

AI for All? Missing Pieces and the Role of Higher Education

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2nd Annual Public Lecture Series

BEYOND STANDARD SCRIPTS

IMAGINING NEW FUTURES IN DIGITAL EDUCATION





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Where are we with AI in higher education?



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Higher Ed: Spectator or Participant?

“You can be a spectator or participant. But you cannot stop it.”

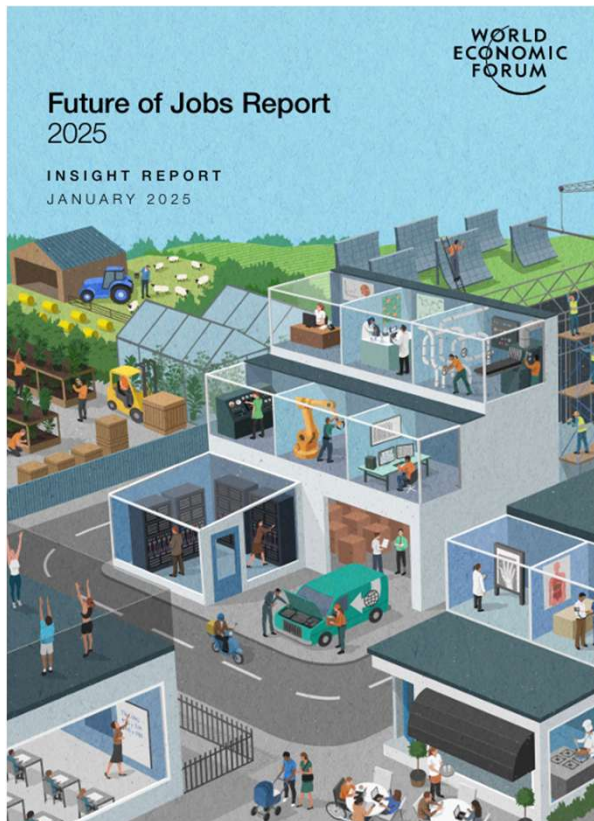
(Elon Musk, 8 Jan 2026, Moonshot Podcast)





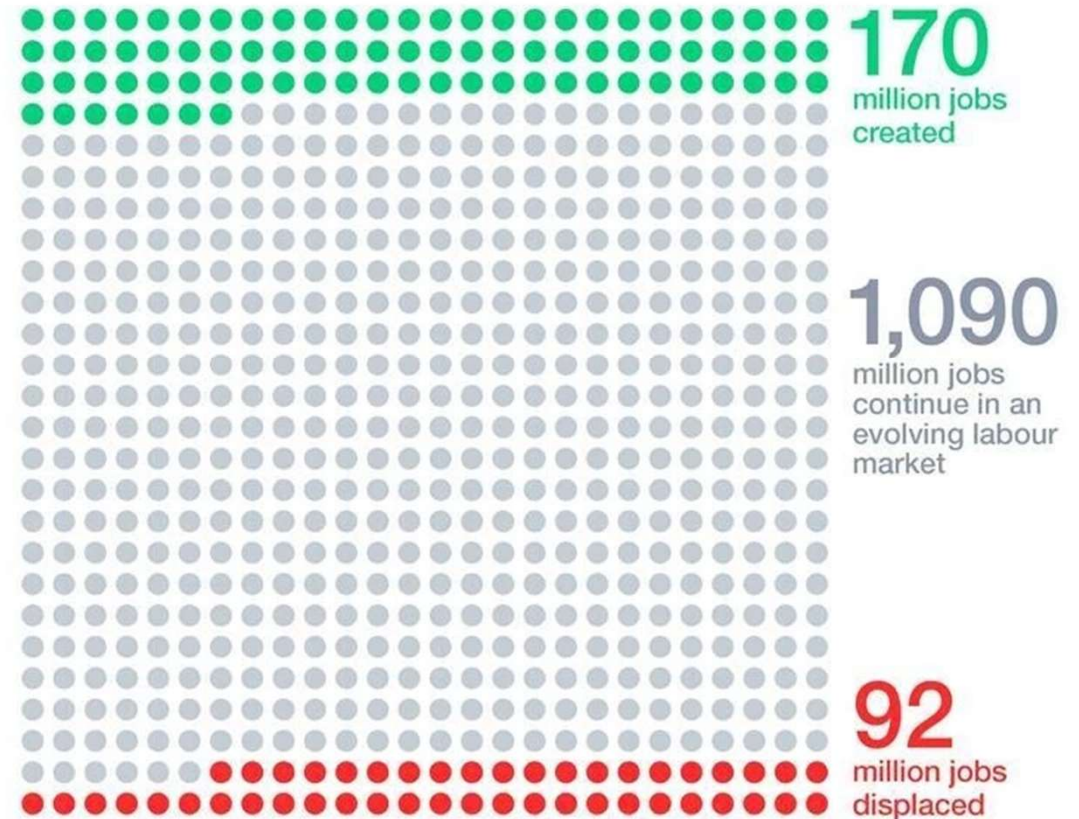
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Future of jobs



Future of Jobs Report 2025

Total job growth and loss



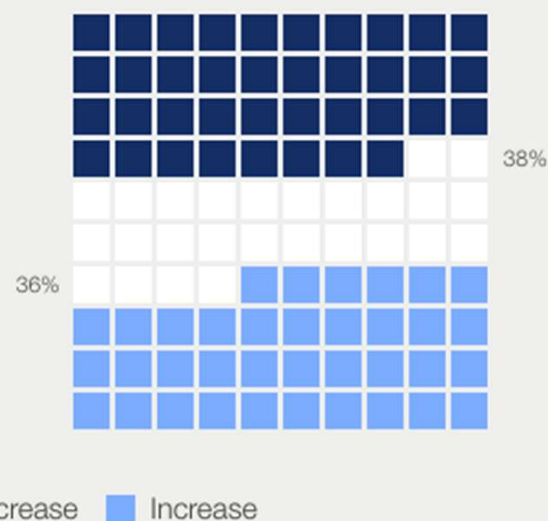
Source: World Economic Forum. (2025). *Future of Jobs Report 2025*.



Expected AI impact on entry-level jobs over the next 3 years

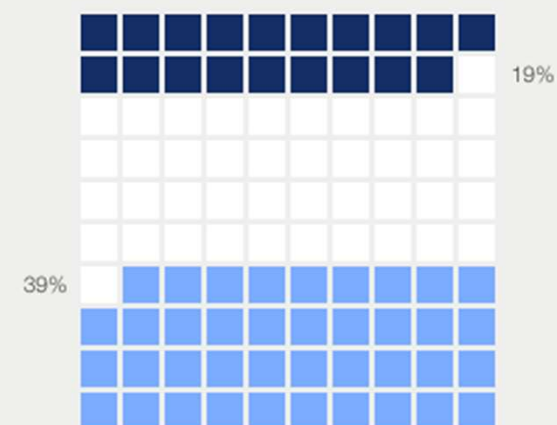
Senior leaders

Q: What impact do you think AI will have on entry-level roles in your organization over the next three years?



Entry-level workers

Q: In the next three years, to what extent do you believe AI will increase or decrease your job security?



Source: PwC Global Hopes and Fears Survey (2025).

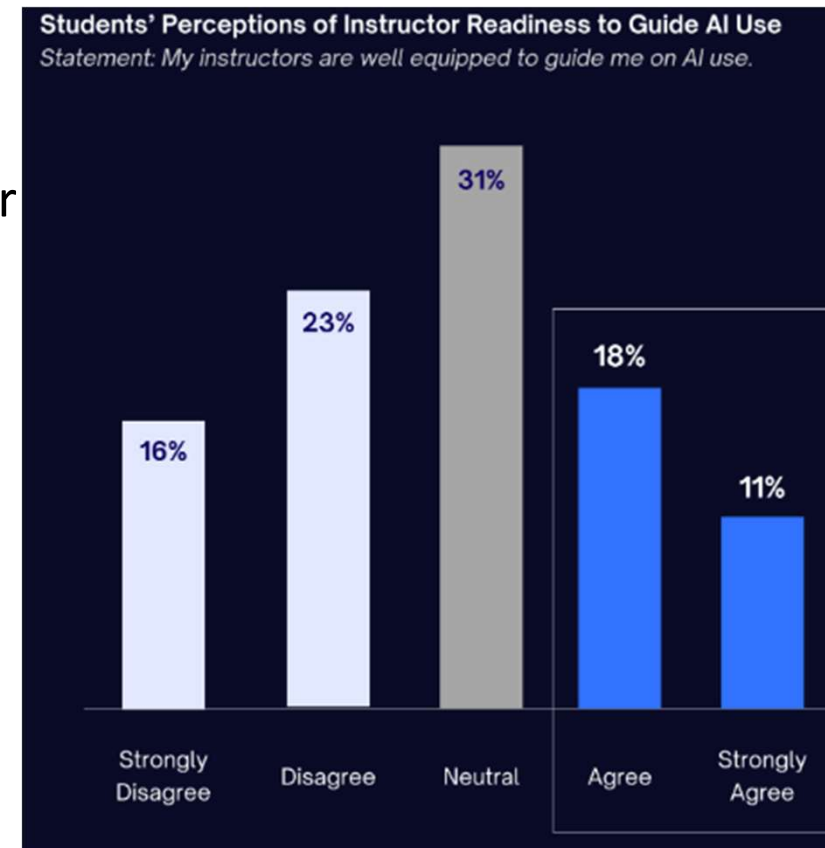


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Student Confidence

- Global Survey with over 27,000 students across 35 countries
- **37%** express serious doubts about whether their programme is relevant for AI and the future.
- **Only 29%** believe their instructors are well equipped to guide them.

Digital Education Council. 2026. [AI in Higher Education Global Survey 2026](#).





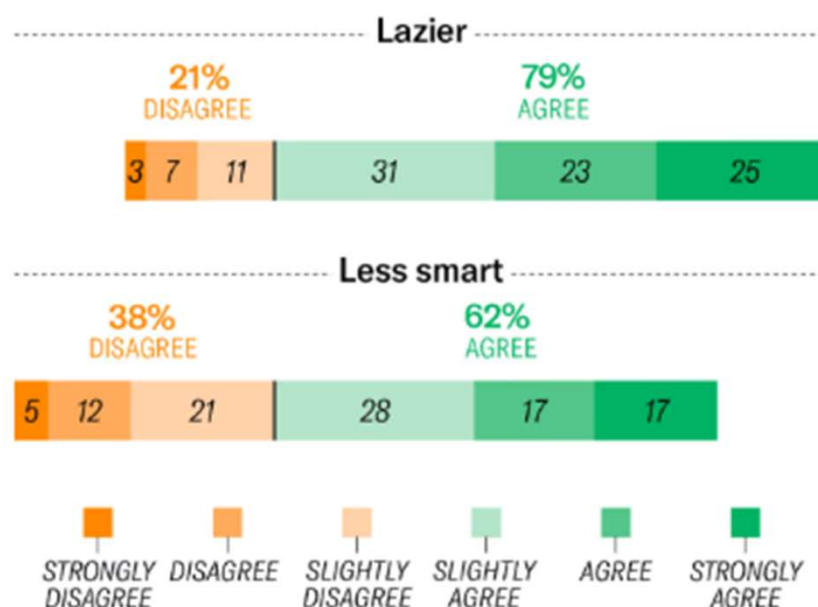
Technology And Analytics

How Gen Z Uses Gen AI— and Why It Worries Them

by Benjamin Lira, Dunigan Folk, Lyle Ungar and Angela L. Duckworth

January 28, 2026

Percentage of Gen Z adults who are worried that
using AI makes people:



Source: Nationally representative Gallup survey of 2,473 U.S. adults
ages 18–28 (October 2025)

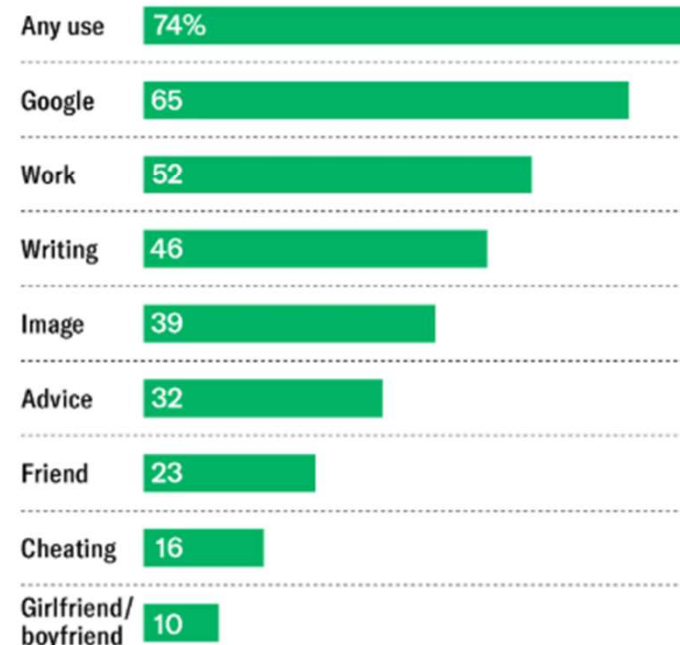


How Gen Z Is Using AI Chatbots

Contrary to prior reports, Gen Z is using AI chatbots more for productivity (e.g., as a substitute for a Google search, to help with work, or to help with writing) than for social reasons (e.g., to ask for life advice, as a friend, or as a girlfriend or boyfriend).

Percentage of Gen Z adults who use AI at least
once a month

By use case



Source: Nationally representative Gallup survey of 2,473 U.S. adults
ages 18–28 (October 2025)





University leadership in shaping AI yet to be seen

- A joint research by UNESCO and UNU IAS with 200 HEIs of 19 countries in Latin America
- Persistent “governance lag”

87%

Reported use
AI daily
basis.

26%

Has a formal
AI strategy.

18%

Has
dedicated
office or unit
for AI
oversight.

9%

Has formal
monitoring
mechanism.



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Human-Centred AI: A UN's Perspective



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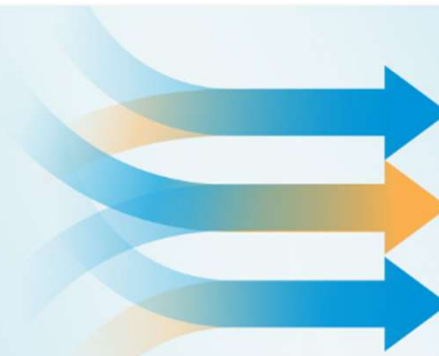
UN's Efforts for Human-centred AI



United
Nations

Independent International Scientific Panel on AI

PACT
FOR THE
FUTURE



What is HCAI: AI systems that **augment, not replace**, human capacities, grounded in human dignity, human rights, fundamental freedoms, and aligned with well-being, inclusiveness, cultural diversity, gender equality, and social justice



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Human-centred AI

Preliminary Report of the Independent International Scientific Panel on AI

July 2026

United Nations



General Assembly

Distr.: General
27 August 2025

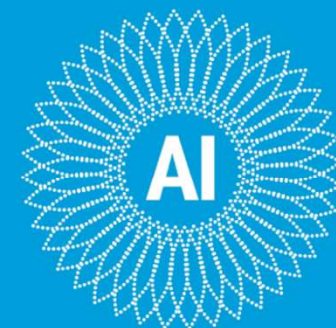
Evidence-based assessment of
opportunities, risks and impacts
of artificial intelligence

Seventy-ninth session
Agenda item 123
Strengthening of the United Nations system

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 26 August 2025

[without reference to a Main Committee (A/79/L.118)]

79/325. Terms of reference and modalities for the establishment and
functioning of the Independent International Scientific Panel on
Artificial Intelligence and the Global Dialogue on Artificial
Intelligence Governance



Global Dialogue on AI Governance

New York, 3-4 May 2027



For a human-centred AI, an intersectional lens is needed.



Credit: Philanthropy Europe Association

Intersectionality -- seeing the world through a special set of glasses



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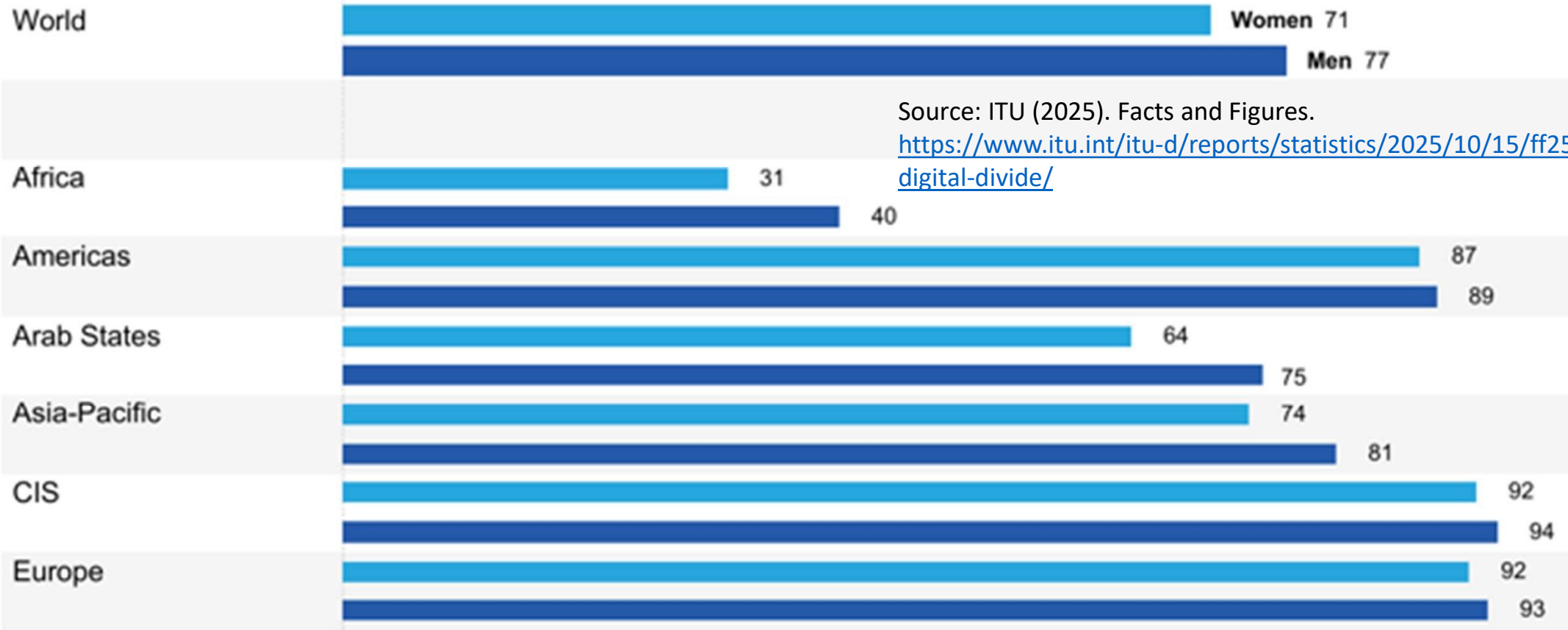
Missing Pieces



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Internet is still not for everyone.

Percentage of women and men using the Internet, 2025



Source: ITU (2025). Facts and Figures.

<https://www.itu.int/itu-d/reports/statistics/2025/10/15/ff25-the-digital-divide/>



AI and Race: AI largely ignores Indigenous peoples and linguistic diversity

40% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in Australia don't know what GenAI is ([Notley et al., 2024](#))

Global language loss could **triple within 40 years** with at least **one** language disappearing per month ([Bromham et al., 2022](#))

Without the inclusion of Indigenous peoples and linguistic diversity, AI will cause...

- More harmful biases and exclusion
- Further misappropriation and theft of Indigenous knowledges and cultures
- Further extinction of languages



Image credit: [UNESCO/Shutterstock](#)

Source: [UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs \(2025\)](#)



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Closing the Gendered AI Gaps

UNESCO (2024) reported that women comprise only:

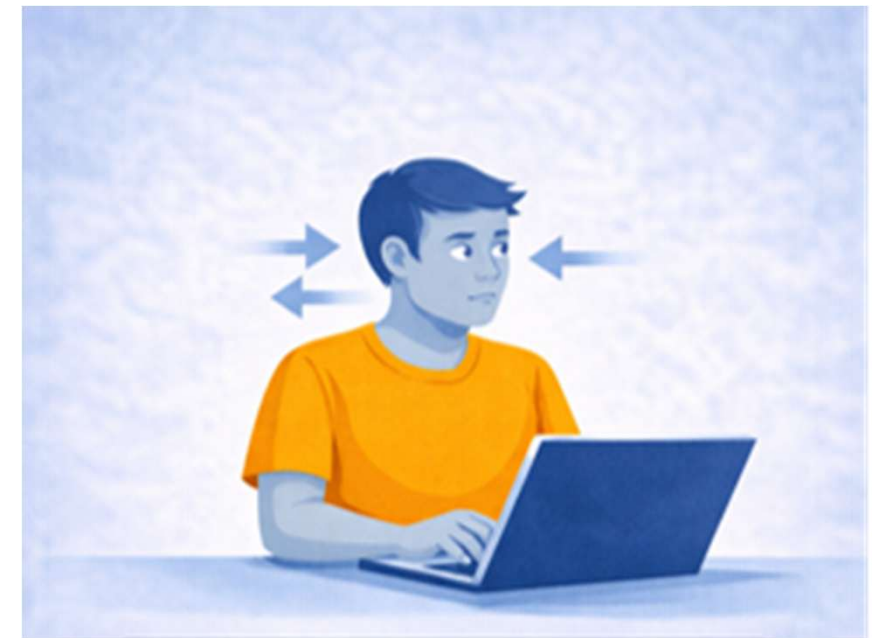
- **20%** of employees in machine learning companies
- **12%** of AI researchers
- **6%** of professional software developers
- **42%** of average monthly ChatGPT users on PCs (and **27% on smartphones**)



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AI and People with Disabilities

1 in 5 students with disabilities dropped out
of education during the COVID-19 pandemic



United Nations (2024). *Disability and Development Report 2024: Accelerating the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals*. UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA).

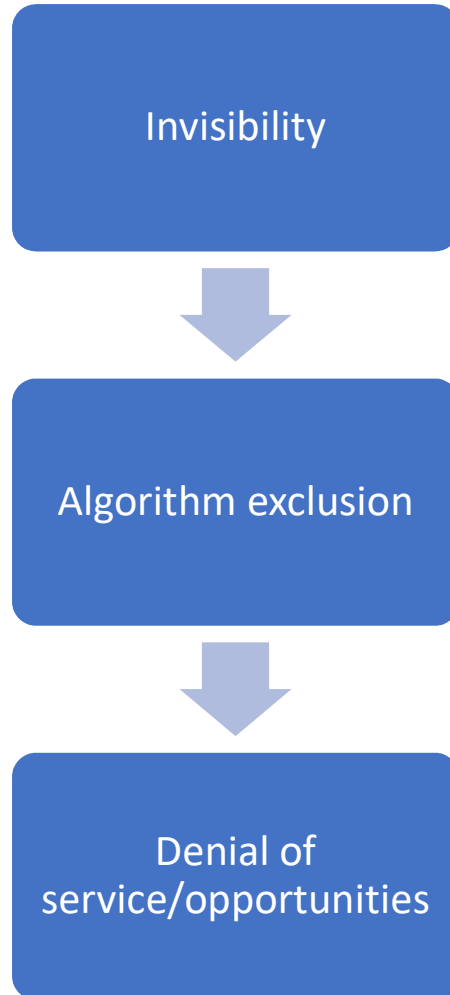
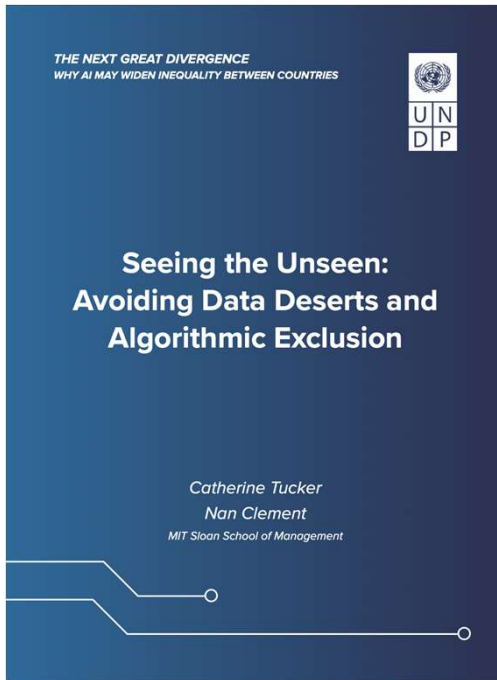


Kwapisz, Monika & Ackerman, Yoav & Nguyen, Jennifer & Rajivan, Prashanth. (2025). Surveillance and Disability in Online Proctored Exams: Student Perspectives and Design Implications. 10.48550/arXiv.2511.10826.



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Data desert



Created by Nano Banana on 5 Feb 2026



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Call for collaboration – What UNU does



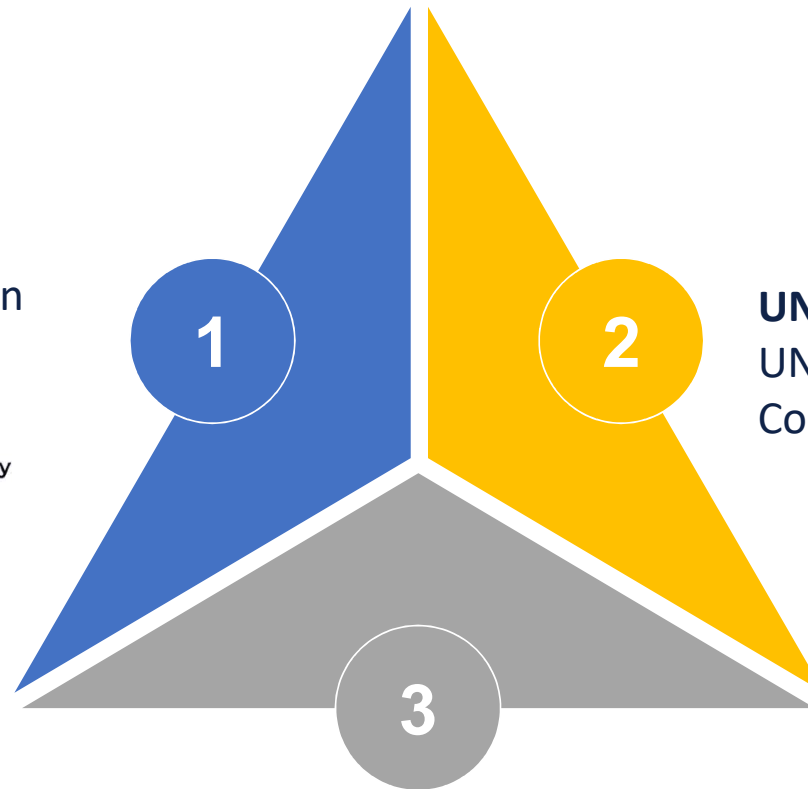
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UNU AI activities

UNU IAS (with UNESCO)
Futures of Higher Education
and AI Action Group



HESI Higher
Education
Sustainability
Initiative



UNU Macau

UNU Global AI Network and UNU AI
Conference (25-26 November 2026)

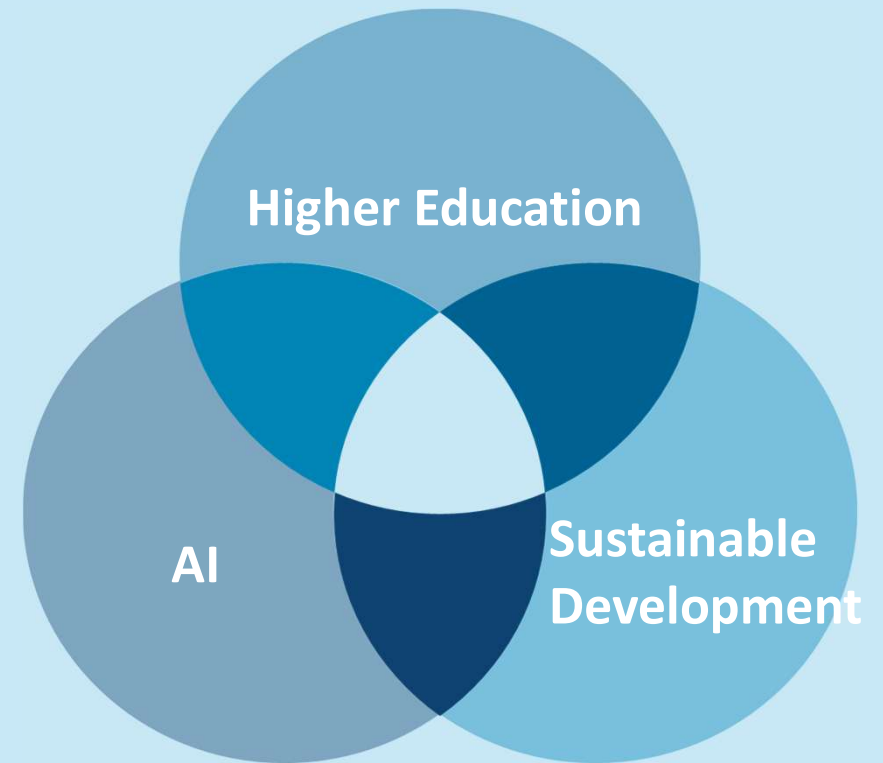
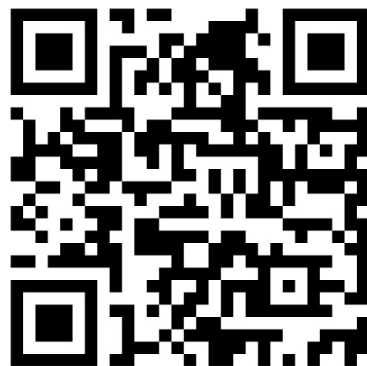
New UNU institute in Italy
specializing in AI and big data (to be open in 2026)



HESI Higher
Education
Sustainability
Initiative

HESI Action Group on the Futures of Higher Education and Artificial Intelligence

Launched at HESI Global Forum during the High-Level Political Forum in July 2024.





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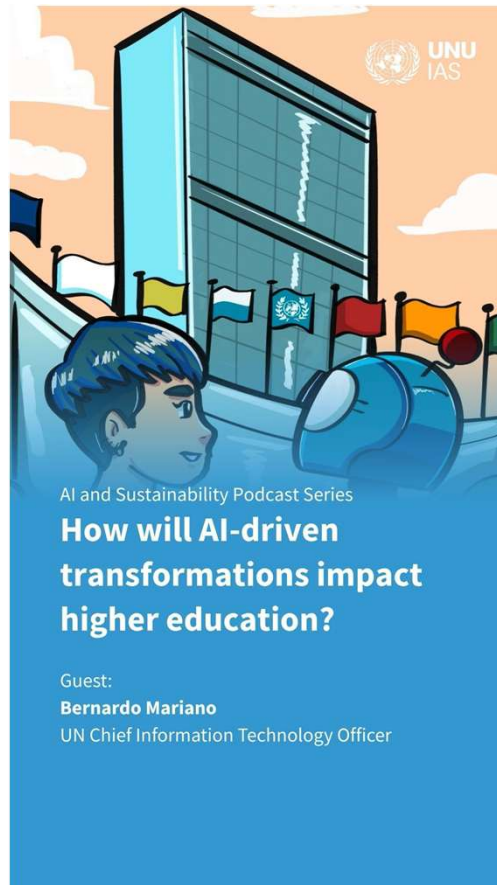
Knowledge Products

Podcast Series

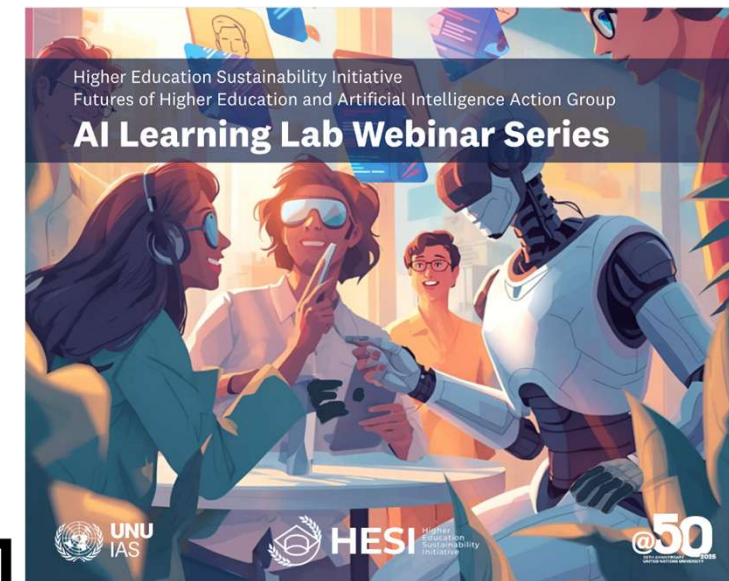


Episode list:

1. Youth leadership in AI field
2. Inherent bias in AI
3. AI and social justice
4. AI-driven transformations
5. Does AI make us lazy thinkers?
6. AI and university management
7. Can AI save our planet?



Webinar Series





Higher Education as Drivers and Shapers

“Technology that will shape the future of humanity must be shaped by all of humanity.”

- António Guterres, United Nations Secretary-General



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Thank you!

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