely and cost-effective way.

Roads, transport systems, airports, ports, broadband, water, sewage and other utilities have a direct impact on a firm's productivity, competitiveness, and investment potential. To remain competitive and achieve growth

and scale, businesses must be supported by world class infrastructure. We welcome the Government's investment ambition set out in Budget 2024, particularly the establishment of the National Infrastructure Fund which has the potential to enhance critical infrastructure delivery over the coming decade. Ireland's ability to deliver critical infrastructure and keep pace with growing demand has been frustrated by costly and cumbersome planning processes, poor spatial planning, and high development costs.

In the short-medium term, affordable energy remains a primary concern for business. Ireland must develop a robust long term energy transition plan to avoid a repeat of the recent electricity supply challenges and ensure Ireland transitions to carbon neutrality in a secure and cost-effective way.



Sustainability and energy (continued)

Recommendations

- **Strengthen financial and advisory supports for Irish firms developing sustainability strategies** in line with industry best practice and legislative requirements.
- **Accelerate the transition to carbon neutrality by scaling up and expanding industry supports for renewables and energy efficiency.** Provide new financial supports and tax credit incentives to encourage firms embed eco-design principles when innovating.
- **Streamline and adequately resource the planning and consents regime** to enable delivery of world-class transport and utilities infrastructure.
- **Ensure that the EU energy market reform** proposals currently being developed by the European Commission take sufficient account of the cross-border nature of the all-island Single Energy Market. There will also be a continuing need to support Irish firms whose viability remains under threat due to energy costs.

Climate Action: A toolkit for business

Ibec has launched 'Climate Action: A toolkit for business' in collaboration with Accenture. This comprehensive toolkit provides businesses with the information they need for their climate action journey and provides practical guidance on how to develop an enduring climate action strategy.



Through this Climate Action Toolkit, Ibec and Accenture share learnings, experience, and best practice, which can be used by executives to understand the business imperative, and more importantly to develop a best practice approach, to support businesses to deliver on carbon reduction. It provides an overview of key concepts and developments in climate change science and regulation, while also setting out five steps businesses can take on carbon measurement and subsequent reduction roadmap. It also provides additional insights and guidance for four large sectors of the Irish economy.

Trade and international relations

As an open economy, Ireland is critically dependent on the free flow of global trade, both goods and services, for its economic wellbeing. Trade and the ability to attract investment are among Ireland and the EU's most powerful assets, and at the core of economic prosperity and competitiveness.

“Our future economic fortunes continue to demand an outward-looking international relations and trade policy that is aligned with the needs of business and citizens.”

Pat Ivory, Director of EU & International Affairs, Ibec



Ibec recommendations are:

- **Urgent action is needed at EU and global level as the multilateral trading system remains at risk:** EU must work with major trading partners to achieve WTO reform, and secure new and diversified bilateral agreements that support trade, including digital and data flows.
- **The EU should deepen the single market by creating a predictable regulatory environment** that drives innovation, removes barriers, enforces existing rules and does more in the areas of services and capital.
- **The EU should continue to build a stable and positive relationship with the UK** based on the Windsor Framework and develop closer relations under the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement, while continuing to monitor regulatory divergence.
- **Maximise the potential of the EU-US Trade and Technology Council:** Revitalise the transatlantic relationship to enhance cooperation on trade and competitiveness, while addressing overcapacity, subsidies and sustainability issues. Maximise the potential of

the EU-US Trade and Technology Council and find permanent solutions for non-tariff barriers and long-standing trade conflicts such as steel, aluminium and aircraft subsidies.

- **The EU must ensure a balanced relationship with China** that considers risks but remains engaged in trade in areas of mutual benefit.
- **Regular engagement with businesses via consultations,** stakeholder forums and inter-Governmental working groups is vital to enhance open strategic autonomy and address economic security concerns.
- **To ensure prosperity and security along global value and supply chains,** the diversification of export and import markets is essential. Economic de-risking can address dependencies and develop capacities to ensure a resilient and sustainable supply of critical raw materials for the green and digital transitions.
- **Provide further support for the manufacturing sector** via State support schemes, grants, trade and marketing promotion internationally for firms.

Manufacturing case studies 2023



A hub of talent and impact

“For the company, people development isn’t just a strategy, it’s an essential part of the DNA.”

Conor Russell, Vice President of Operations for Boston Scientific in Clonmel, talks about how Boston Scientific has evolved over the years and why Ireland is a good place to start and grow a manufacturing business.

A hub for talent and impact

In the last few decades, Ireland has cemented its reputation as a hub for medtech innovation. This evolution is due to the abundance of talent, proactive government support, a thriving education ecosystem, and the increasing presence of global medtech giants. Today, Ireland is widely regarded as one of the top 5 medtech hubs in the world.

At the heart of this hub of innovation lies Boston Scientific, a global medical device company. The company was founded in 1979 by John Abele and Pete Nicolas with a vision to transform lives through less invasive technologies. Today it is a global medical technology leader, with over 45,000 employees worldwide, providing a broad range of solutions that reduce the cost of healthcare and address the unmet needs of over 33M patients every year. Last year, Boston Scientific generated over \$12 bn in global sales and supports the treatment of diseases as diverse as heart failure, atrial fibrillation, vascular diseases, gastrointestinal conditions, chronic pain and specific types of cancer.

The journey of Boston Scientific began in Ireland in 1994 when the company started up operations at their Galway site. Very shortly afterwards 2 other sites were added in Cork and Clonmel. After almost 30 successful years, they employ over 6,500 people across mainly manufacturing and research and development.

Conor Russell, vice president of Operations for Boston Scientific at the Clonmel site, says “Boston Scientific has been a leader in innovation and our

best ideas are as a result of the diverse perspectives of our people and of course insights from our customers and their patients.

“From drug-eluting stents to implantable defibrillators and from imaging scopes to stroke prevention, we are always innovating and advancing the way we deliver healthcare. In fact, one-third of our revenues came from products released on the market over the past three years, which include those that were acquired through strategic acquisitions.”



Nurturing talent for tomorrow

For Boston Scientific, Conor says talent and culture are “what sets us apart and what will define our long-term success”. For the company, people development isn’t just a strategy, it’s an essential part of the DNA.

“It’s become a much more competitive market in recent times,” says Conor. “We focus a lot on developing our people. The company places a strong emphasis on supporting continuous education, to help our employees hone their skills and work toward advancing their careers in our manufacturing and R&D teams. Skills like data analytics, software, additive manufacturing, and automation are in short supply and are critical to our continued success”.

“This strategy has been hugely successful. We encourage managers to promote from within, which leads to strong retention, as well as high engagement and employee satisfaction.”

From internal talent development to forging partnerships with universities, Conor says Boston Scientific is committed to nurturing the next generation of innovators. “We have also furthered our recruiting efforts with a very strong graduate recruitment programme in combination with the Irish Medtech Association’s apprenticeship programmes, which have had tremendous success in introducing new technical apprenticeship qualifications into our industry.

“Our employees enjoy being a part of a company that has a positive impact on people’s lives. The work we do impacts patients and healthcare systems around the world in the most profound way and that is a huge factor in our ability to attract and retain the best talent in the industry,”

The company’s relationships in the country extend deep into the heart of local communities. There’s not only the economic benefit of the salaries from the employees and companies that support the site, but the team also support local charities and volunteer organisations. From fundraising for charities that support cancer care, suicide prevention, and autism to promoting STEM education and supporting local LGBTQ+ organisations, the company’s commitment to community engagement is unwavering and has been a constant theme since it started operations here more than 25 years ago.

“It is hugely rewarding for our employees to be able to help out and give back to our community in meaningful ways - a community that supports us as much as we support them.”



A great place for business

With a significant concentration of industry players and a wealth of talent coming out of its universities, Ireland is undoubtedly a global hub for medtech.

Overall, there are 260,000 people employed in the Irish manufacturing sector, accounting for over 12% of total employment in the economy. Nine of the world's top 10 medical device companies have operations in Ireland. The medtech industry in Ireland exports medical devices to over 100 countries with 80% of stents used across the world manufactured in Ireland.

Conor says, “The opportunities are immense in Ireland. In the medtech sector, we already have a world-class manufacturing base. Our goal is to build on this platform, expand our R&D capabilities, and focus on how we can add even more value through product development and innovation.”

Conor says government policies have played a pivotal role in making Ireland a hub for innovation. “We’ve seen the direct impact of this in Clonmel, from a decade ago where we had only manufacturing on-site to today where we have a strong multifunctional R&D team developing the next-generation technologies for patients and physicians.”

But Conor says the need for continued focus on education is critical to ensure Ireland remains competitive as a manufacturing leader. “Investment in STEM skills and our public research infrastructure is crucial. Our graduates need to be equipped to compete globally. An investment in education is an investment in the next generation and in our future economy.”

The company’s vision for its operations in Ireland is to continue to transform even more lives, in more meaningful ways. With the right talent and culture and with an unwavering focus on the patient, we can be confident in continued success and a very exciting future.

Conor Russell,
Vice President of Operations for Boston Scientific



A strategy of innovation and growth

“We always, first and foremost, want to make the best quality product we can. We focus on three pillars: better sourced, better made and better for you.”

John O’Brien, Managing Director of O’Brien Fine Foods, talks about how the company has evolved in its innovation over the years and how Ireland has become more competitive.

A strategy of innovation and growth

Ireland has not only become a centre for manufacturing in sectors such as biopharmaceuticals, electronics, and medical technology, but it also acts as a hub for food manufacturing. The country’s rich agricultural traditions, along with its temperate climate, ensure a steady supply of high-quality raw materials.

One company exceeding standards in this sector is O’Brien Fine Foods, an intergenerational family-owned company based in Co Kildare. Employing over 700 people, they specialise in the manufacture and marketing of premium meats. Over the past twenty years, their business has grown to become the leading producer of cooked meats in Ireland, with a growing presence in the UK. Operating from three BRC approved manufacturing facilities in Kildare, Westmeath and London, they supply both branded and private label ranges to retailers across Ireland and the UK. Their branded portfolio includes Brady Family, a household name and Ireland’s No. 1 cooked meats brand, Green Farm, Ireland’s No 1 white meat brand and Bearfields of London, a traditional ham and gammon business in the UK.

John O’Brien, Managing Director of O’Brien Fine Foods, says manufacturing firms, particularly in the food sector, play a pivotal role in both the economy and community of Ireland. “The business was originally set up in the late 70’s by Ossie and Mary Brady,” says John. But when John’s parents, Bill and Patricia O’Brien, bought the business in 2000, it had a massive growth spurt. Under his family’s guidance, O’Brien Fine Foods grew to become “the biggest producer of cooked meats on the island of Ireland”.

“One in every two packs of cooked meats that are sold in Ireland are made by us.” The company caters to several large retailers in Ireland, producing both branded and own-label cooked meats for outlets like Dunnes Stores, Tesco, SuperValu, Lidl and BWG.

Product innovation has always been at the heart of their strategy. John, who joined the business in 2003 and became Managing Director in 2014, says they are committed to delivering top-quality manufactured products, “We always, first and foremost, want to make the best quality product we can. We focus on three pillars: better sourced, better made, and better for you.

“For example, we source Bord Bia quality-assured pork, and we try to make the product with minimal waste and a lower carbon footprint, with nearly all our packaging being 90% recyclable. We also strive to make our products better for consumers by improving their nutritional profile where we can, such as by reducing the salt content.”

A hub for manufacturing

When asked about Ireland as a manufacturing hub, John is very positive about the advantages of being located here, “The support that you get in Ireland is top class.”

He credits organisations like Bord Bia and Enterprise Ireland for playing pivotal roles in nurturing businesses like his. “They have helped with everything from consumer research, to supporting us with our team development, training, and even capital grants to help us build our factory. Ireland is becoming commercially attractive to many businesses and is increasingly trading on an all-island basis.”

There is also a large talent pool in Ireland with highly educated and experienced people. “It’s all about retaining that talent. We entered the Kildare Chamber Awards this year and are finalists in three categories to not only highlight our business to our consumers, but also to attract and retain the best talent.”

In fact, they are the biggest indigenous employer in North Kildare. But a company like this has also had a significant impact on the community beyond employment. O’Brien Fine Foods sponsors local sports teams such as Kildare GAA, LGFA and Camogie and actively works with charities like Barretstown, which offers respite for children with serious illnesses. They have also collaborated with organisations such as Food Cloud to redistribute surplus food to those who need it.



Supporting manufacturing

It's not just talent and supportive organisations which have helped Ireland to become a manufacturing hub. There are also plenty of government policies that influence the manufacturing industry.

John says pension auto-enrolment, which is due to be rolled out in the country next year and aims to enrol every working person into a pension scheme, is “the right thing to do. There is also the recent introduction of statutory sick pay which is a great addition.”

He also mentions the environmental aspect, citing the challenge of farm-level emissions. He believes that a unified approach from every stakeholder in the supply chain can significantly address this issue, though he emphasizes the government's role in steering this joint effort effectively.

“There are things that add costs to businesses, and I hope we continue to work with the government closely heading into the future.” As for this future, John says he sees continuous growth for O'Brien Fine Foods in Ireland and beyond. “We want to grow into the UK, consolidate our position in Ireland, improve our sustainability targets, and always create a place where people love to come and work.”

John O'Brien,
Managing Director of O'Brien Fine Foods



Leading the way in digital transformation in manufacturing

“We’re constantly innovating to develop smart digital products and solutions that will help our customers to manage assets, increase performance and maintain reliability, while also reducing their energy consumption, costs, and carbon footprint.”

A strategy of innovation and growth

Chris Collins, Ireland Country Managing Director at Schneider Electric, speaks about how the company is supporting industries in digital transformation and energy management.

The process of digital transformation is happening across a wide range of industries globally today, and none more so than in manufacturing. Digitisation has the power to reshape how products are produced, how services are delivered, and how net-zero goals can be achieved.

One such company leading the way in digital transformation is Schneider Electric. As a global leader in digital automation and energy management, Schneider Electric helps customers develop and execute sustainable strategies and business models that meet their net-zero ambitions.

Chris Collins says, “Schneider Electric has had a presence on the island of Ireland since 1984 and in 1994, we acquired a company called APC and its Galway manufacturing facility. So, we have a long history in Ireland. We currently employ approximately 400 people across Ireland with offices in Kildare, Galway, Cork and Belfast. And our customers range from commercial buildings, healthcare and life sciences to data centres, renewable energy sources, food and beverage, and manufacturing.”

According to Chris, there are many benefits to digitising manufacturing operations, “We’re constantly innovating to develop smart digital products and solutions that will help our customers to manage assets, increase performance and maintain reliability, while also reducing their energy consumption, costs, and carbon footprint.

We understand the importance of smart solutions for manufacturing because we use them ourselves in our own manufacturing plants and facilities.

“For example, our fully digitised site in India has achieved a 30% reduction in energy costs and expects full return on investment in two years!”

Chris adds, “Another benefit of digitising is less downtime for manufacturing facilities. For example, when we apply our AI solutions to businesses’ manufacturing processes, we can give them an insight into where they’ll have issues or breakdowns in the future. So that helps to minimise downtime because they’re able to address issues before they happen.”





Thriving environment

While Schneider Electric is a French multinational, and Chris is originally from the US, he strongly feels Ireland is a favourable hub for growing a business and has a resilient manufacturing industry. “Ireland has such a rich business environment. The education of Ireland’s workforce is second-to-none. Ireland has a network of Technological Universities that are developing a skilled workforce, and in places like Cork and Galway, there is already a strong focus on industrial and manufacturing-related degrees.

“I think the country has done a fantastic job of creating the right workforce, the right training, and the right tax incentives. Ireland is also on-track to become carbon-neutral by 2050, making it an even more exciting place for businesses to develop.

Regionally, Ireland’s global positioning has proved to be an asset, and the IDA has done a fantastic job of recruiting foreign direct investment into the country.”

Chris continues, “There is a thriving manufacturing community in Ireland. In addition to Schneider Electric’s operations and facilities, our Maynooth and Galway sites are surrounded by manufacturers and specialist engineering companies covering different sectors, from medtech to semiconductors and more. These businesses contribute heavily to local employment, attracting skilled workers and helping to improve the local economy in the process.”

Support

However, Chris highlights there are also challenges, “One big challenge, not just in manufacturing but in all industries, will be based around our need to keep building out infrastructure, making sure that we have power availability, and clean, renewable power for our data centres, manufacturing centres, and our hospitals. We need some planning reforms that will allow us to move faster on infrastructure build-out.”

Chris says the Irish manufacturing community will also need support and funding from the Government, if they’re going to meet their commitments laid out in Ireland’s climate action plan to achieve net zero by 2050. Particularly as Schneider Electric’s own research revealed that 85% of Irish business leaders believe the current energy crisis will hinder their CO2 emission reduction goals.

“Our approach is in line with Ibec’s own policies to support Ireland’s energy security and infrastructure, while investing in new technologies. We also acknowledge the need to ensure that manufacturers can absorb and mitigate rising energy costs at a time when they’re facing exceptional price increases and competitive pressures.

“At Schneider Electric, we’ve identified a direct link between lower energy use and decreased Co2 emissions. We’ve committed to carbon neutrality in our operations by 2030, and that starts with the digitisation of our own factories. By incentivising manufacturers to digitise and monitor their energy usage, we will see more and more of them lowering their emissions. This, in turn, will lower their overall energy costs and provide a useful boost to the bottom line in these challenging times.”

Chris Collins

Ireland Country Managing Director at Schneider Electric



Sustainable manufacturing – the wave of the future

“We’ve been on a sustainability journey for the last 40 years. Environmental responsibility has always been important to us. And at a corporate level, we have a number of 2030 goals that we are working towards.”

Sustainable manufacturing – the wave of the future

How leading pharmaceutical company Eli Lilly and Company is minimising the environmental impact of their operations and growing the business in responsible ways.

Sustainability is a key issue for the manufacturing sector today. However, the industry has been very focused on tackling sustainability issues in recent years. This focus will increase into the future, as companies aim to reach the Government’s ambition to achieve a 51% reduction in emissions by 2030 and carbon neutrality by 2050.

One such company making huge strides in their sustainability efforts is Eli Lilly and Company – an innovative pharmaceutical company committed to making safe, high-quality medicines to improve the lives of people globally.

“Lilly has been in existence since 1876, with 40,000 employees globally,” says Jean Casey, Director of Public Affairs at Lilly. “The company’s first investment in Ireland was in 1978, with our site in Kinsale. We now also have a Global Business Solutions Centre in Little Island, and we are building a new state-of-the-art biotech manufacturing campus on a greenfield site in Limerick. The company has grown extensively in Ireland in recent times and today, we have nearly 3,000 employees across our sites here.

Reducing resources

Making medicines requires the use of valuable resources including energy, water and raw materials, and Lilly has ambitious 2030 goals to reduce their usage. But Jean says sustainability isn't new to the company.

“We've been on a sustainability journey for the last 40 years. Environmental responsibility has always been important to us. And at a corporate level, we have a number of 2030 goals that we are working towards.”

Gerard O'Shea, Director for Health, Safety and Environment at Lilly Kinsale, says “Locally, we worked closely with thought leaders to put together a plan for what we need to do to be on target to achieve our corporate goals and more, by 2030. We've identified five key focus areas, with five deliverables in each area.”

Ger shares plastic waste reduction as an example. “Our employees are passionate about sustainability, and they've spearheaded a plastic recycling initiative, partnering with a company in Ireland, to repurpose recycled plastic into a raw material used for benches and planters, for example. In the last 12 months, we have diverted a significant proportion of what would otherwise be waste plastic, to make 570 garden benches and planters. It's a real testament to the team, who also make great efforts to reduce the use of plastic right across the company.”

Ger says sustainable travel is another focus. “We put a lot of effort into finding alternative ways people can travel to our rural site, instead of bringing their cars. We've introduced a bus service and we have over 50 people travelling from Cork City to Kinsale. It's been such a success that we are now launching a second route. We also have 50 new electric vehicle chargers on-site.”

Reducing energy usage is also a priority for Lilly. Paul O'Sullivan, Utilities Engineer at Lilly, says, “Adjacent to our Kinsale site, we have a 26-acre solar farm.

“It's one of Ireland's largest solar farms and can provide about 15% of the site's electricity per annum. On a very sunny Irish day, the solar farm can generate about 4.5MW on the site, which is over 60% of the site's daily demand.”

“So, at times, two-thirds of our power is coming from our solar farm, which is something we're very proud of.”

Jean adds, “The sustainability ambition is also very significant for our Limerick site, because it's a greenfield site, which means sustainability is at the core of the design. Compared to a traditional pharma site, our Limerick site will have 35% lower energy intensity. It'll use 40% less water and have 15% less waste.”

Future focus

Looking forward, Paul feels decarbonisation will be a major challenge for the manufacturing industry. “Decarbonisation needs capital investment, and it requires replacing established technologies with low-carbon technologies. If we stop burning gas, and use electricity as a source of energy, it’s one way to tackle decarbonisation.”

“I think decarbonisation by increasing electrification is going to present a challenge to the wider industry and Ireland’s infrastructure as a whole, so we need to invest in the national electricity network to prepare for that extra demand.”

Ger says it’s important that everyone plays their part to make small efforts to become more sustainable. “Lilly has always looked at sustainability with a ‘continuous improvement’ focus. Whether that’s bringing a bus to site, or installing a biomass boiler, whatever small change it is.”

“If we continue to move that dial with a view to the future, and what it’s going to be like to manufacture in Ireland in 2030 or 2035, we’re on the right track. Once that spirit of continuous improvement is alive and well, I think we are in good shape.”

Jean Casey,
Director of Public Affairs at Eli Lilly



Ibec campaigns



Better Lives, Better Business

Ibec's Better Lives, Better Business campaign aims to make Ireland a better place to live and work by persuading policymakers to address these challenges around the country's burgeoning capacity and infrastructure constraints



Stronger Europe, Stronger Ireland

Ibec's Stronger Europe, Stronger Ireland campaign highlights Irish business priorities for the future of Europe: Competitive, Innovative, Sustainable and Open.



Smarter World, Smarter Work

Ibec's Smarter World, Smarter Work campaign focuses on preparing Ireland for workplace change and a new era of jobs and employment.



Peace + Prosperity

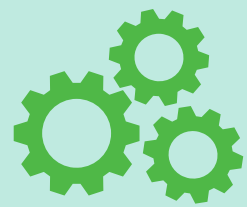
Ibec's Peace + Prosperity campaign highlights the stability brought about by the Belfast Good Friday Agreement and the pivotal role that business has played in perpetuating peace and prosperity on the island.



Model of Sustainable Substance

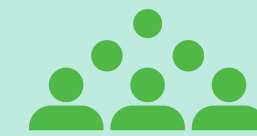
Ibec's Model of Sustainable Substance campaign spotlights Ireland's evolution into a model of substance, and how sustainability is at the core of our competitiveness.

Ibec's cross-sectoral campaigns



Manufacturing In Ireland campaign:

Highlights the scope and scale of the manufacturing sector in Ireland, latest research and recommendations to government.



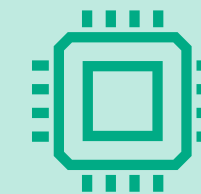
Ibec's Founders campaign:

Highlights recommendations to Government to support founders.



The Experience Economy campaign:

Ibec's More than Meets the Eye campaign brings a contemporary understanding to Ireland's experience economy and outlines its significant economic contribution.



Digital Health campaign:

A joint Irish Medtech Association, BioPharmChem Ireland and Technology Ireland Campaign to increase awareness of Ireland as a place 'Where Digital Health Thrives' and to ensure we have the right business policies and conditions to grow the digital health sector here in Ireland.

Ibec Academy

Ibec is working with industry leaders and ESG experts to develop training programmes and resources for firms at various stages of their sustainability journey. We now offer a 4 day accredited Certificate in ESG, helping managers bring their ESG strategy to action, together with programmes building expertise in the foundations of ESG, up to ESG competent boards for senior executives in your business. Additionally, Ibec's forums keeps members abreast of key developments and best practice on ESG topics like sustainability reporting, supply chain due diligence, carbon budgets, whistleblowing legislation, and diversity in the workplace.

Subsidised, industry-led learning through our sectors

Ibec is the promoter for 11 Skillnet Networks which offers 550+ subsidised programmes ranging from accredited diplomas and masters to short courses and certs in technical and non-technical areas, designed to meet your company's strategic and operational needs. These Networks offer training in areas such as sustainability, digitilisation, operational excellence, lean and more.

Ibec delivers 8 funded apprentice programmes across manufacturing, polymer, IFS, laboratory and retail, supporting your company in upskilling existing employees and attracting school leavers to grow and develop your talent pipeline.

The Irish Medtech Springboard Delivers 2 funded and certified springboard programmes in Regulatory Affairs, supporting existing employees and eligible unemployed persons through upskilling and taking up new roles in the industry.

“The Manufacturing Engineering and Polymer Technology Apprenticeships were amongst the first 25 apprenticeships launched by the Department of Education and Skills with industry in 2017. These programmes represent a radical modernisation of the traditional apprenticeships system, they offer new routes to high-tech careers by equipping participants with skills such as manufacturing automation, engineering science, polymer processing, and lean manufacturing. To future proof manufacturing, we're calling on the Government to unlock the National Training Fund to deliver key skills for a modern knowledge economy and create a 'Lifelong Learning Strategy for Ireland.'”

— Barry J. Comerford, Irish Medtech Association Chair, Member of the National Apprenticeship Alliance, and Freudenberg Advisory Board.

About Ibec

Ibec is Ireland's largest lobby group and business representative. We campaign for real changes to the policies that matter most to business. Policy is shaped by our diverse membership, who are home grown, multinational, big and small and employ 70% of the private sector workforce in Ireland.

With 39 trade associations covering a range of industry sectors, 6 offices around Ireland as well as an office in Brussels. With over 300 employees, Ibec communicates the Irish business voice to key stakeholders at home and abroad. Ibec also provides a wide range of professional services and management training to members on all aspects of human resource management, occupational health and safety, employee relations and employment law.

Ibec Trade Associations

Representing your industry

Representing your industry Ibec understands that every business is different. There are the general issues which face all businesses operating in Ireland and then there are the issues specific to individual sectors or categories of the economy. To reflect the distinct interests of all our members, there are 39 business associations within the Ibec group. Ibec's trade associations identify and champion issues of importance to their respective members and provide great knowledge sharing, networking, and training for all these industries.

Ibec's trade associations are strong brands in their own right and those that represent the manufacturing sector include:

- BiopharmaChem Ireland
- Irish MedTech Association
- Technology Ireland
- Property Industry Ireland [Building Materials Federation]
- Engineering Industries Ireland
- Food Drink Ireland
- Drinks Ireland



#ManufacturinginIreland
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