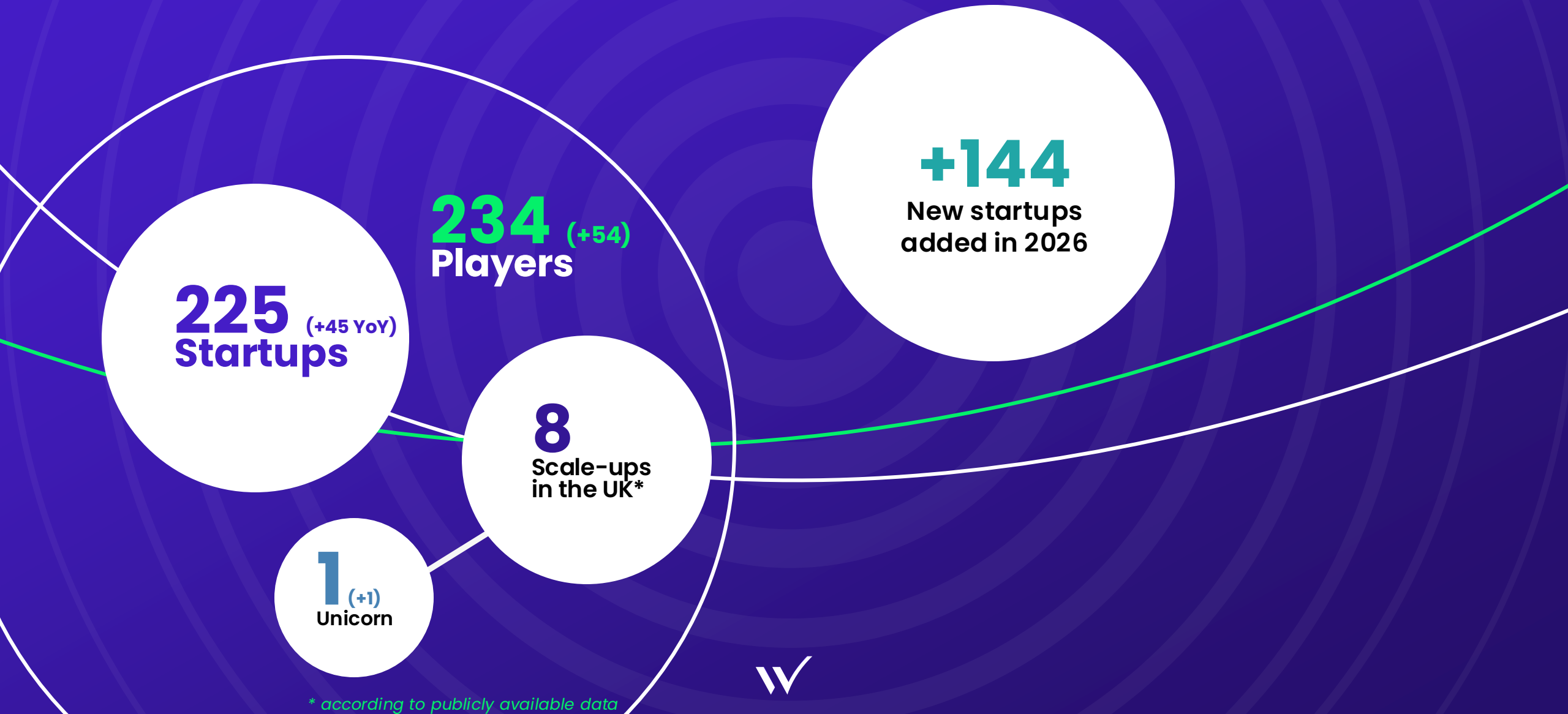




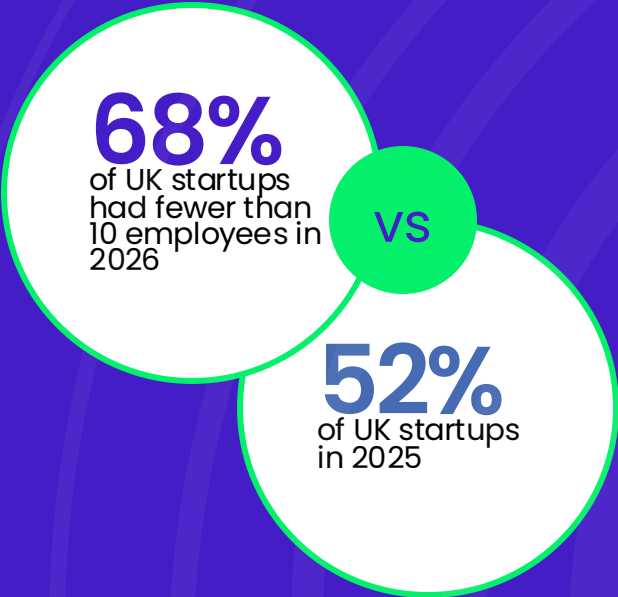
2026

UK
CYBERSECURITY
STARTUP RADAR

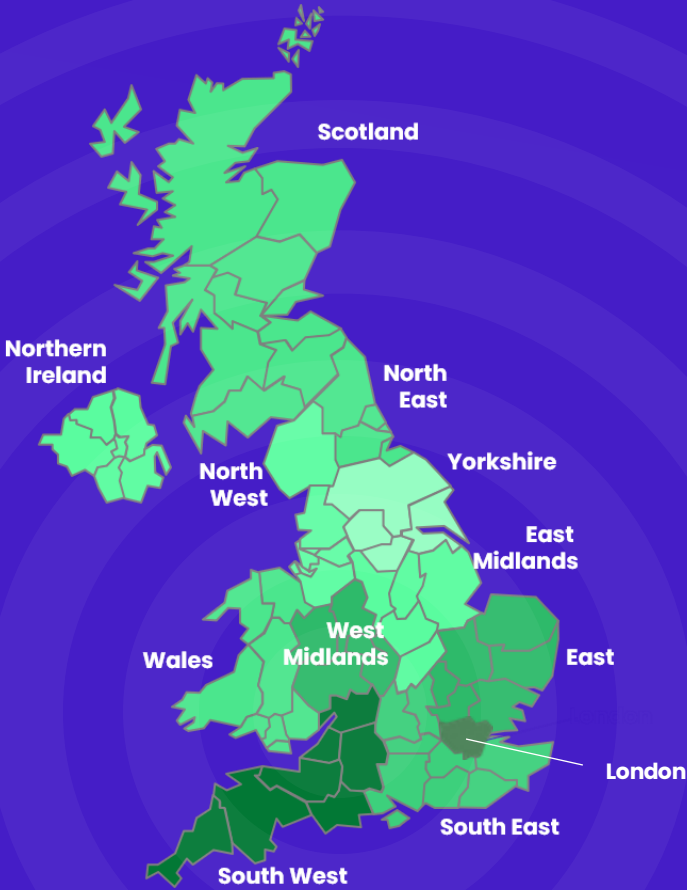
In 2026, the UK accelerates in the creation of cyber startups but struggles to establish itself as a scale-up ecosystem



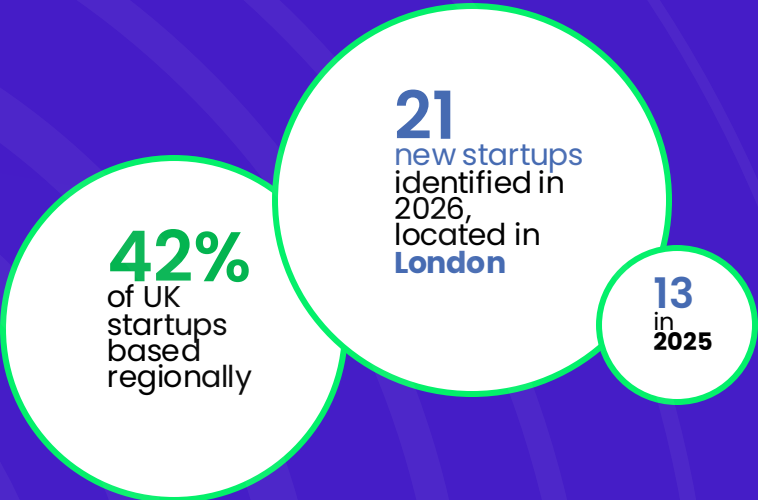
London remains central as regional ecosystems continue to expand



Analysis shows that the **employee headcount** for emerging cybersecurity startups is **falling on average year on year**.



Main locations for startup founding



London remains a major hub for **cybersecurity startups and scale-ups**. However, activity is consistently expanding across the UK, with regions such as the **South West** performing strongly in new startups included in the 2026 radar.



* 2026 radar consists of a substantially larger sample size as compared to 2025

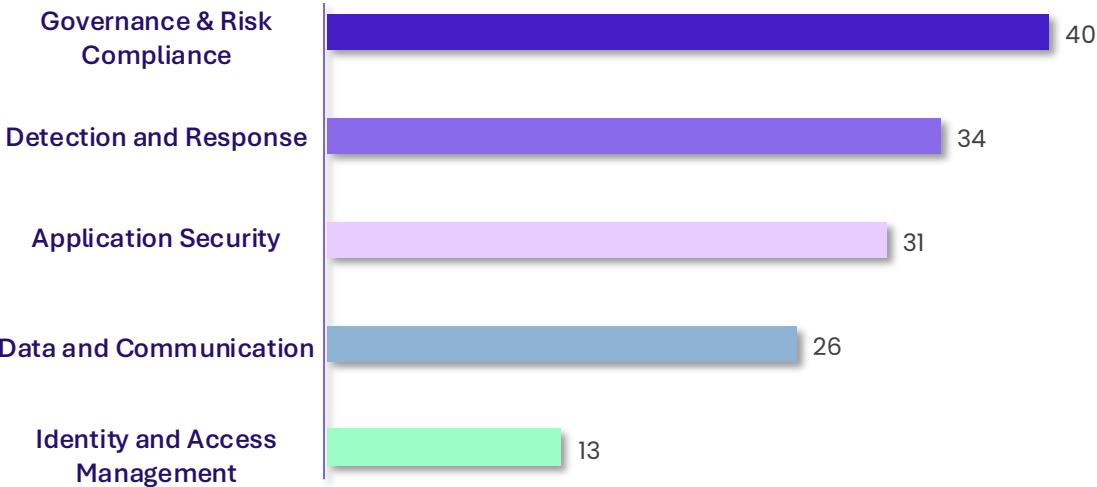
A hyper-growing ecosystem: an unprecedented wave of new startups is crowding an already competitive market

144

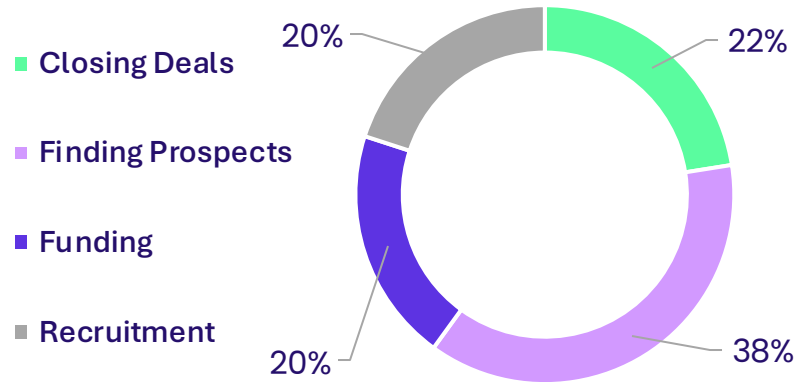
new startups identified in 2026

Edition 2026

TOP 5 CATEGORIES OF STARTUPS IDENTIFIED IN 2026



Biggest challenges facing UK startups*



* Insights based on responses from a focus group of 49 startups

Continued issues for startups around market access and customer procurement.

Finding prospects is the biggest hurdle for UK startups at about **38%**. Market access and customer procurement remain an issue for start-ups, as cautious investors and tight hiring conditions leave many founders struggling to secure capital, pipeline, and the talent needed to scale.



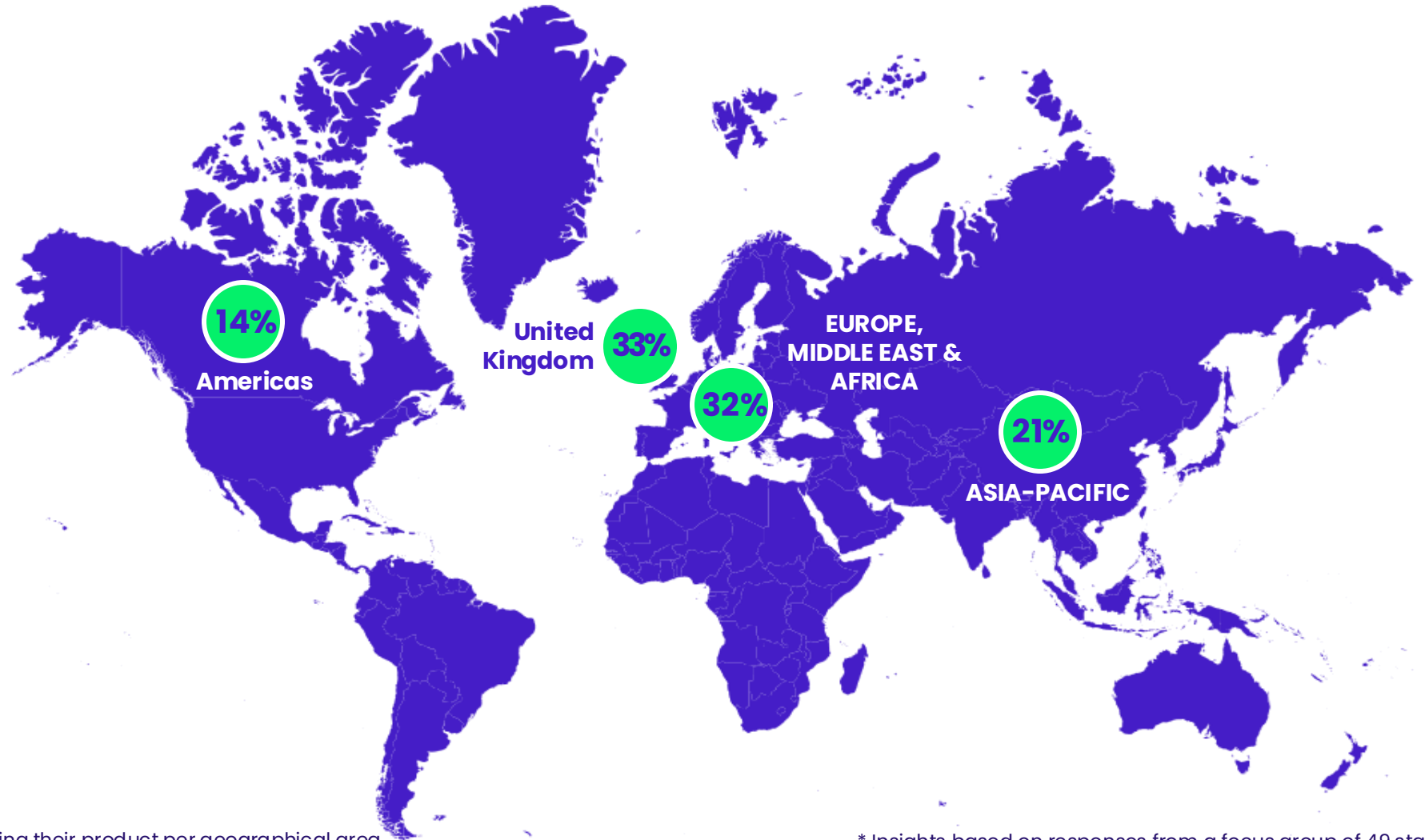
A majority of companies export their product, mainly in Europe

67%
export their
product
outside of
the UK

33%
are selling
exclusively
to UK clients

"Data reflects the latest
available primary sales
market data at the time
of analysis."

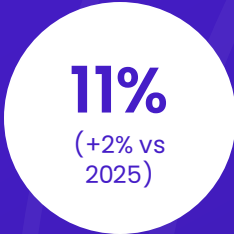
Number of companies selling their product per geographical area



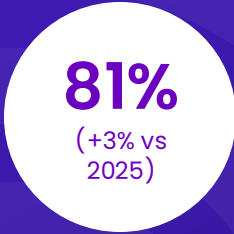
* Insights based on responses from a focus group of 49 startups



Innovation in focus



Only a minority of the startups interviewed stated that their main inspiration for their startup came from improving an existing product

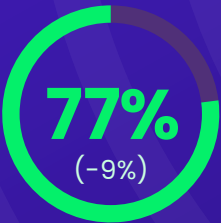


The vast majority of firms stated that they aimed to address a gap in the market with their startup

Several founders also relayed personal experiences around cybercrime and its widespread effects enhancing their motivation to build their products.

Certifications and qualifications

Startups have at least one cybersecurity certification



Despite a large influx of new startups, often too new to be certified, a large majority still hold at least one cybersecurity certification.

Certifications



* Insights based on responses from a focus group of 49 startups



The security of AI usage is growing rapidly, and its integration into security products continues to expand



AI is present across the cybersecurity startup landscape

Solutions **reimagined by AI**

Startups that accelerate security solutions using AI

AI-accelerated penetration testing

Pentestify



AI-accelerated resilience



AI-accelerated third-party management



RiskRegister.ai



HOPLONai

AI-accelerated SOC

DARKTRACE



Deep tech solutions

Deep tech companies building core technologies for demanding environments



Safecypher



sitehop

Data encryption

DevSecAI



Open Code Mission



Secure development

SUNLIGHT



maze

Secure Virtualization (hypervisor)



SHAYYPE



Identity Access Management



Trends from the 2026 Radar

1

› Growth in global fundraising

The radar has seen an increase in the number of UK startups seeking funding from abroad. Increasing from 26% in 2025 to 30% in 2026.

2

› Continued market access issues

Across both the 2025 and 2026 radar editions, market access remains a persistent barrier, with 38% of surveyed startups citing it as a key

3

› Rise of AI security

In 2026, there was a sharp uptick in AI adoption, with the share of startups embedding AI in their products rising from 30% in 2025 to 62% in 2026.

4

› Geographic dispersion across the ecosystem

More UK cyber startups are now being founded and scaled outside London and the South East, with regional hubs playing a bigger role in the ecosystem.



Questions?

Find the 2026 startup radar
on our website



Gérôme Billois
gerome.billois@wavestone.com
Partner



Florian Pouchet
florian.pouchet@wavestone.com
Partner



Saaid Mohamoud
saaid.mohamoud@wavestone.com
Senior Consultant

With the operational support of:



**Euan
Briggs**



**Hamima
Zainab**



**Sam
Smith**



**Antoine
Heitzmann**



**Umair
Ahmad**



**Chris
Marrai**



**Ayush
Ramniclaj**

About Wavestone

Born from the rise of digital innovation, Wavestone has evolved into a leading consulting firm positioned at the convergence of business and technology. It helps the world's leading organizations scale new ways of working, transform operations and reinvent business models in the age of AI.

With 6,000 employees across Europe and North America, Wavestone combines business, transformation and technology capabilities to deliver end-to-end consulting services. AI has been embedded across the firm's expertise and ways of delivering services, enabling clients to translate its potential into tangible and sustainable value.

Wavestone is listed on Euronext Paris and has been certified as a Great Place to Work®.

