Startup Survey 2026 Uzbekistan

Based on a survey of 400 startups

Electronic version:

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Introduction

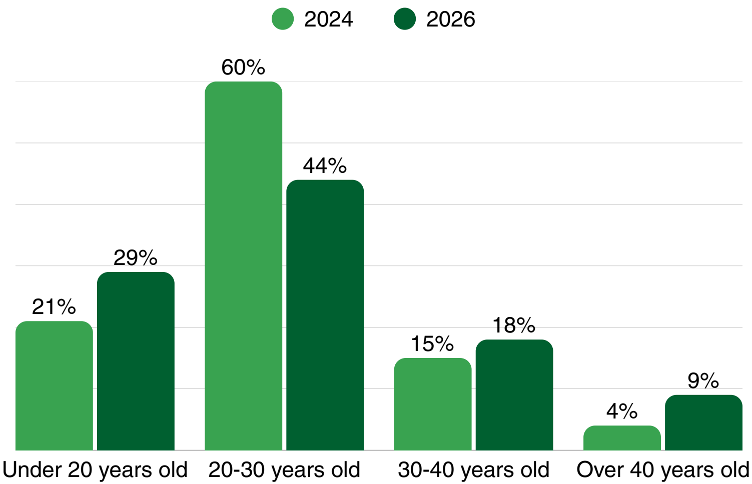
The purpose of this survey was to identify current trends and key characteristics of startup development in Uzbekistan, including the stages of startup life cycle, main opportunities and barriers they face, as well as the support tools used and areas requiring further improvement.

The study surveyed 400 startup founders. The survey was conducted in a generalized and anonymous manner.

The study results were compared with data from a similar survey conducted in 2024 using the same methodology and set of questions, revealing key trends in Uzbekistan's startup ecosystem. The comparative analysis is presented only for those indicators where changes were recorded.

The results obtained can be used to formulate targeted proposals aimed at increasing the effectiveness of support measures for startups, creating additional conditions for their development, and strengthening the startup ecosystem as a whole.

Previous study:



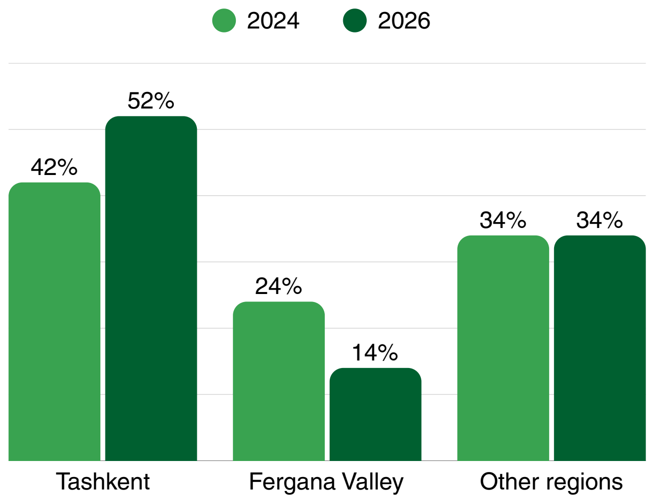
Age of the founder

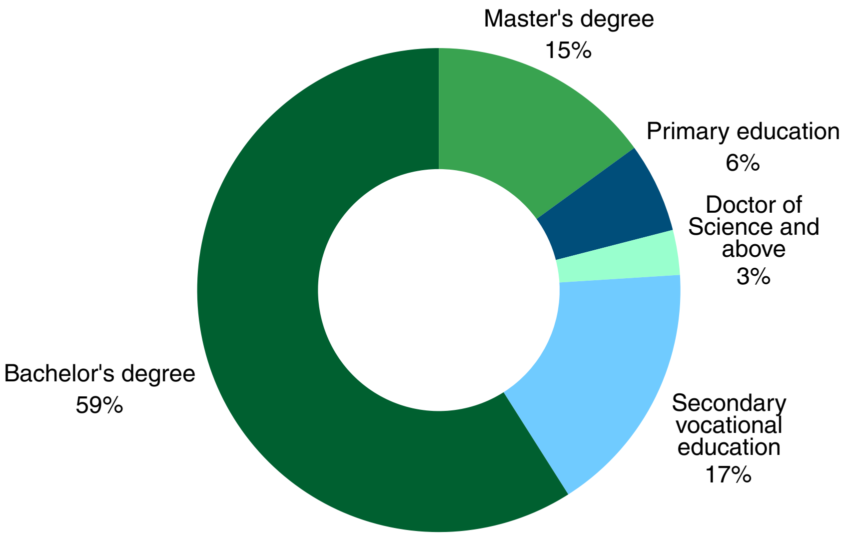
Over the past two years, the share of startup founders aged 20–30 has dropped significantly — from 60% to 44%, while other age groups have shown moderate but steady growth, indicating a gradual broadening of the founder age profile.

Location

The geography of startup activity has shifted significantly: Tashkent's share increased from 42% to 52%, strengthening its leadership, while the Fergana Valley, on the contrary, showed a decline — from 24% to 14%.

At the same time, the contribution of the remaining regions remained stable and did not undergo significant changes.





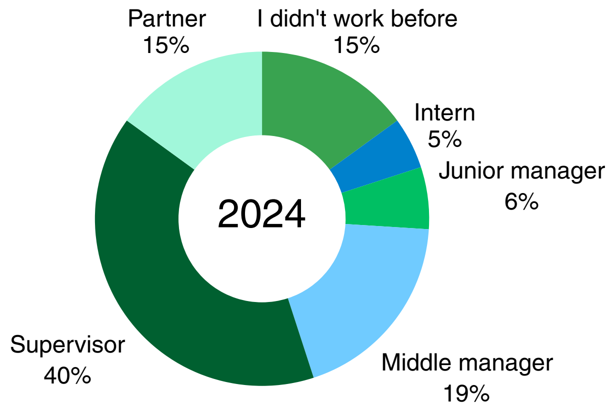
Founder's education level

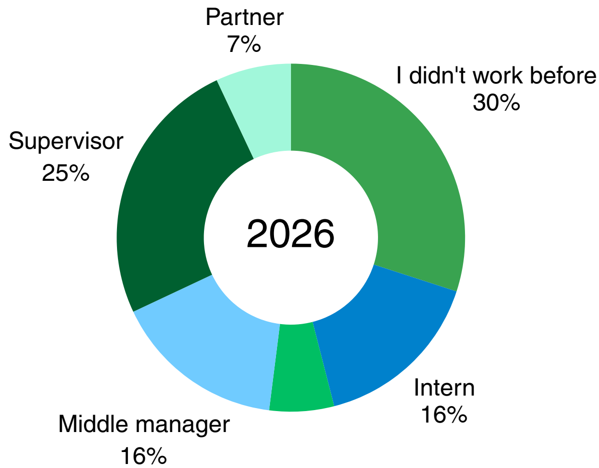
The majority of startup founders (77%) have a higher education (bachelor's, master's, PhD), which indicates the high intellectual potential of the ecosystem and creates a basis for the development of innovative projects.

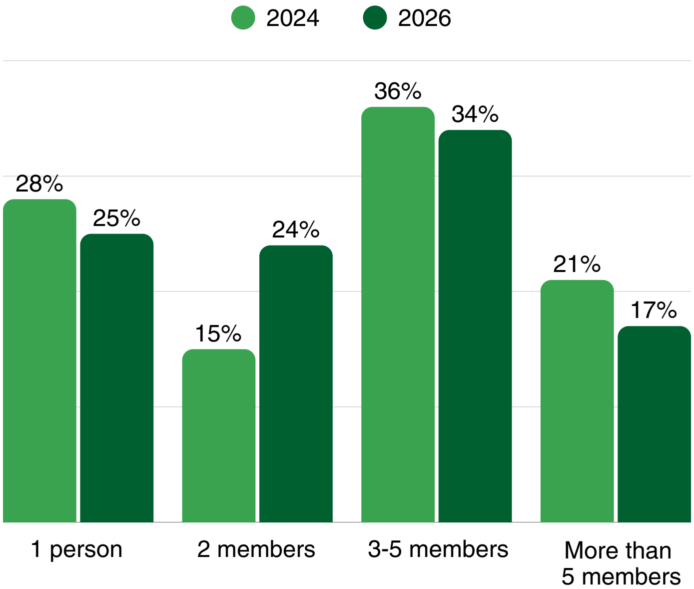
Founder's position at previous job

The profile of founders has shifted towards the less experienced: the share of those who had not previously worked or only had internship experience has doubled – from 20% to 46%.

Startups are increasingly becoming the first major career step, reflecting the growing appeal of entrepreneurship among young professionals.







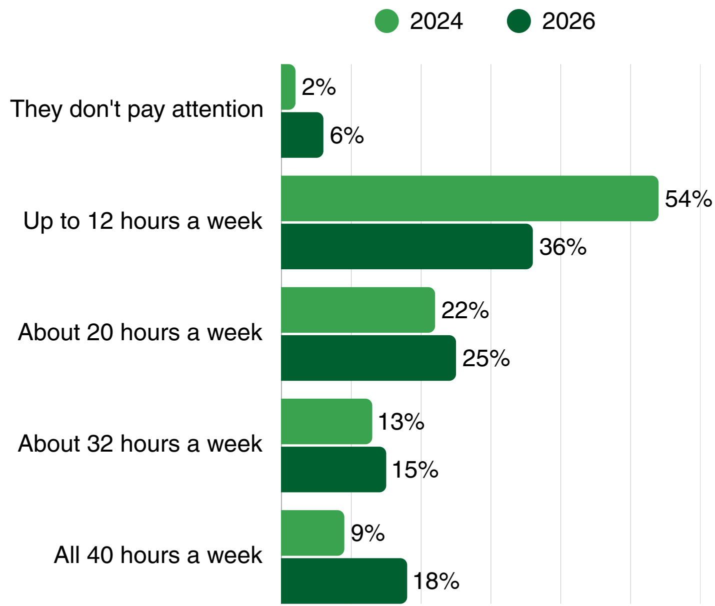
Team size

The team configuration has significantly shifted: startups with two members have strengthened their position, increasing their share from 15% to 24%. On the contrary, the number of both solo founders and large teams (more than five people) has declined.

The change in team structure indicates the maturation of the ecosystem and its gradual alignment with global trends, where compact teams are seen as the most effective model for early-stage startup development.

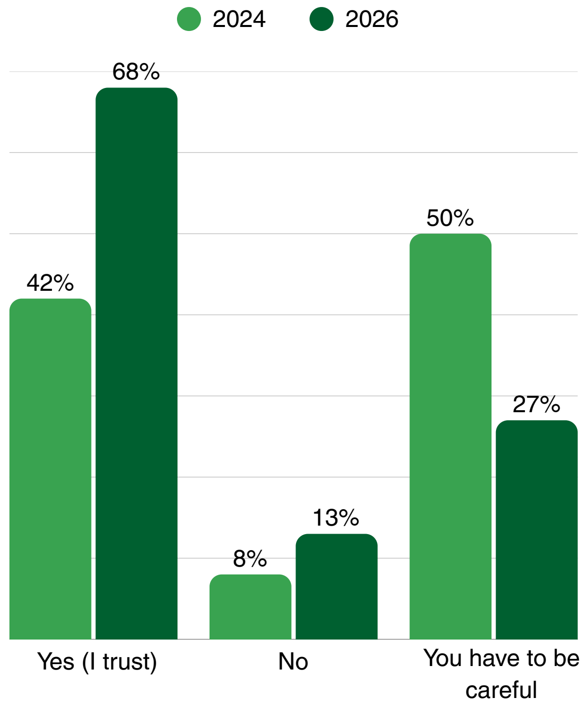
The amount of time devoted to the startup

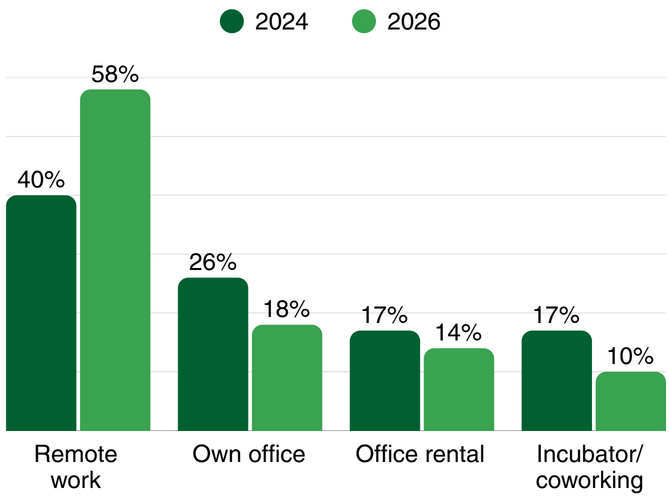
Overall, there is a shift towards greater involvement:
Startups are becoming not just a side hustle, but a full-fledged professional choice for more and more founders.



Do you trust people when forming a team?

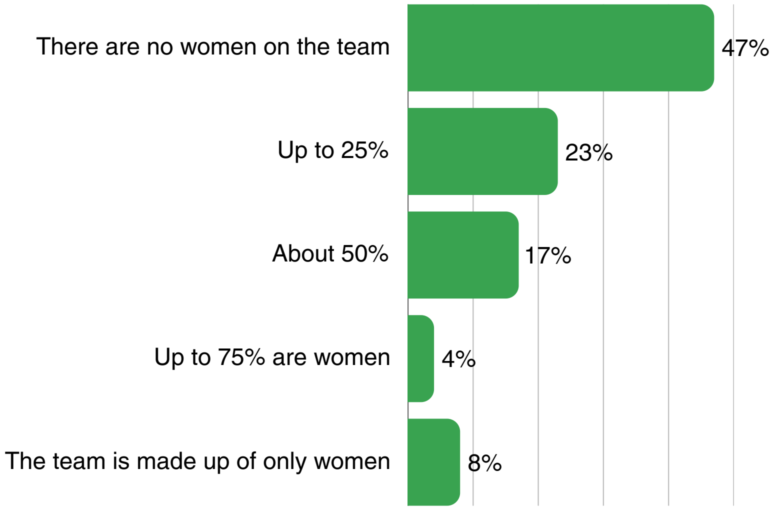
The startup community is becoming more open to collaboration: trust is gradually replacing excessive caution in team formation.





Where does your team work?

Over the past two years, startup preferences have shifted toward remote work: its share has grown from 40% to 58%, while the use of in-house offices and coworking spaces has declined.

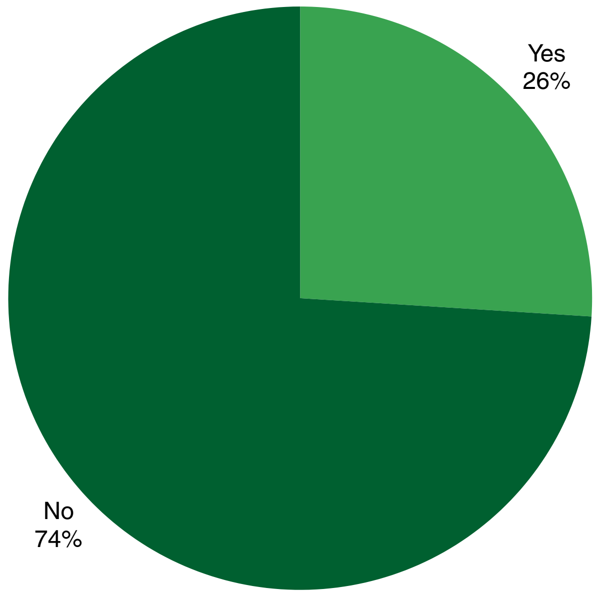


Percentage of women in the team

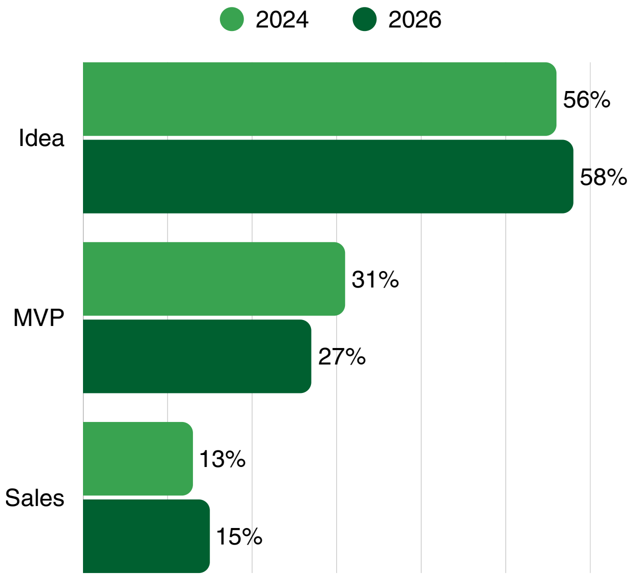
Women are increasingly playing a prominent role in the ecosystem, participating in both mixed teams and projects with high levels of female representation.

Is the startup leader a woman?

The startup community is becoming more diverse: women now lead more than a quarter of all projects, strengthening their presence among founders and team leaders.



Structure and typology of startups

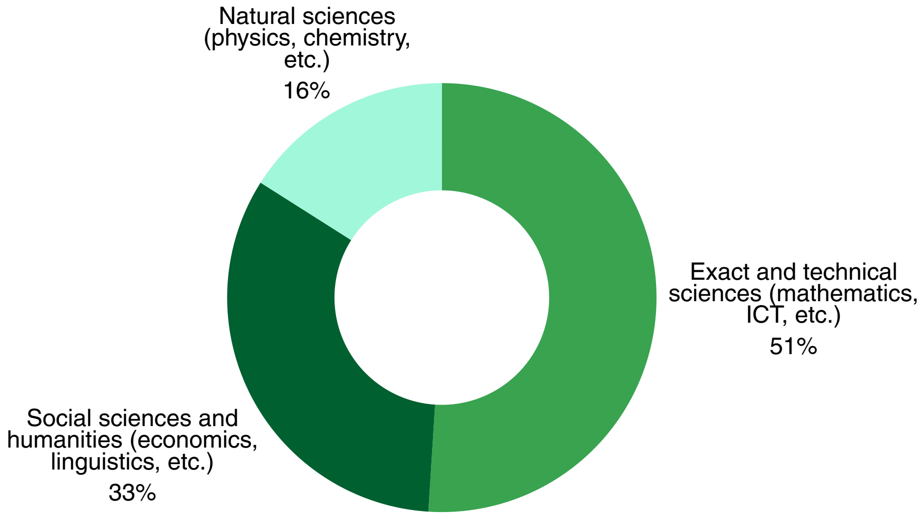


Startup development stage

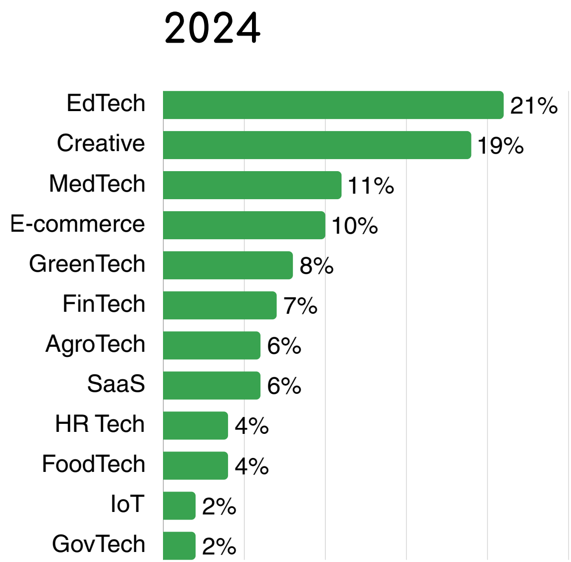
There is a gradual transition of projects from the development and hypothesis testing stage to the commercialization stage, which is confirmed by the growing share of startups with sales.

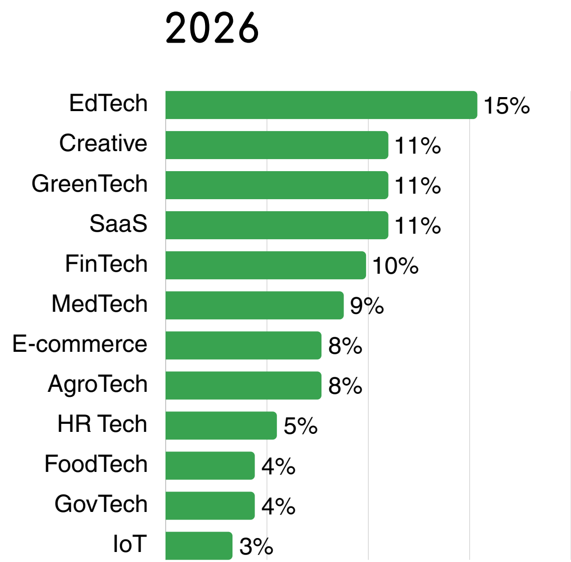
Academic focus

The startup ecosystem is primarily formed around STEM specialists, which creates a strong foundation for the development of innovative products with high scalability potential.



Industry distribution





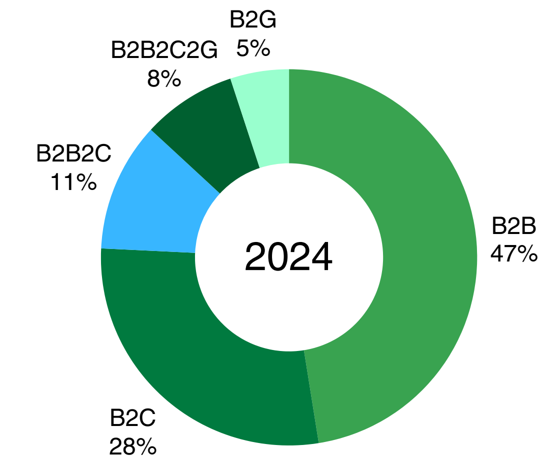
In 2026, EdTech maintains its leadership in the industry startup landscape, confidently holding first place.

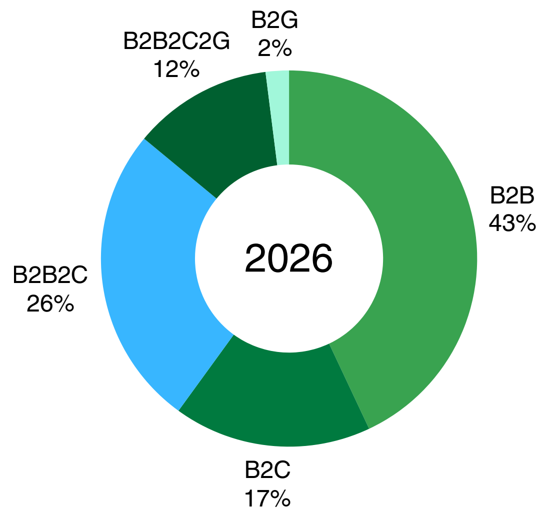
GreenTech deserves special attention – the sector has significantly strengthened its position and has become a leader, reflecting the growing interest in sustainable technologies, energy efficiency, and environmentally oriented solutions.

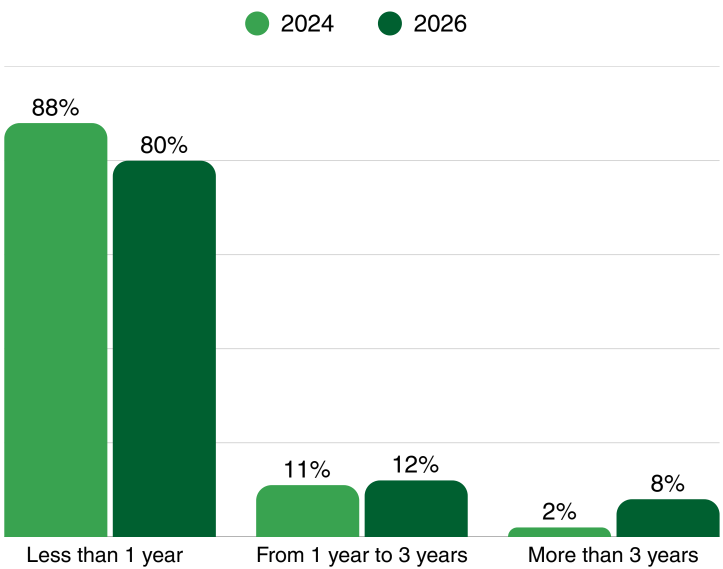
SaaS and FinTech also continue to strengthen their positions, gradually increasing their shares in the industry structure of startups and confirming their status as the most attractive segments for launching and scaling new projects.

Segmentation by business models

The structure of business models is shifting from classic formats to multi-segment solutions capable of simultaneously serving businesses, end users, and the public sector.





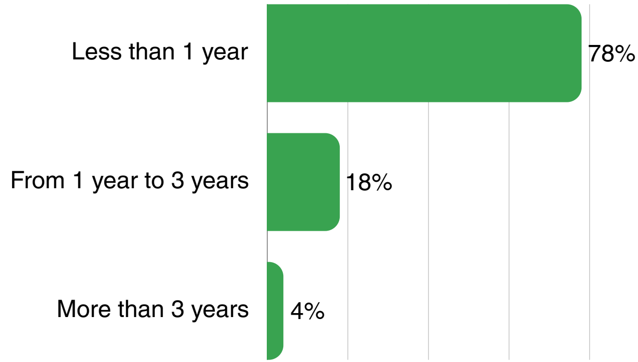


Lifespan of a startup

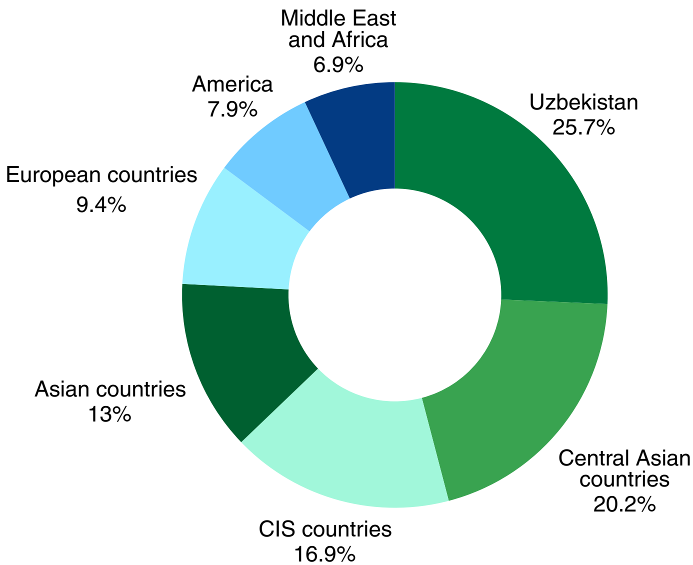
The ecosystem is maturing: the number of startups over three years old has quadrupled, indicating increased sustainability and viability of projects.

How long did it take from the idea to the first sale?

Almost 80% of startups that achieve sales get their first customers quickly — in less than a year.



**Only startups with sales were taken into account.*



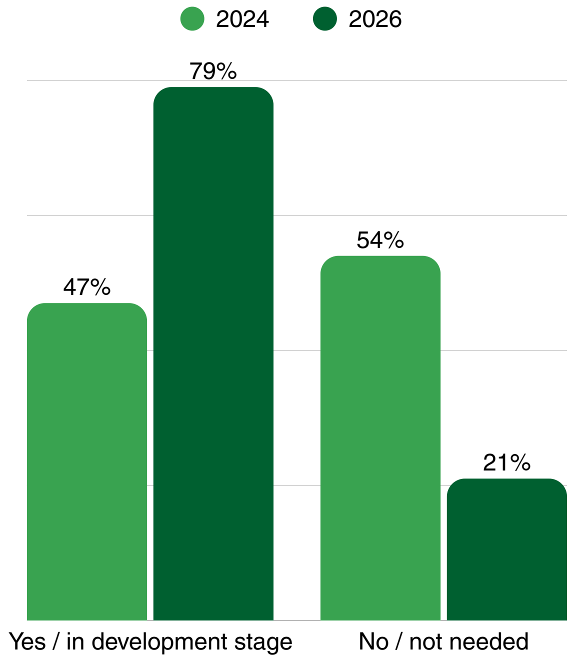
Target audience

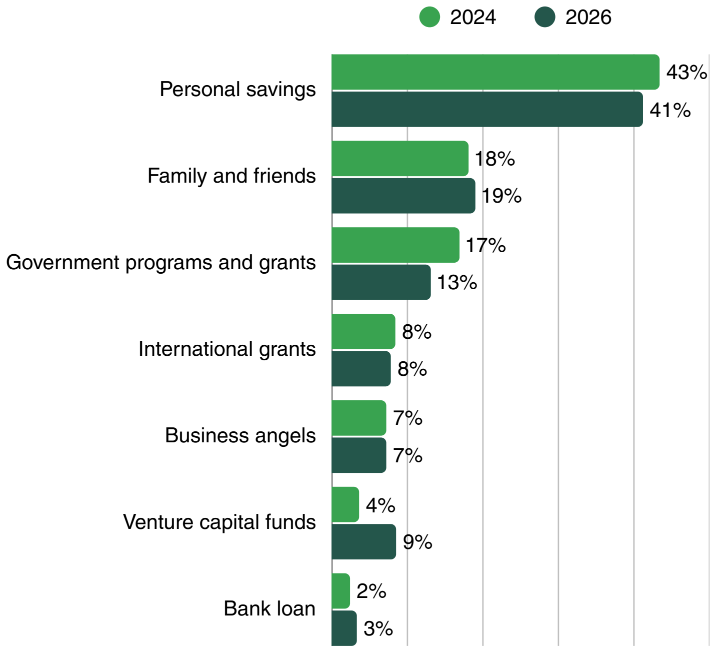
Most founders are focusing on the Uzbek market, while a significant number of teams are already looking to expand into Central Asian and CIS countries, as well as entering broader international markets.

Startup website

Startups are becoming increasingly digitally mature, with most teams investing in their own web resources.

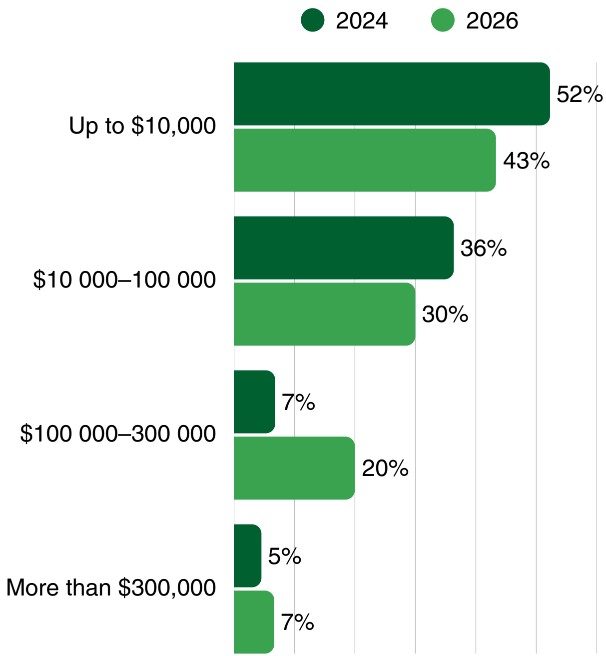
The share of projects without a website has decreased significantly in two years.





Main sources of funding

The structure of funding sources remains generally unchanged, but the share of venture capital funds has more than doubled and already significantly exceeds the share of bank lending among startups.

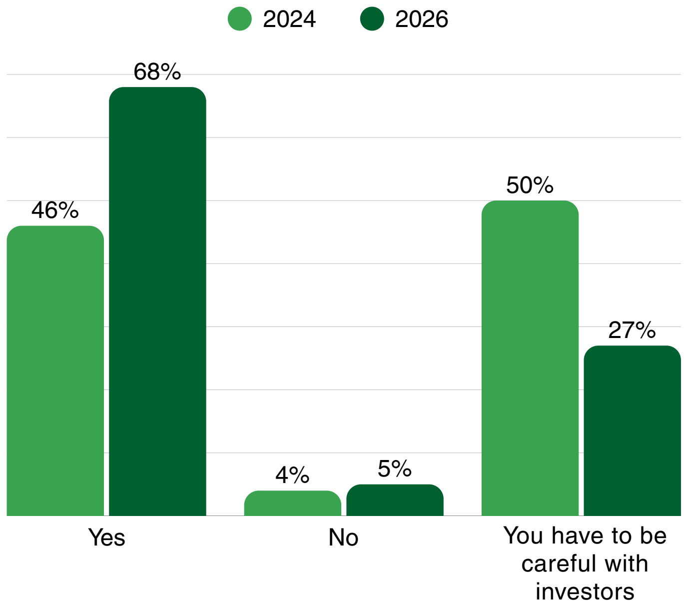


If startup attracted investment, what was the average check?

The investment structure is shifting towards larger checks: the share of rounds over $100,000 is growing, while the share of smaller raises is decreasing.

Do you trust investors?

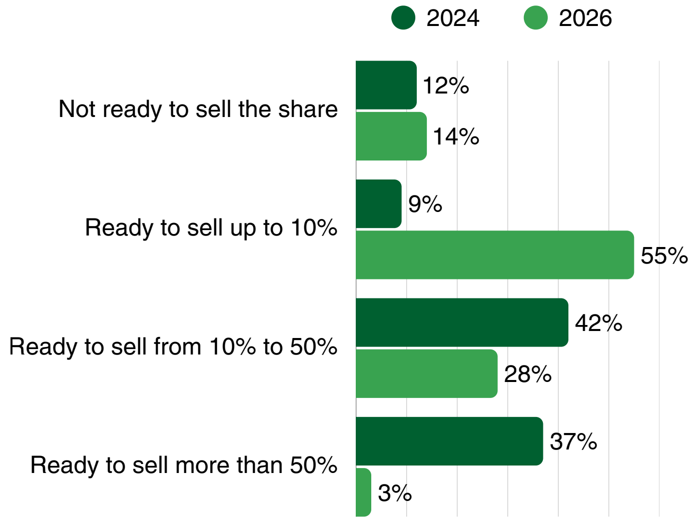
In 2026, investor trust increased significantly: the share of positive assessments rose to 68%, while cautious attitudes decreased almost by half.

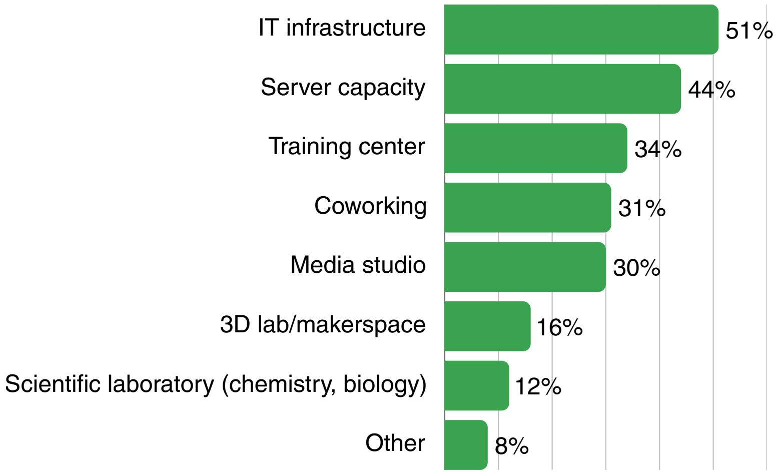


Willingness to sell shares

The willingness to raise outside capital is growing, but most founders are focused on partnerships without significant dilution of their stake.

The most popular format remains the sale of a minority stake of up to 10%.

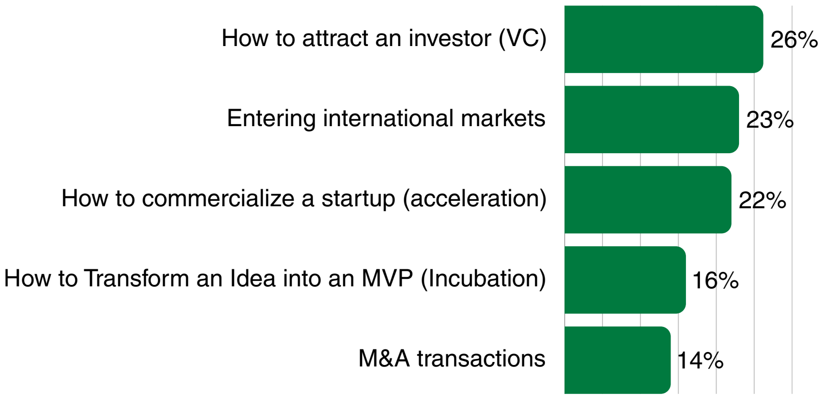




**Respondents could select multiple answers.*

In-demand infrastructure services

The demand distribution reflects the digital nature of the modern startup ecosystem, where computing resources, specialized equipment, and educational support are of greatest value.

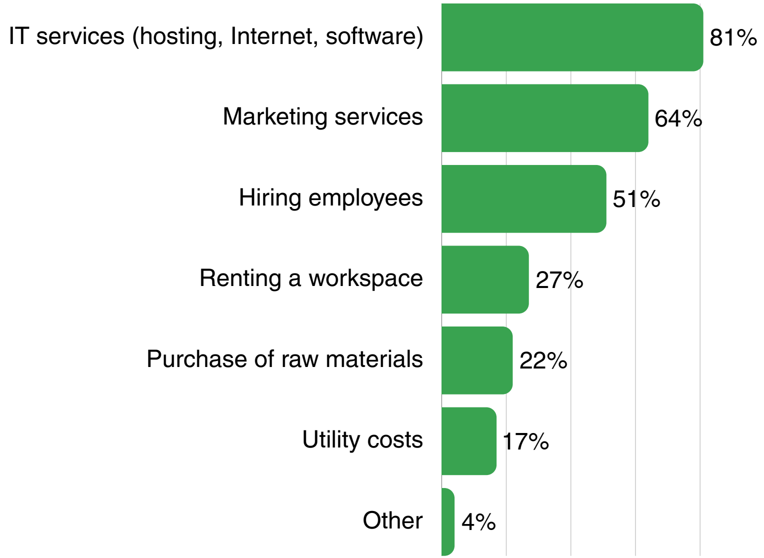


In-demand knowledge and skills

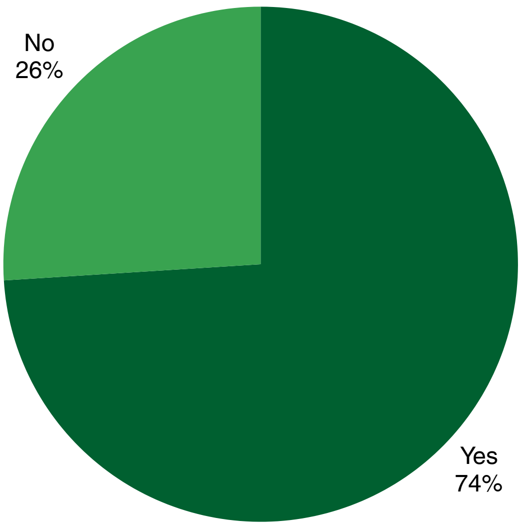
The greatest interest is generated by competencies related to attracting investment, entering new markets and commercializing products.

Main expenses

The cost distribution structure shows that the key resource for startups is not space or raw materials, but technology, team, and market access.



Respondents could select multiple answers.



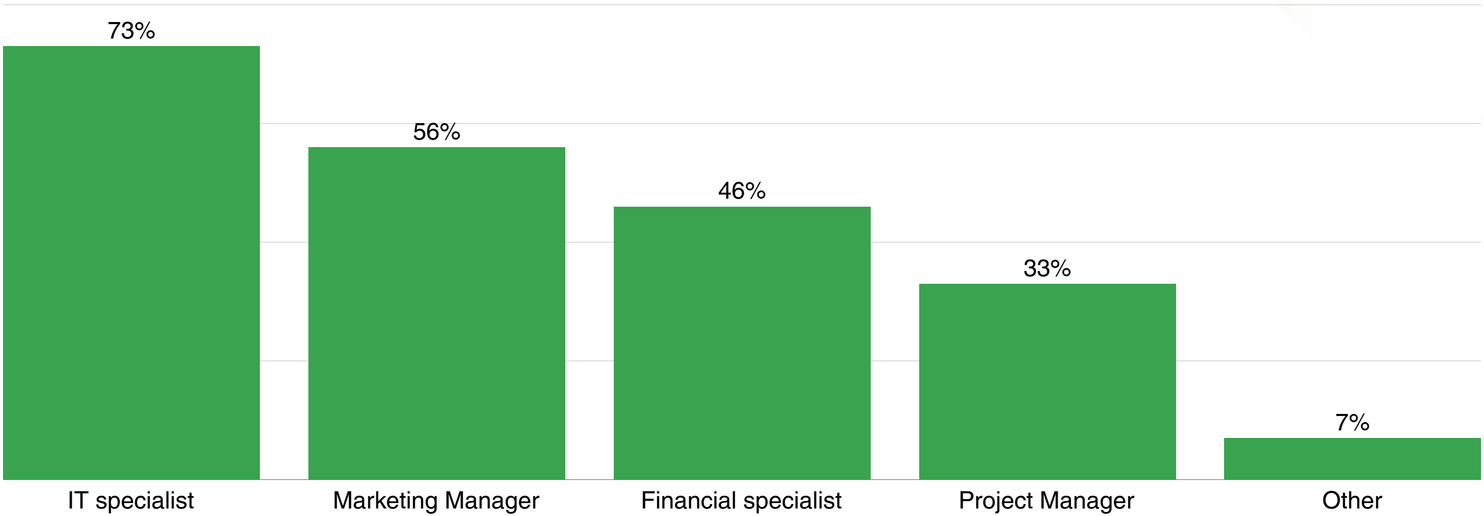
Demand for legal consulting

The high demand for legal consulting demonstrates a mature approach to business development, in which legal resilience is becoming as important resource as funding and technology.

The most demanded specialists

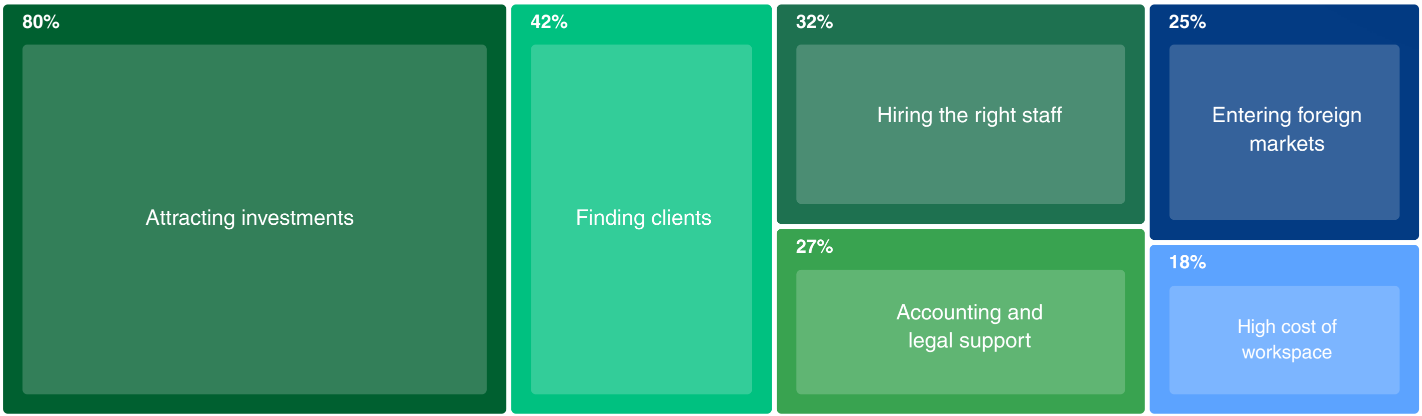
Startups' key demand focuses on competencies that support product creation and customer acquisition: IT specialists and marketers are in greatest demand.

**Respondents could select multiple answers.*



Main problems

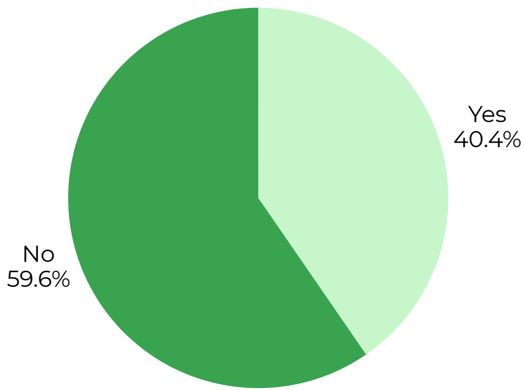
The set of challenges faced by startups is consistent with global trends, where access to capital and market entry are traditionally considered the main risk factors in the early stages of development.



Startup Failures: Scale and Causes

The reasons for failure are primarily systemic: startups often lack access to funding and the necessary skills.

Has the startup ever encountered failure?



If yes, what are the main reasons for failure?

Key findings

- Uzbekistan's startup ecosystem in 2026 demonstrates a shift from enthusiasm to a more mature, yet still emerging, system: founder engagement is growing, a focus on long-term development is strengthening, and entrepreneurship is increasingly perceived as a viable career choice.

- The founder profile is becoming more diverse: more young and aspiring entrepreneurs are joining the ecosystem, expanding the pool of participants in the startup movement. Startups are increasingly being formed by smaller teams, and founders are devoting more time to projects, demonstrating a more conscious and systematic approach to entrepreneurship.

- In 2026, EdTech will retain its leadership, but the startup ecosystem will become more diversified. Alongside traditional leaders, the role of GreenTech, SaaS, and FinTech is growing, indicating a broadening range of technological areas and a gradual increase in the complexity of the market's industry structure.

- The ecosystem remains technology-focused and maintains high innovative potential. However, the predominance of projects at the idea and MVP stages suggests that the main wave of commercial growth is yet to come.

- Despite the development of venture capital infrastructure and the emergence of new funds in Uzbekistan, financing remains a key barrier for startups. Most projects continue to be developed using their own funds, highlighting the need for increased practical support through incubation and acceleration programs aimed at developing business competencies and preparing them for attracting investment.

- Despite the gradual expansion of women's participation in the startup movement, their representation among founders and teams remains limited. Greater female involvement could become an additional driver of entrepreneurial activity and the development of the innovation ecosystem.

- Overall, we can say that the startup market is moving from the development stage to the structuring stage: awareness is growing, and signs of sustainability are emerging. However, to move to the next level, systemic changes are necessary — primarily through the development of startup competencies and improved project quality.

- In other words, the ecosystem has already formed a foundation, but its further growth will be determined not by the number of ideas, but by the ability to turn them into viable businesses.

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