THE FUTURE OF WORK · A DATA-JOURNALISM REPORT

# Charting the Impact of AI on Employment

## *The jobs AI will create — and replace*

A sourced reading of what the best available research actually says about artificial intelligence and the labor market — separating **net headcount change** from **gross task exposure**, and augmentation from replacement.

NET STRUCTURAL CHANGE BY 2030

**+78M**

jobs, net — 170M created against 92M displaced, on the World Economic Forum's employer-survey projection.[1]

A DIFFERENT LENS: TASK EXPOSURE

**~300M**

full-time jobs whose *tasks* are exposed to automation, on Goldman Sachs' March 2023 estimate — a measure of exposure, not lost jobs.[2]

These two numbers answer different questions. This report keeps them apart — see page 3.

*"Not AI. AI for Humans."*





1 World Economic Forum, *Future of Jobs Report 2025* (Geneva: WEF, January 2025), 5, 18. Net figure = 170M created − 92M displaced; a structural churn of 22% of the surveyed labor market. Accessed 23 July 2026.

2 Goldman Sachs, *The Potentially Large Effects of Artificial Intelligence on Economic Growth*, Global Economics Analyst (26 March 2023). "~300 million full-time jobs" denotes task exposure to automation, not projected job losses. Accessed 23 July 2026.

# The headline is net-positive — but the honest story is about tasks, not jobs

Every credible institution studying AI and work agrees on one thing: the effect is large. They disagree — often loudly — on its *sign*. Much of that disagreement dissolves once you notice the sources are measuring different things.

The World Economic Forum, surveying employers who together represent millions of workers, projects a **net gain of 78 million jobs by 2030** — 170 million created against 92 million displaced, a structural churn equal to about a fifth of the surveyed labor market.[3] That is a projection of *net headcount*.

Goldman Sachs, by contrast, estimated in March 2023 that generative AI could expose the equivalent of **roughly 300 million full-time jobs** to automation, with about two-thirds of occupations exposed to some degree and around a quarter of work tasks potentially automatable.[4] That is a measure of *gross task exposure* — how much work could in principle be touched, not how many jobs vanish.

The International Monetary Fund threads the two together: about **40% of global employment is exposed to AI**, rising to roughly 60% in advanced economies — but of those exposed jobs, about half may be complemented and made more productive rather than displaced.[5] Exposure, in other words, cuts both ways.

This report holds those distinctions steady. It presents job creation and job displacement as mirror images, then resolves the tension through the concept that runs under all of it: **augmentation**. Most exposed work is not disappearing — it is being restructured around what only people can do.

> *Exposure is not destiny — and "exposed" is not a synonym for "eliminated."*

## What the report covers

- **The net picture** — created vs. displaced, and why the two big numbers don't compare
- **Jobs AI will create** — from data scientists to frontline care
- **Jobs AI will replace** — the clerical and routine core
- **Automation vs. augmentation** — the central tension
- **Exposure by sector & geography** — who is most affected
- **Skills & the wage premium** — what AI-fluency is worth
- **Productivity & the global picture**
- **Worker sentiment** — and what DataExos concludes

### A note on sourcing

Every load-bearing figure here is drawn from a named primary source — the WEF, IMF, ILO, U.S. BLS, PwC, Goldman Sachs, and Pew Research Center — dated, and footnoted at the bottom of its page; a full bibliography closes the report. Where a point cannot be supported with a verified number, we make it qualitatively.

3 World Economic Forum, *Future of Jobs Report 2025* (Geneva: WEF, January 2025), 5, 18. Figures are employer expectations for 2025–2030 across a 1.18-billion-worker dataset and are not comprehensive. Accessed 23 July 2026.

4 Goldman Sachs, *The Potentially Large Effects of Artificial Intelligence on Economic Growth*, Global Economics Analyst (26 March 2023). Present as a March 2023 estimate. Accessed 23 July 2026.

5 Mauro Cazzaniga et al., *Gen-AI: Artificial Intelligence and the Future of Work*, IMF Staff Discussion Note SDN/2024/001 (Washington, DC: International Monetary Fund, January 2024), 1–2. Accessed 23 July 2026.

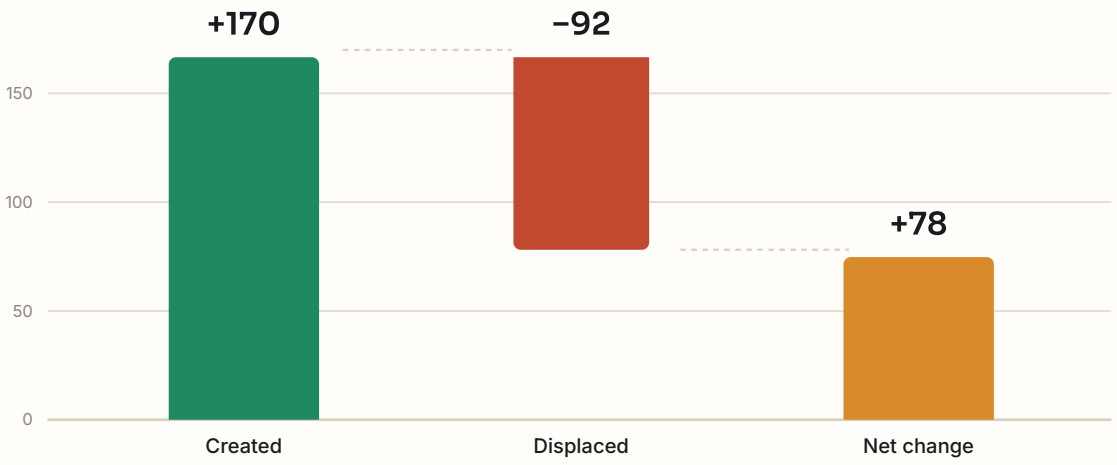
 

# 170 million created, 92 million displaced — a net of +78 million

The World Economic Forum frames the 2025–2030 outlook as structural churn: large flows in both directions that net out positive. Read the flows, not just the total.

### Global labor-market churn to 2030 (millions of jobs)

A waterfall: jobs created are added, jobs displaced subtracted; the remainder is the net change.




Source: World Economic Forum, Future of Jobs Report 2025 (Jan 2025), pp. 5, 18 — as of 2026-07-23. Employer-survey projection across a 1.18-billion-worker dataset; figures are expectations, not observed outcomes.[6]

### Do not conflate these two numbers

**+78 million** (WEF) is a projection of *net headcount change* — jobs gained minus jobs lost, from an employer survey. **~300 million** (Goldman Sachs, March 2023) is an estimate of *gross task exposure* — the full-time-equivalent volume of work whose tasks *could* be automated.[7] One counts jobs on net; the other counts exposure of tasks. They are not comparable, and a headline that sets "78 million" against "300 million" as if they measured the same thing is simply wrong. The gap between them is definitional, not empirical.

6 World Economic Forum, *Future of Jobs Report 2025* (Geneva: WEF, January 2025), 5, 18, 22. The occupational dataset covers ~1.18 billion workers — "a subset of the ILO's total employment data … should not be treated as comprehensive." Accessed 23 July 2026.

7 Goldman Sachs, *The Potentially Large Effects of Artificial Intelligence on Economic Growth*, Global Economics Analyst (26 March 2023): roughly two-thirds of U.S. occupations exposed to some automation; up to ~25% of work tasks automatable; ~300M full-time-equivalent jobs exposed; potential ~+7% (~$7T) global GDP over ten years. A March 2023 estimate. Accessed 23 July 2026.

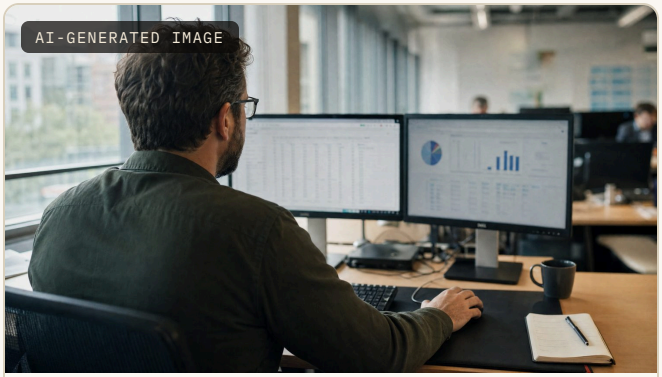
# The fastest-growing work splits in two: the AI-native, and the deeply human

In percentage terms, technology roles lead. In absolute headcount, the biggest growth is in frontline, care, and education work — jobs defined by physical presence and human judgment.

The WEF's list of the fastest-growing roles by *rate* is unambiguously technological: big-data and AI/ML specialists, fintech engineers, software developers, information-security analysts, data engineers, and DevOps roles — alongside a green-economy cohort of renewable-energy and environmental engineers.[8]

But the counter-narrative matters just as much. The largest growth by *absolute headcount* is not in AI specialisms at all. It is in frontline and human-centered work: farm and delivery workers, construction, nursing and personal care, social work, and teaching. AI reshapes the tools of these jobs; it does not remove the human at their center.

The single most citable U.S. data point sits at the intersection of both stories — a role that exists to *build and interpret AI systems*, growing far faster than the economy as a whole.




Knowledge work: analytics and data roles are among the fastest-growing by rate. Illustrative; not a real person — see disclosure, p. 12.

**+34%**

Projected growth in U.S. **data-scientist** employment, 2024–2034 — "much faster than average," roughly eleven times the all-occupations rate.[9]

**+82,500**

New data-scientist jobs projected over the decade (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics).

**$112,590**

Median annual wage for data scientists, May 2024 (U.S. BLS Occupational Outlook Handbook).

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Outlook Handbook — Data Scientists (last modified 28 Aug 2025) — as of 2026-07-23.

> *AI does not only threaten jobs; it authors new categories of them — and pays a premium to the people who can do them.*
>
> ON THE CREATION SIDE OF THE LEDGER

8 World Economic Forum, *Future of Jobs Report 2025* (Geneva: WEF, January 2025), Figs. 2.2–2.5, pp. 19–23. Role categories are reported qualitatively; role-level headcount figures are not reproduced here. Accessed 23 July 2026.

9 U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Occupational Outlook Handbook: Data Scientists* (Washington, DC: U.S. Dept. of Labor, last modified 28 August 2025): +34% (2024–34), employment change +82,500, median annual wage $112,590 (May 2024). Accessed 23 July 2026 (via Internet Archive, snapshot 21 July 2026; bls.gov blocks automated retrieval).

# The displacement is concentrated in routine, codifiable, clerical work

The declines are not random. They cluster where work is repetitive and rule-based — the tasks large language models and information-processing systems handle most readily.


Logistics and fulfillment: routine handling and record-keeping tasks are among the most automatable. Illustrative; not a real person — see disclosure, p. 12.

On the WEF's own accounting, the fastest-declining roles are clerical and routine-information roles: cashiers and ticket clerks, administrative assistants and executive secretaries, data-entry clerks, bank tellers, postal clerks, bookkeeping and payroll clerks, and telemarketers.[10] The common thread is codifiability — work that can be reduced to rules and patterns.

Goldman Sachs' March 2023 analysis quantifies the exposure behind that shift: roughly two-thirds of U.S. occupations are exposed to some degree of AI automation, and generative AI could substitute up to about a quarter of current work tasks — the equivalent, on their estimate, of some 300 million full-time jobs' worth of tasks globally.[11] Because this is a 2023 estimate, we present it with its date attached and treat it as the higher-end task-exposure reading, not a forecast of job losses.

Even on the employer side, intent is real but bounded: around 40% of employers in the WEF survey expect to reduce their workforce where AI can automate tasks — a minority, and one weighed against far larger shares planning to reskill and redeploy.

### "Exposed" is the operative word

Task exposure describes what *could* be automated, not what *will* be. The same Goldman analysis that produced the 300-million figure also argued that historical waves of automation were ultimately offset by new job creation, and projected that AI could raise annual global GDP by around 7% over a decade.[11] Displacement and creation are two readings of the same underlying shift. The clerk's ledger is automatable; the nurse's bedside, the electrician's judgment, and the teacher's attention are far less so.

10 World Economic Forum, *Future of Jobs Report 2025* (Geneva: WEF, January 2025), Figs. 2.2–2.5, pp. 19–23; workforce-reduction intent ("around 40% of employers"), p. 6. Role categories reported qualitatively. Accessed 23 July 2026.

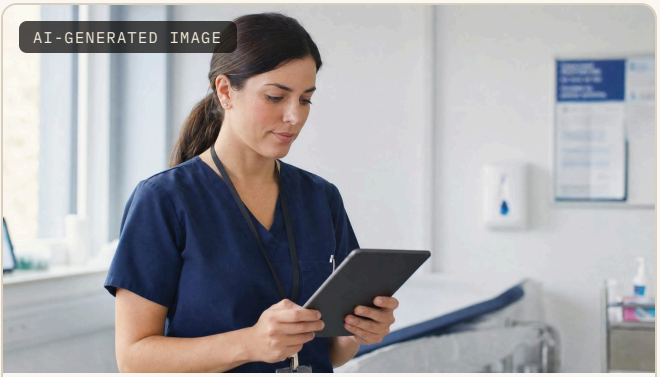
11 Goldman Sachs, *The Potentially Large Effects of Artificial Intelligence on Economic Growth*, Global Economics Analyst (26 March 2023): ~two-thirds of U.S. occupations exposed; up to ~25% of work tasks automatable; ~300M full-time-equivalent jobs exposed; potential ~+7% global GDP over ten years. A March 2023 estimate; presented with date and firm attribution. Accessed 23 July 2026.

# Most exposed work is being transformed, not eliminated

This is the hinge of the whole debate. Exposure to AI is real and widespread — but the dominant mode, so far, is augmentation: people doing more, differently, with AI in the loop.

The IMF's framing is the clearest. About **40% of global employment is exposed to AI**, rising to roughly **60% in advanced economies**. Crucially, of the exposed jobs in advanced economies, the IMF splits the effect almost evenly: about half may be negatively affected, while about half could be *complemented* — made more productive rather than displaced.[12]

The ILO's occupational-exposure index sharpens the point. About **one in four workers worldwide (24%)** are in an occupation with some generative-AI exposure — yet only **3.3% of global employment** falls in the highest-exposure category. The ILO's conclusion is explicit: because of the continued need for human input, most exposed jobs have "the potential to be transformed by" AI rather than made redundant.[13]




Healthcare: AI handles documentation and pattern-finding; the clinician keeps the judgment and the bedside. Illustrative; not a real person — see disclosure, p. 12.

### Exposure is not replacement — the ILO occupational gradient

Share of global employment, by generative-AI exposure. The highest-exposure sliver is small.


Source: ILO Working Paper 140, Gmyrek, Berg et al., "Generative AI and Jobs: A Refined Global Index of Occupational Exposure" (May 2025) — as of 2026-07-23. Lower-gradient share (≈20.7%) is the arithmetic remainder of 24% exposed minus 3.3% highest-exposure.[13]

12 Mauro Cazzaniga et al., *Gen-AI: Artificial Intelligence and the Future of Work*, IMF Staff Discussion Note SDN/2024/001 (International Monetary Fund, January 2024), 1–2: ~40% global exposure; ~60% in advanced economies, of which "about half may be negatively affected … while the rest could benefit from enhanced productivity." Accessed 23 July 2026 (primary PDF via Internet Archive; imf.org blocks automated retrieval).

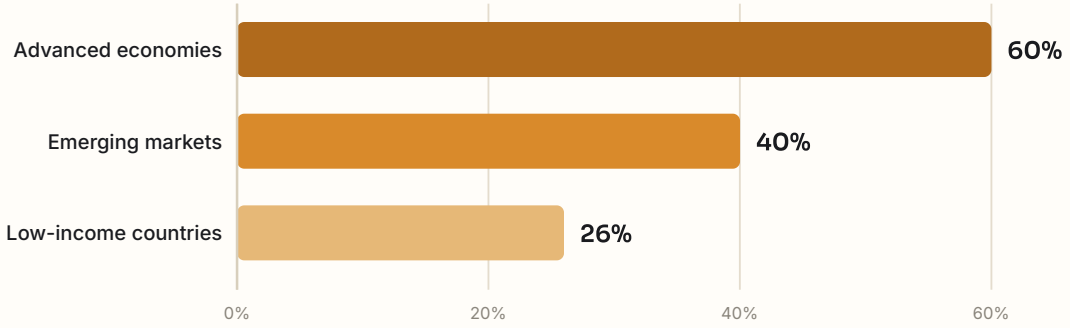
13 Paweł Gmyrek, Janine Berg, et al., *Generative AI and Jobs: A Refined Global Index of Occupational Exposure*, ILO Working Paper 140 (Geneva: ILO & NASK-PIB, May 2025): one in four workers (24%) in an occupation with some exposure; 3.3% in the highest-exposure category. "Transformed rather than made redundant" paraphrases the paper's framing. Accessed 23 July 2026.

# Exposure rises with income — and with how "codifiable" the work is

Advanced economies hold the most cognitive, clerical, and professional work — so they face the most exposure. That is both their risk and their opportunity.

### AI exposure of employment, by economy tier

Share of jobs exposed to AI. Higher-income economies are more exposed — they hold more of the cognitive work AI touches.




Source: IMF Staff Discussion Note SDN/2024/001, Cazzaniga et al., "Gen-AI: Artificial Intelligence and the Future of Work" (Jan 2024) — as of 2026-07-23.[14]

The occupations most exposed converge across every source: clerical and routine-information roles — data entry, bookkeeping, general office and administrative work — sit at the top of the exposure gradient. The least exposed are physical, manual, and in-person roles: farm work, construction, care, food service.[15]

Geography compounds this. Because advanced economies concentrate cognitive and clerical work, they carry the highest exposure — and, the IMF notes, the greatest scope for AI to *complement* workers. The same feature that raises their risk raises their upside; lower-income economies are less exposed but also less positioned to capture AI's productivity gains — a divergence the IMF warns could widen inequality between countries, and one that falls somewhat harder on women, who are over-represented in clerical work.


Advanced manufacturing: automation and human oversight on the same line. Illustrative; not a real person — see disclosure, p. 12.

14 Mauro Cazzaniga et al., *Gen-AI: Artificial Intelligence and the Future of Work*, IMF Staff Discussion Note SDN/2024/001 (International Monetary Fund, January 2024), 1–2: exposure ~60% (advanced economies), ~40% (emerging markets), ~26% (low-income countries). Accessed 23 July 2026.

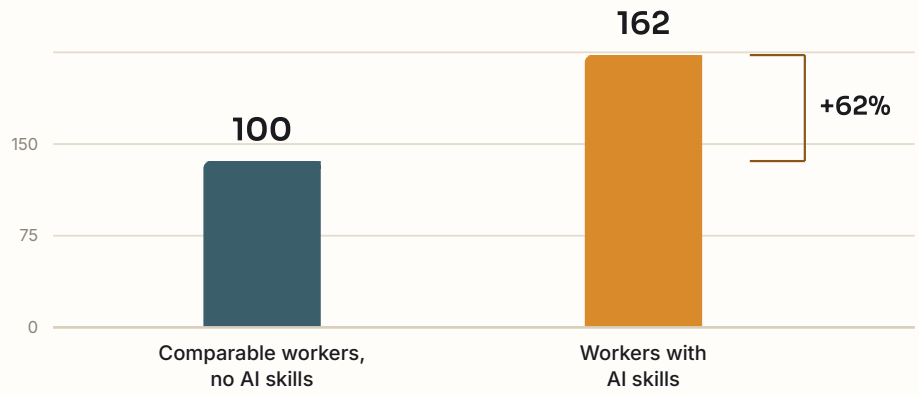
15 ILO Working Paper 140 (May 2025) on clerical exposure and the income/gender distribution of exposure; corroborated qualitatively by OECD (M. Lane, "Who Will Be the Workers Most Affected by AI?", OECD AI Papers No. 26, 2024) on white-collar exposure. Accessed 23 July 2026.

# The market is already paying a premium for AI fluency

Whatever the net effect on headcount, the price signal is unambiguous: workers who can wield AI command materially higher pay — and the gap is widening.

### The AI-skills wage premium

Relative pay for workers with AI skills vs. otherwise-comparable workers without them (indexed, comparable roles = 100).




Source: PwC, 2026 Global AI Jobs Barometer (published ~6 July 2026) — as of 2026-07-23. Premium = 62%, up from 57% the prior year; a firm-authored analysis of job-ad data (correlational). Index shown for illustration (100 × 1.62 = 162).[16]

## Reskilling is the pivot, not layoffs

The WEF's employer survey is consistent on direction even where we hold the specific percentages back: skills gaps are named as the single biggest barrier to transformation, the majority of employers plan to prioritize upskilling and to hire for new AI-related skills, and a large share of workers' core skills are expected to shift over the second half of the decade. The dominant employer response to AI is to *retrain and redeploy*, not simply to cut.[17]

That is why "AI fluency" is becoming a general-purpose skill rather than a niche one — and why the wage premium above is best read not as a bonus for specialists, but as the early price of a capability the whole workforce is moving toward.

**+34%**

Projected U.S. growth for **data scientists**, 2024–34 — a concrete example of a role AI *creates*, at a $112,590 median wage.[18]

**Read the premium carefully**

PwC states plainly that it "can't prove causation." The 62% figure is a correlation in job-ad data — powerful as a market signal, but not a controlled measurement of what AI skills *cause* in any one paycheck.

16 PwC, *2026 Global AI Jobs Barometer* (published ~6 July 2026): AI-skills wage premium of 62%, up from 57% the prior year. Attributed to PwC; a correlational analysis of job-advertisement data. Accessed 23 July 2026.

17 World Economic Forum, *Future of Jobs Report 2025* (January 2025), p. 6. Employer intentions on skills gaps, upskilling, and redeployment are reported here qualitatively; specific percentages are held to the source. Accessed 23 July 2026.

18 U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Occupational Outlook Handbook: Data Scientists* (last modified 28 August 2025): +34% (2024–34); median wage $112,590 (May 2024). Accessed 23 July 2026.

# The upside is a productivity story — unevenly distributed

The case for AI's net benefit rests on productivity: more output per worker. The case for caution rests on who captures it.

**~+7%**

Potential lift to **annual global GDP** over a decade of widespread adoption — roughly $7 trillion (Goldman Sachs, March 2023).[19]

**~40%**

Share of **global employment exposed** to AI — the IMF's central estimate, spanning both risk and productivity upside.[20]

**~25%**

Share of current **work tasks** that could be automated by generative AI (Goldman Sachs, March 2023) — exposure of tasks, not of jobs.[19]

Goldman Sachs' March 2023 analysis is the most-cited macro estimate: generative AI could raise annual global GDP by around 7% — roughly $7 trillion — over a ten-year adoption period. Goldman itself stresses a wide uncertainty band: the gain "could be much smaller or larger," depending on how capable the technology proves and how much work is ultimately automated. We present the figure with its 2023 vintage visible.[19]

The IMF supplies the distributional counterweight. Because AI exposure — and, more importantly, AI *complementarity* — correlates with income, advanced economies are positioned to capture more of the productivity gain than lower-income ones. Absent deliberate policy, the IMF warns, AI could widen inequality both between countries and within them.[20] The technology's aggregate upside and its distributional risk are the same phenomenon seen from two angles.

This is the throughline of the entire report. The most defensible net number (WEF's +78 million) is positive. The most defensible exposure number (the IMF's ~40%) is large. And the most defensible macro number (Goldman's ~+7% GDP) is an *upside* — conditional on adoption, capability, and, above all, on how the gains are shared.

None of these are certainties. Every institution cited here flags the same caveat in its own words: these are projections with wide bands, describing potential rather than observed outcomes. The responsible reading is directional, not deterministic.

> *AI's aggregate promise and its distributional risk are not opposites. They are the same force, measured from two ends.*
>
> THE MACRO THROUGHLINE

19 Goldman Sachs, *The Potentially Large Effects of Artificial Intelligence on Economic Growth*, Global Economics Analyst (26 March 2023): potential ~+7% (~$7 trillion) lift to annual global GDP over ten years; up to ~25% of work tasks automatable. Goldman states "significant uncertainty." A March 2023 estimate. Accessed 23 July 2026.

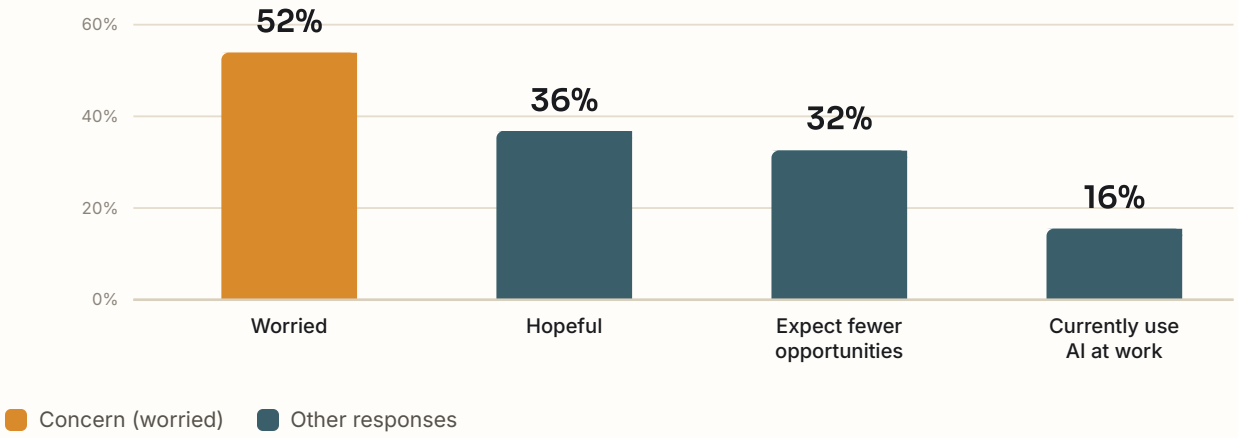
20 Mauro Cazzaniga et al., *Gen-AI: Artificial Intelligence and the Future of Work*, IMF Staff Discussion Note SDN/2024/001 (International Monetary Fund, January 2024): ~40% of global employment exposed; AI may worsen inequality between and within economies because complementarity correlates with income. Accessed 23 July 2026.

# U.S. workers are more worried than hopeful — and mostly not yet using AI

Behind every projection is a workforce forming its own view. In late 2024, Pew Research Center asked more than five thousand U.S. workers how they see AI at work.

### How U.S. workers view AI in the workplace

Share of employed U.S. adults (n ≈ 5,273), surveyed 7–13 October 2024.




Source: Pew Research Center, "U.S. Workers Are More Worried Than Hopeful About Future AI Use in the Workplace" (25 Feb 2025; fielded 7–13 Oct 2024, n ≈ 5,273) — as of 2026-07-23.[21]

**52%** of U.S. workers say they feel worried about future AI use in the workplace, against **36%** who feel hopeful. About a third — **32%** — think AI will ultimately mean fewer job opportunities for them.[21]

Yet only **16%** currently use AI in their own job. The anxiety, for now, runs well ahead of the direct experience — a gap that itself argues for careful, transparent, human-centered adoption rather than for either hype or alarm.

21 Pew Research Center, *U.S. Workers Are More Worried Than Hopeful About Future AI Use in the Workplace* (Washington, DC: Pew Research Center, 25 February 2025). Survey of 5,273 employed U.S. adults, fielded 7–13 October 2024: 52% worried, 36% hopeful, 32% expect fewer opportunities, 16% currently use AI in their job. Accessed 23 July 2026.

# The evidence points to augmentation — so we build for it

Read together, the sources tell a consistent story: exposure is broad, net headcount change looks positive, and the dominant mode is people working with AI, not being replaced by it.

That is not a comfortable conclusion or an alarming one. It is a *design* conclusion. If most exposed work is being transformed rather than eliminated, the question that matters is not "will AI take this job?" but "how do we put AI into this work so the human stays in command of it?"

### What the data supports

- A net-positive headcount outlook to 2030 (WEF, +78M)
- Broad exposure that runs largely as augmentation (IMF, ILO)
- A real, widening wage premium for AI fluency (PwC)
- New role categories with strong growth (BLS data scientists, +34%)

### What it does not support

- Treating task exposure as a forecast of job losses
- Reading Goldman's ~300M as comparable to WEF's +78M
- Assuming exposure falls evenly across people or places
- Certainty of any kind — every figure is a projection

> *"Not AI. AI for Humans."*
>
> THE DATAEXOS OPERATING PRINCIPLE

DataExos builds under a **human-in-the-loop** model: AI systems that accelerate and inform the work while keeping a person accountable for the decision. That is the posture the evidence in this report rewards. The clerical ledger may automate; the judgment, the context, the care, and the accountability do not. Our job is to build the systems that let people do more of the second kind of work — and to be transparent about how those systems reach their conclusions.

The workforce's own sentiment reinforces the point. Anxiety currently runs ahead of direct experience with AI. The answer to that gap is not louder promises; it is careful, explainable, human-centered deployment — the kind an organization can stand behind and a worker can trust.

### How to use this report

Treat every number here as directional evidence, dated and attributed, not as a settled forecast. The most defensible readings are: net headcount change looks positive (WEF); exposure is broad but mostly augmenting (IMF, ILO); and AI fluency already carries a wage premium (PwC). Build, hire, and reskill accordingly — with humans in the loop.

Sources for the claims summarised on this page are cited in full on the pages where each figure first appears (WEF, pp. 2–3; IMF and ILO, p. 6; BLS, pp. 4, 8; PwC, p. 8) and in the bibliography, p. 12. No client outcomes are claimed or implied.

# Sources

Chicago notes–bibliography style. All URLs accessed 23 July 2026. Where a publisher host blocked automated retrieval, the primary document was read via the Internet Archive Wayback Machine, noted inline.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Gmyrek, Paweł, Janine Berg, Karol Kamiński, Filip Konopczyński, Agnieszka Ładna, Balint Nafradi, Konrad Rosaniec, and Marek Troszyński. **Generative AI and Jobs: A Refined Global Index of Occupational Exposure.** ILO Working Paper 140. Geneva: International Labour Organization & NASK-PIB, May 2025. `[T1]` ilo.org/sites/default/files/2025-05/WP140_web.pdf. Companion Research Brief, **Generative AI and Jobs: A 2025 Update** (ILO & NASK-PIB, May 2025).

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U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. **Occupational Outlook Handbook: Data Scientists.** Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Labor, last modified 28 August 2025. `[T0 – official]` bls.gov/ooh/math/data-scientists.htm (via Wayback Machine, snapshot 21 July 2026; bls.gov blocks automated retrieval).

World Economic Forum. **Future of Jobs Report 2025.** Geneva: World Economic Forum, January 2025. `[T1]` reports.weforum.org/docs/WEF_Future_of_Jobs_Report_2025.pdf. Employer survey; occupational dataset ≈ 1.18 billion workers, not comprehensive.

Corroboration (event/date only): CNBC, "IMF warns AI to hit almost 40% of jobs worldwide and worsen overall inequality," 15 January 2024 — used solely to corroborate the IMF release date, not for interpretation.


DISCLOSURE — AI-GENERATED PHOTOGRAPHY

The photographs of people in this report are generated by artificial intelligence. The individuals depicted are not real people. They do not portray, and should not be interpreted as portraying, actual DataExos clients, employees, or any identifiable person. The images are illustrative only, used to represent the categories of work discussed in the analysis. No client engagement is depicted or implied.

### A note on method and limits

This report uses only figures verified against primary sources during preparation, each presented with its date and attribution. WEF net-change figures and Goldman task-exposure figures are deliberately kept distinct. Goldman's estimates are March 2023 vintage. Where a claim could not be supported with a verified number, it is stated qualitatively. All figures are projections with uncertainty bands stated by their own authors; nothing here is a guarantee of outcomes.