AI Talent in the European Labour Market

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is a hotly-debated topic, particularly in the context of its impact on the labor market and the workforce. These vital discussions are all too often based on assumptions rather than on concrete, objective data.

Data from LinkedIn's Economic Graph reveal new, evidence-based insights into the relationship between AI and the labor market. This novel assessment of AI talent in Europe -- looking at the relative distribution and concentration of AI talent and skills across the across EU Member States, territories, and demographies -- also uncovers emerging trends that can help guide policymaking in this area.

Where We Are Today

AI talent is spread unequally across Member States, industrial sectors, and types of workers.

Europe is lagging internationally. The U.S. employs twice as many AI-skilled individuals than the EU, despite its total labour force being just half the size.

2x
AI-skilled people employed in the U.S.

Just three countries are home to half of all the EU's AI talent. The highest proportion (24%) can be found in the UK, with Germany (14%) and France (12%) following close behind.

24%   14%
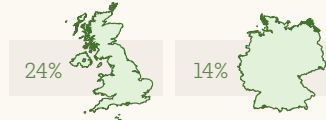
Two-thirds of AI-skilled individuals work in the technology (ICT) sector or within academia.

2/3
work in tech or academia

AI talent distribution is uneven across gender, educational, and demographic lines.

Gender gap among AI talent in the European Union

16% in AI talent are women

84% in AI talent are men

There is an opportunity to lure talent into untapped markets. AI talent is incredibly mobile, and 42% of AI-skilled individuals will move away from the country where they studied.

42%
move away

Large, well-established companies are most likely to be first adopters of AI in the EU -- a contrast to what we see in the U.S. market. And it follows that championing industries within Member States are the first to benefit from the diffusion: automotive companies in Germany, finance firms in the UK, and telecommunications firms and automotive in Sweden, are already seeing significant gains from investing in AI technologies.

The Path Forward

The uneven distribution of AI talent, and underlying inequities, is limiting Europe's potential to become an AI innovation hub in the world. To transform the EU into an AI leader and equalize the distribution of AI talent across socioeconomic and geographic lines, leaders must take action.

- Training and upskilling "near-AI" talent could double the size of the current AI workforce in the EU.
- Aligning curriculum and training to industry standards would ensure talent has the right skills to work in the jobs employers are hiring for.
- Fostering AI ecosystems will encourage greater overlap between fundamental and applied research, and would introduce AI skills across various fields of study, curricula, and levels of education -- including non-formal education.
- Making strategic investments in Eastern Europe to encourage a more even development of AI skills across the continent and prevent widening geographical divides.
- Helping industries and companies with low concentrations of AI make other technological investments can help increase the rate of diffusion of AI technologies into those industries, as more companies reach peak productivity.

Without a proactive approach, AI could well become a new driver of inequality in Europe.