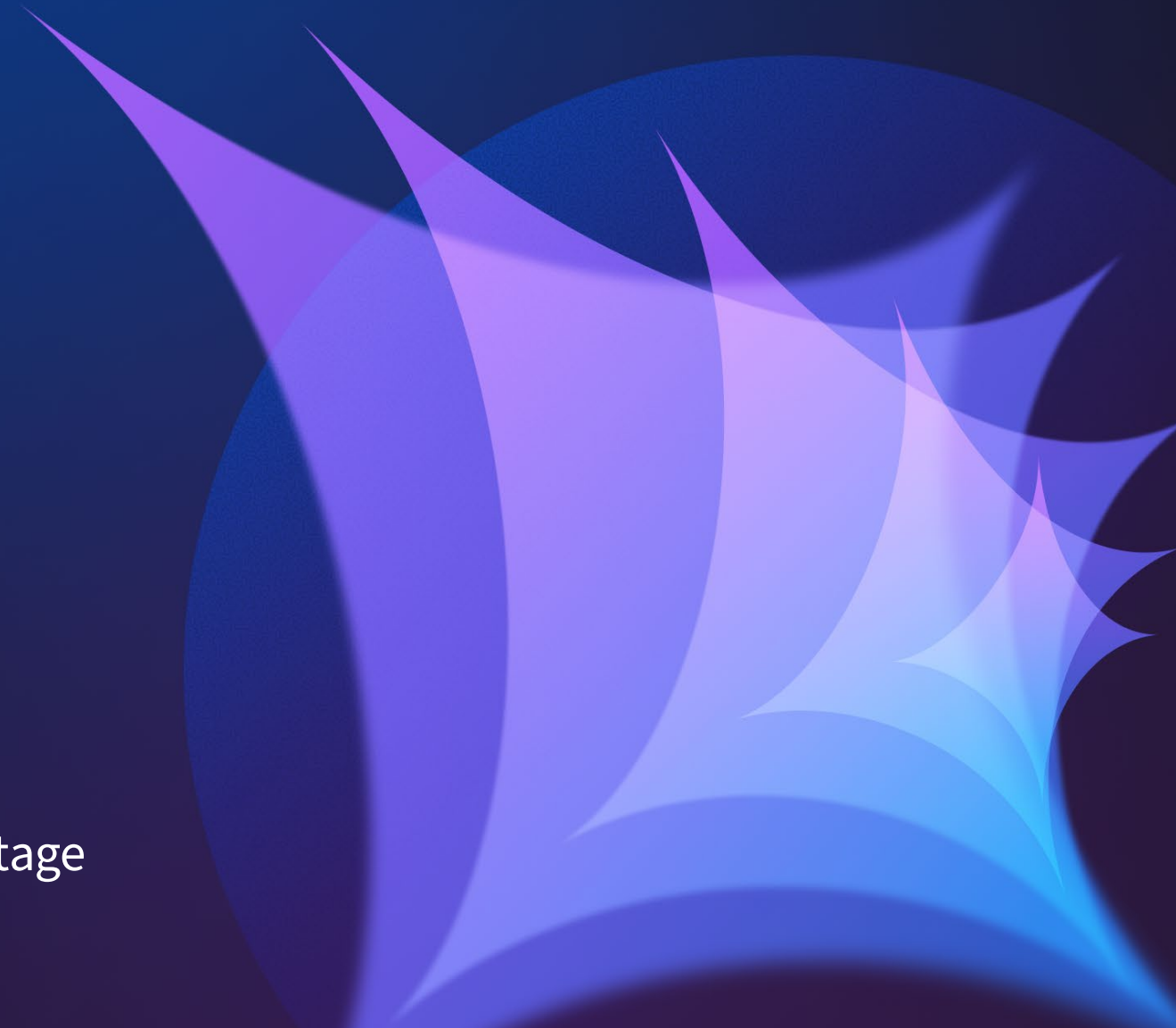
coursera + ûdemy

2026

# Global Skills Report

## The AI-Human Skills Advantage



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# Foreword

The *Global Skills Report 2026* arrives at a defining moment for the global workforce—and for Coursera and Udemy. The integration of our two companies positions us to create one of the most comprehensive skills platforms in the world. Drawing on a subset of learning data from more than 300 million Coursera and Udemy learners, the 2026 edition features the broadest dataset in the *Global Skills Report*'s eight-year history.

Across both platforms, demand for AI-related content is accelerating, led by generative AI (GenAI). Enrollments reached 45 per minute, up from 25 per minute in 2025. To meet this demand, we expanded our GenAI content catalog across Coursera and Udemy to nearly 10,000 courses this year.

The urgency around GenAI becomes even more pronounced when viewed against AI's projected impact. IDC predicts that AI will generate over $22.5 trillion in cumulative global economic value by 2031.[1] However, this value will not be distributed evenly. PwC finds that 74% of AI's economic value is captured by just 20% of organizations.[2]

**Speaking with customers around the world, I consistently hear that the leaders who are achieving the greatest velocity with AI are those who are treating investments in AI and human skills training as equally important as investments in technology.**

In fact, research conducted by Coursera and AWS found that 88% of leaders said their planned AI investments would fail without greater investment in training.[3] Deloitte similarly identifies a 2X gap between technology infrastructure and talent readiness.[4]

It's this readiness disconnect that provides the backdrop for the *Global Skills Report 2026*, which focuses on the relationship between AI skills and the human skills that help people use AI effectively. The report's findings are both grounded in and reinforce a broader definition of AI readiness. Yes, people need technical proficiency to use AI in their given job roles. But they also need human skills like critical thinking, creativity, and ethics to augment AI use with better decisions and execution.

To show where learner skill-building and national AI readiness align most strongly, the report introduces the **AI-Human Skills Synergy Index**—the first of its kind in the world. The Index reveals how learners across 98 countries are developing AI and human skills together, viewed alongside the wider conditions that influence how individuals put these capabilities into practice.

Leaders across business, higher education, and government can use these insights to connect learning investments to tangible business outcomes, prepare students for roles in the AI economy, and turn national AI ambition into effective workforce development strategies.

AI will continue to change the nature of our work. Our responsibility is to ensure people have the right skills to approach, and direct, that change with confidence.

*– Anthony Salcito*



**Anthony Salcito**
SVP & President, Enterprise, Coursera

# Executive summary



# Executive summary

## AI deployment is outpacing the skills people need to use it effectively.

Nearly three in four organizations have deployed or are piloting AI, yet only 18% report that most of their workforce participated in AI reskilling or upskilling during the past year.[5]

The same gap appears in education and among workers. More than 95% of surveyed students and educators use AI, but only 26% of educators say their institution has a formal policy governing its use.[6] Workers perceive the largest gap between the importance of AI literacy and their own proficiency.[7]

Realizing value from AI requires both technical proficiency and human capabilities, such as critical thinking, complex problem-solving, and ethics. This report examines where learners are developing these skills, what skills they are focusing on, and how they are pursuing them.

READING THE DATA

The ***Global Skills Report 2026*** draws on data from more than 300 million registered Coursera and Udemy learners. Coursera learner data supports the country-level AI-Human Skills Synergy Index, skill-pair analysis, and year-over-year trends. Both Udemy and Coursera data are used in the analysis of top AI and human skills, which are organized into broader skills themes. Because the platforms differ in taxonomy, learner base, and data availability, their metrics are not blended into a single dataset.

**Coursera and Udemy's joint datasets broaden the evidence of learner activity.** Each platform's measures remain separated and are not combined into a single score.

> *As AI takes on more of the routine, easily verifiable parts of our work, more people can play broader roles that once required a whole team. A marketing coordinator might now grow to running entire campaigns end to end, from conception through planning, execution, to analyzing what worked. A web frontend developer might now become a full-stack developer involved more broadly in building entire pieces of software.*
>
> *Succeeding in these expanded roles will require a combination of AI skills plus broad and deep skills in their specific discipline. This is why AI is driving widespread demand for people to learn new skills. People who embrace these opportunities will have tremendous opportunities to step up, do more, and create more value.*



**Andrew Ng**
Founder, DeepLearning.AI and Co-Founder and Chairman, Coursera

# Report overview

This year's report explores how learners are building AI and human skills together. Three principal data components are used to illustrate this relationship:

- **AI-Human Skills Synergy Index:** Where active learners are developing AI skills alongside the human skills needed to apply them, in the context of each country's broader AI-readiness position
- **Top human and AI skills:** The fastest-growing capabilities in each category, showing where learner demand is intensifying
- **AI-human skills pairs:** The skill combinations learners most frequently build together, showing how technical and human capabilities reinforce one another

> *At Bausch + Lomb, foundational AI courses are mandatory across the enterprise, with course completion embedded in performance management. This requirement established AI literacy as a core expectation for every colleague and has unlocked new sources of value across our workforce. Colleagues are more confident experimenting with new tools and approaches, and innovation now comes from both technical and nontechnical functions.*



**Devang Modi**
Chief AI Officer, Bausch + Lomb

# Key findings

## 01

## Learner skill-building and national AI readiness align most strongly in Europe

Across the countries included in the AI-Human Skills Synergy Index, learner skill-building and national AI readiness align most strongly in Europe. Twenty-five of the 31 European countries examined for the report sit in the top half of the Synergy Index, led by Germany and France. Other leading countries across regions include Japan, the United Arab Emirates, the United States, and Singapore. The different operating environments of these countries show why learner interest in AI and human skills must be considered alongside regional infrastructure, investment, and regulation.

## 02

## Learners are building AI and human skills together

Across the most common AI-human skills pairs, foundational and applied AI skills repeatedly connect with innovation, judgment, and stakeholder alignment. These combinations support demands for AI-enabled work such as finding valuable applications of AI, protecting the quality of decisions when using AI, and coordinating AI adoption. Leaders should identify where AI and human skills can be developed independently and where it is beneficial to develop them in tandem.

## 03

## Critical thinking leads human skills development

Critical thinking and judgment lead the report's top human skills, followed by skills pertaining to ethics, governance, and complex problem-solving. Enrollments in critical thinking in particular rose by 107% year over year. The wider pattern shows human skills safeguarding the quality of AI-supported work, translating governance into everyday decisions, and helping individual contributors lead through influence and coordination. The expectation for developing these skills is also appearing earlier in AI-exposed career paths, such as those for software developers, data analysts, and finance managers.

## 04

# AI learning is becoming more applied and specialized

Generative AI remains the leading AI skill of interest among learners. Analysis of both Coursera and Udemy data finds that learners are now enrolling in GenAI content at a combined rate of more than 45 enrollments per minute, up from 25 per minute in 2025. Learning interest around AI agents, orchestration, security, infrastructure, and personalization reveals growing demand for building, connecting, securing, and guiding AI systems.

## 05

# Trusted credentials are gaining value as workforce signals

Micro-credential enrollments grew 33% year over year, with AI micro-credential enrollments specifically growing 122%, indicating rising participation in structured pathways that make newly developed skills visible. Employers report valuing micro-credentials as hiring signals, while certification preparation provides another route toward independently assessed industry credentials.



## What these findings mean for leaders

From business to higher education to government, AI readiness depends on whether people can apply technology to real problems with judgment, accountability, and purpose.

- **Business and workforce leaders:** Audit the AI and human capabilities required for specific roles, enable managers to support adoption, and connect learning to applied work, credentials, and career mobility.
- **Higher education leaders:** Build AI proficiency across disciplines while strengthening assessment, critique, ethical reasoning, and responsible use.
- **Government leaders:** Pair AI policy and infrastructure with accessible learning, recognized credentials, and workforce pathways that broaden participation in AI-enabled work.

# Detailed findings



01

# Europe leads the AI-Human Skills Synergy Index

AI readiness is built through policy, infrastructure, technology, and people. National investments can create the conditions for AI adoption, but skills determine whether workers can thoughtfully translate AI use into impactful outcomes.

The AI-Human Skills Synergy Index adds this dimension of workforce learning to the AI readiness picture. It identifies where active learners are developing AI skills alongside the human skills needed to apply them, then places that behavior in the context of each country's broader AI readiness environment.

READING THE DATA

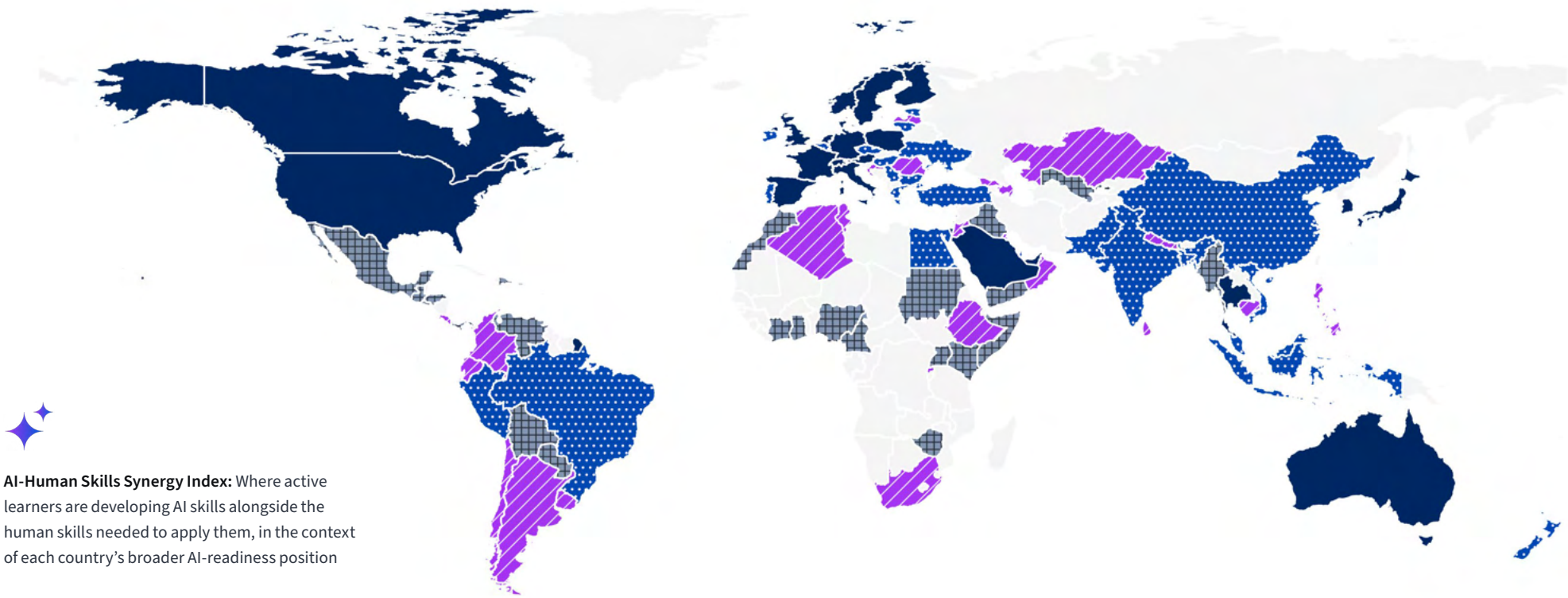
## The AI-Human Skills Synergy Index

The AI-Human Skills Synergy Index combines Coursera learning behavior, weighted at 60%, with the Oxford Insights' *Government AI Readiness Index 2025*, weighted at 40%. The Coursera learning signal primarily considers learner proficiency, enrollment breadth, and enrollment overlap. The Oxford Insights component adds national-level context on government capacity, policy infrastructure, and technology readiness.

The result shows where learner skill-building and national AI readiness align most strongly. A high-ranking country combines strong observed skill-building with a supportive readiness environment. A lower ranking can reflect weaker skill-building, a less supportive readiness environment, or some combination of both. Access, learning participation, or enabling conditions all may be key contributing factors.

# AI-Human Skills Synergy Index

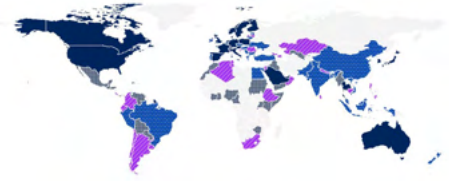
## Global overview




**AI-Human Skills Synergy Index:** Where active learners are developing AI skills alongside the human skills needed to apply them, in the context of each country's broader AI-readiness position

# AI-Human Skills Synergy Index

## Global rankings



### Leading

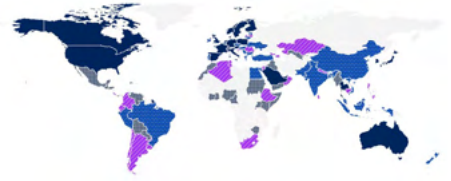
| Rank | Country | Rank | Country |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Germany | 14 | Norway |
| 2 | France | 15 | Sweden |
| 3 | Japan | 16 | Poland |
| 4 | Korea, Republic of | 17 | Finland |
| 5 | Hong Kong | 18 | Israel |
| 6 | United Arab Emirates | 19 | United Kingdom |
| 7 | Netherlands | 20 | Austria |
| 8 | United States | 21 | Italy |
| 9 | Spain | 22 | Australia |
| 10 | Singapore | 23 | Puerto Rico |
| 11 | Canada | 24 | Thailand |
| 12 | Switzerland | 25 | Saudi Arabia |
| 13 | Denmark | | |

### Competitive

| Rank | Country | Rank | Country |
|---|---|---|---|
| 26 | Czech Republic | 39 | Hungary |
| 27 | Estonia | 40 | India |
| 28 | China | 41 | Turkey |
| 29 | Indonesia | 42 | Ukraine |
| 30 | Ireland | 43 | Egypt |
| 31 | Portugal | 44 | Bulgaria |
| 32 | Belgium | 45 | Brazil |
| 33 | Serbia | 46 | Qatar |
| 34 | Greece | 47 | Pakistan |
| 35 | Lithuania | 48 | Bahrain |
| 36 | Malaysia | 49 | Peru |
| 37 | New Zealand | 50 | Bangladesh |
| 38 | Vietnam | | |

# AI-Human Skills Synergy Index

## Global rankings continued



### Emerging

| Rank | Country | Rank | Country |
|---|---|---|---|
| 51 | Colombia | 64 | Cambodia |
| 52 | Romania | 65 | Azerbaijan |
| 53 | Latvia | 66 | Oman |
| 54 | Uruguay | 67 | Kuwait |
| 55 | Kazakhstan | 68 | Argentina |
| 56 | Croatia | 69 | Nepal |
| 57 | Rwanda | 70 | Jordan |
| 58 | Tunisia | 71 | Algeria |
| 59 | Chile | 72 | Lebanon |
| 60 | Sri Lanka | 73 | South Africa |
| 61 | Georgia | 74 | Ecuador |
| 62 | Costa Rica | 75 | Ethiopia |
| 63 | Philippines | | |

### Lagging

| Rank | Country | Rank | Country |
|---|---|---|---|
| 76 | El Salvador | 89 | Ghana |
| 77 | Bolivia | 90 | Uganda |
| 78 | Morocco | 91 | Sudan |
| 79 | Panama | 92 | Guatemala |
| 80 | Kenya | 93 | Uzbekistan |
| 81 | Nigeria | 94 | Cote d'Ivoire |
| 82 | Yemen | 95 | Honduras |
| 83 | Dominican Republic | 96 | Paraguay |
| 84 | Zimbabwe | 97 | Venezuela |
| 85 | Myanmar | 98 | Somalia |
| 86 | Iraq | | |
| 87 | Cameroon | | |
| 88 | Mexico | | |

# Strong AI alignment extends across Europe, while other regions feature standout countries

Though Germany and France lead the Synergy Index, Europe's advantage is the consistency of its performance. Twenty-five of the region's 31 countries analyzed in this report sit in the top half, and none appear in the bottom 25. This strength extends beyond Western Europe. Northern European countries including Denmark, Norway, Sweden, and Finland rank in the top 17; Spain and Italy place in the top 21; and Poland, the Czech Republic, and Estonia put Central and Eastern European countries in the top 27. Only six European countries fall below the global midpoint. Even with those exceptions, high-ranking countries are found in Northern, Western, Southern, Central, and Eastern Europe.

Coordinated investment and rising adoption provide context for Europe's performance. EU Member States' 2025 Digital Decade roadmaps—national strategic plans that guide digital transformation—included 1,910 measures worth €288.6 billion.[8] Furthermore, the creation of European Digital Innovation Hubs—nonprofit organizations that help organizations in the EU accelerate digital transformation—provide regional access to technical expertise, experimentation, training, and skills development.[9]

Enterprise AI use across the EU rose from 13.5% in 2024 to 20% in 2025. Adoption remains uneven, ranging from 42% in Denmark to 5.2% in Romania.[10] These conditions don't explain why Europe performs strongly in the Synergy Index.

**They do show that multiple European countries have policy and institutional infrastructure capable of supporting learning at scale. Regional AI regulation may also play a role in this trend.**

Elsewhere, strong performance is more concentrated. There are four countries in the Asia Pacific region in the top 10: Japan, the Republic of Korea, Hong Kong, and Singapore. The United States ranks eighth, while Canada places eleventh. The United Arab Emirates ranks sixth, but regional performance varies widely: Nations from the Middle East and North Africa can be found in all tiers of the Synergy Index. Countries in Latin America and Sub-Saharan Africa appear more often in the lower tiers, signaling opportunities to expand learning access, improve enabling conditions, and/or strengthen pathways between education, credentials, and work.

## Global enrollment trends at a glance (year over year)

| | |
|---|---|
| AI micro-credentials | +122% |
| AI enrollments | +67% |
| Micro-credentials | +33% |
| **AI skills** | |
| AI security | +665% |
| Agentic workflows | +546% |
| Generative AI | +132% |
| **Human skills** | |
| Complex problem-solving | +126% |
| Critical thinking | +107% |
| Innovation | +74% |

# AI policy is advancing quickly, but not in one direction

Governments are converging on the need to manage AI risk, but not on a single regulatory model. Some are establishing cross-economy obligations. Others are regulating particular systems or uses, relying on voluntary standards and existing regulators, or building national strategies before introducing broad compliance requirements.

Regional patterns contain important exceptions. Europe has the strongest concentration of comprehensive binding rules because EU Member States share the AI Act. The United Kingdom instead follows a principles-led approach.[11]

| Governance direction | What it means | Illustrative jurisdictions | Implications for learning initiatives |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Broad mandates** | Cross-economy laws establish national governance, risk categories, transparency or safety obligations, and enforcement mechanisms. | The European Union is implementing a phased, risk-based AI Act. The Republic of Korea brought its AI Basic Act into force in January 2026, with a minimum one-year enforcement grace period.[16] | Treat AI literacy as a compliance requirement. Build documented, auditable training programs now. Fines under regimes like the EU AI Act (up to €35M or 7% of global turnover) raise the cost of delay. |
| **Targeted rules** | Enforceable rules govern defined models, content, decisions, sectors, or subnational jurisdictions rather than AI across the economy. | China regulates public generative AI services and other defined technologies. Peru has adopted prohibited- and high-risk-use classifications and transparency requirements. California requires large frontier developers to publish safety frameworks and meet related transparency requirements.[17] | Map training to the systems, roles, or use cases the rules cover instead of blanket AI literacy. Teams that touch high-risk classifications, frontier models, or public-facing GenAI services need targeted, role-specific training and documentation. |
| **Flexible guidance** | Governments use voluntary guidance, technical standards, existing laws, and sector regulators to shape AI practice. | The United Kingdom applies cross-sector principles through existing regulators. The United States combines an innovation-oriented federal action plan with the voluntary NIST AI Risk Management Framework. Australia, Singapore, and the United Arab Emirates also emphasize guidance, safeguards, and assurance tools.[18] | No binding literacy mandate yet, but voluntary frameworks are becoming the de facto standard regulators and customers expect. Use them to structure governance training now, ahead of stricter rules that may follow. |
| **Strategic growth** | National or regional strategies prioritize capacity, infrastructure, institutions, and responsible adoption, while AI-specific legal obligations remain limited or under development. | Colombia has a funded national policy and implementation roadmap. Kenya is implementing its 2025–2030 AI strategy, while the African Union is promoting coordinated national approaches through its Continental AI Strategy.[19] | Compliance requirements are still developing, but national strategies prioritize capacity-building and accessible learning pathways. Align workforce training with public-sector investment and partnership opportunities before requirements harden. |

*Note: This policy snapshot is provided for informational purposes and does not constitute legal advice. Please consult with your own legal counsel and technical teams to determine the best course of action for you and your organization.*

Asia Pacific spans the full range of regulatory models. South Korea has a cross-economy law, China uses targeted regulation, and Singapore and Australia rely more heavily on governance frameworks and standards. Japan's 2025 AI Act establishes national governance and planning but remains primarily promotion-oriented.[12]

North America includes voluntary federal frameworks and binding state-level controls. Latin America includes both Peru's enforceable regime and Colombia's strategy-first model. Across much of Africa and the Middle East, nonbinding strategies and frameworks remain the primary governance mechanisms.[13]

Though the approaches differ, the growing breadth and complexity present in the AI policy landscape places urgency on developing relevant AI skills to reduce risk. Failure to do so can result in significant fines. The EU AI Act, for instance, includes AI literacy obligations that require providers and deployers to account for people's knowledge, experience, training, and the context in which AI is used. Organizations in breach of the EU AI Act may receive fines of up to €35 million or 7% of global turnover.[14] Meanwhile, similarly stringent legislation is being drafted in Brazil.[15]

Notably, organizations operating across jurisdictions may face obligations from more than one regulatory regime. Institutions should identify which rules apply to their systems, users, and activities with qualified legal counsel.

> *When Kazakhstan launched AI-SANA, our national AI training program, we knew that providing access to digital courses was only the first step. To drive real systemic change, we built a robust partnership model with 100 participating universities, supporting integration of courses into curriculum, very closely monitoring progress, and updating curriculum with the freshest AI content. We've also accelerated pedagogical upskilling, empowering 1,200+ educators to use innovative online instructional methods and create 35 high-quality custom courses that effectively prepare our students for an AI-driven workforce.*



**Sayasat Nurbek**
Minister of Science and Higher Education
of the Republic of Kazakhstan

## Trending AI and human skills courses

**Agentic AI**

- udemy — Introduction to Loop Engineering
- University of Oxford — Generative and Agentic AI

**Prompt engineering**

- udemy — Generative AI and Prompt Engineering For Absolute Beginners
- Vanderbilt University — Prompt Engineering

**AI leadership**

- udemy — Certified Chief AI Officer Program: AI Strategy & Governance
- Google Cloud — Generative AI Leader

**Compliance and governance**

- udemy — Compliance Management: All Areas Covered
- aws — Security, Compliance, and Governance for AI Solutions

A CLOSER LOOK

# When learner demand outpaces enterprise deployment: Insights from Japan

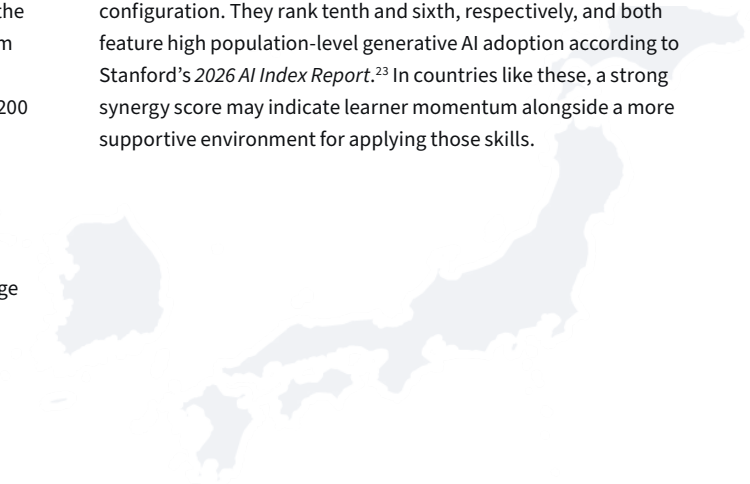
Japan ranks third in the AI-Human Skills Synergy Index. Its position is driven by strong investment and high uptake of both AI and human skills among active Coursera learners.

External evidence reveals a more complicated operating environment. In a 2025 BCG survey, 51% of respondents in Japan reported using AI at work at least weekly, the lowest rate among the surveyed Asia Pacific countries, and only 46% expressed optimism about AI.[20] At the same time, hiring for AI skills is increasing. PwC found that Japanese job postings requiring AI skills rose from 91,200 in 2024 to 332,800 in 2025.[21]

Organizational change may partially explain the disconnect. In Workday's 2025 survey, 55% of Japanese business leaders cited the time required for reskilling as an obstacle to skills-based transformation, compared with 43% globally. Resistance to change was cited by 46% in Japan and 38% globally.[22]

Japan's Synergy Index position and the external evidence describe different stages of readiness: Learners are building skills and employers are hiring, but organization-wide AI adoption remains uneven.

Singapore and the United Arab Emirates illustrate a different configuration. They rank tenth and sixth, respectively, and both feature high population-level generative AI adoption according to Stanford's *2026 AI Index Report*.[23] In countries like these, a strong synergy score may indicate learner momentum alongside a more supportive environment for applying those skills.



## Your next step

- **Business and workforce leaders:** Use the Synergy Index as a planning signal. Match learning investments to local conditions, connect training to specific roles and workflows, and equip managers to support responsible adoption.
- **Higher education leaders:** Treat AI proficiency and human capability as connected learning outcomes. Use regional context to set curriculum priorities, shape employer partnerships, and identify the credentials students need to demonstrate applied capability.
- **Government leaders:** Pair AI strategies, infrastructure, and governance with accessible skills pathways. Readiness depends on whether students and workers can participate in the opportunities those investments create.

02

# Learners are building AI and human skills together

The AI-Human Skills Synergy Index shows where learner skill-building and national AI readiness align. Skill-pair data shows *what* skills learners are building together. Across the skills pairs, AI skills themes repeatedly connect with innovation and ideation, critical thinking and judgment, and stakeholder alignment and influence. This connection appears with foundational AI skills like prompting and generative AI, as well as with more applied and technical skills like agents, LLM applications, and AI product strategy.

The recurring combinations of AI and human skills correspond to three activities: identifying applications, reviewing outputs, and coordinating implementation.

**For leaders, AI readiness programs should address technical and human capability as connected parts of the same work.**

> *Unlocking the power of AI across a global workforce starts with building confidence. Giving Mountaineers accessible, role-relevant AI pathways is turning high-level concepts into daily practice, enabling our teams to integrate their learning seamlessly into their everyday routines.*



**Sara Long**
VP of Global Talent and Learning,
Iron Mountain



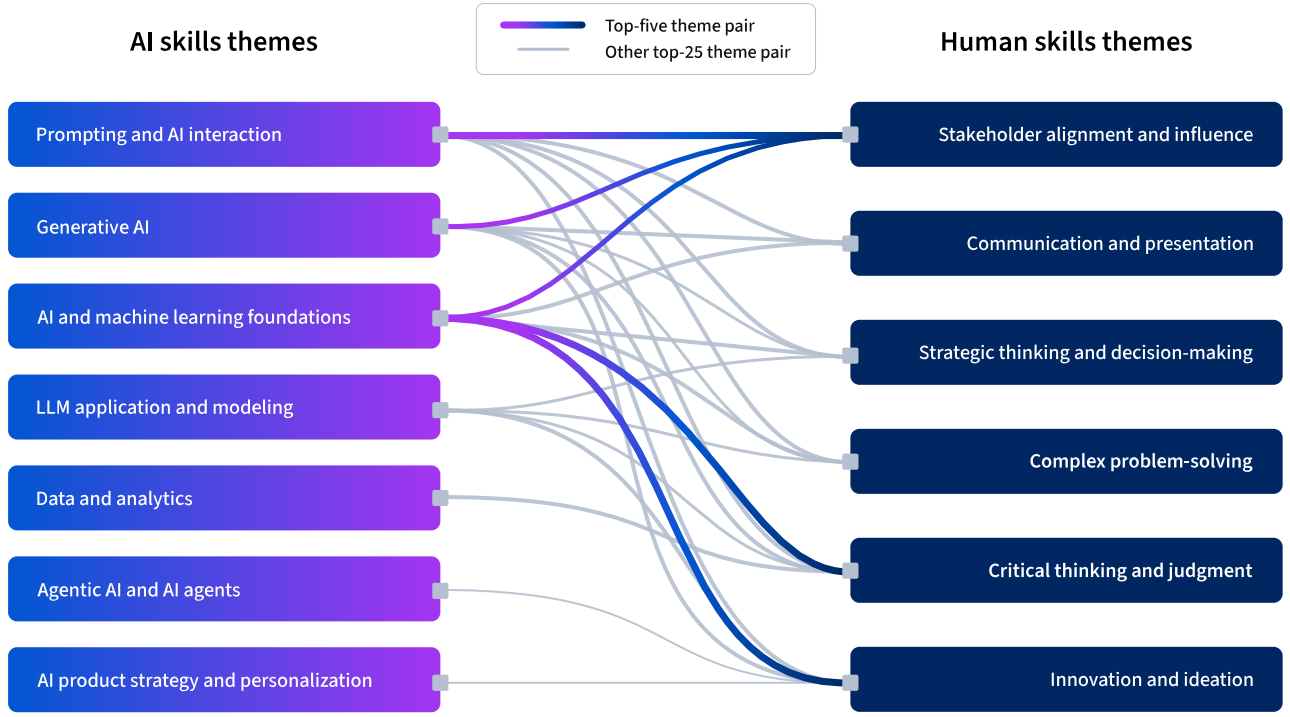
READING THE DATA

## AI-Human Skills Pairs

A pair qualifies when a learner enrolls in at least one course tagged with an AI skill and at least one course tagged with a human skill during the reporting window. In some cases, this may be the same course.

To reduce overlap among closely related taxonomy labels, the analysis maps the available top 100 source pairs to report-facing themes. Theme-level pairs are ranked by the combined learner volume of the source pairs within each theme. Learners may appear in more than one pair, so the totals do not represent unique learners across combinations.

Named proprietary models and AI assistants were excluded from the source data to better highlight transferable skills, so their absence from this analysis should not be interpreted as low demand.




**The 25 leading theme combinations**

Thicker connections represent greater relative learner volume.

*Source:* Global Skills Report 2026 *platform analysis. Theme pairs are ranked by summed learner volume within the available top 100 source pairs. Pairing indicates co-learning, not proficiency or workplace outcomes.*

# AI learning connects to value, quality, and adoption

AI and machine learning foundations skills connect with skills like innovation, judgment, and stakeholder alignment across the data set. These relationships describe the decisions that surround the use of AI. Specifically, individuals need to distinguish between tasks that AI can adequately support and those that it can't. They also need to scrutinize AI outputs for hallucinations and gaps in broader organizational context.

A similar trend extends into more applied AI learning. Prompting and generative AI frequently connect with stakeholder alignment, while innovation appears across LLM applications, agents, and AI product strategy. These instances highlight how human capability drives specialized technical work, shaping how people translate requirements, review results, manage tradeoffs, and coordinate changes to work.

| Trend | What the data shows | Why it matters |
|---|---|---|
| **Finding valuable applications for AI** | The innovation and ideation theme appears alongside foundational and applied AI skills themes. | Learned together, these skills can ground technical practice in real problems, user needs, and opportunities to improve work. |
| **Protecting decision quality** | Critical thinking, strategic decision-making, and complex problem-solving recur across the leading skills pairs. | Learners need practice examining evidence, challenging outputs, and deciding when AI-supported work is ready to use. |
| **Coordinating adoption** | Stakeholder alignment appears alongside AI foundations, prompting, and generative AI. | AI use often requires people to gather requirements, explain tradeoffs, clarify accountability, and build agreement. |

EXPERT INSIGHT

*When a pipeline feeds a dashboard and something breaks, someone notices a wrong number. When a pipeline feeds a model or a RAG system, bad data becomes bad answers at scale. That's why governance, reproducibility, and observability sit at the core of our AI data engineering curriculum.*



**Antonio Cangiano**
Director, IBM Skills Network

# Design learning around combined capabilities

McKinsey estimates that more than 70% of the skills sought by employers are used in both automatable and non-automatable work, with people expected to spend more time framing questions and interpreting results as AI handles more routine activity.[24] In a separate global study, 93% of active AI users told Workday that AI frees them to focus on higher-level responsibilities, such as strategy and problem-solving.[25] These findings reinforce that technical and human skills are increasingly needed for the same tasks.

## Learning programs should reflect this combination of work.

A learning pathway for an AI-enabled role can connect the practice of an AI tool to the ability of a learner to define a problem, review evidence, and communicate results. Hands-on projects and assessments can require learners to demonstrate these capabilities together in a realistic task.

This approach to learning design also reflects the organizational work involved in AI adoption. McKinsey argues that capturing value from AI will require changes to workflows, roles, skills, culture, and performance measures.[26] AI learning programs grounded in day-to-day tasks can help employees practice their responsibilities while also giving managers a clearer basis for evaluating and providing guidance on applied AI knowledge.

EXPERT INSIGHT

*Leaders now expect every hire to understand how generative AI applies to their work, regardless of the role. That means knowing what the technology capabilities are and recognizing where it fits in your own domain, whether you are a nurse, working in a factory, or managing risk in financial services. Knowing when to use it and not to is both a durable skill and the basis of responsible use.*



**Valerie Singer**
General Manager of AWS Global Education, AWS

## Your next step

- **Business and workforce leaders:** Start with priority roles and workflows. Build pathways that combine AI practice with the human capabilities each workflow requires, then assess them through the same projects and scenarios.
- **Higher education leaders:** Design assignments that require students to use AI within a disciplinary problem and demonstrate the related innovation, judgment, communication, or collaboration.
- **Government leaders:** Fund workforce development pathways that combine AI proficiency with employability and sector-specific capabilities. Connect learning to recognized credentials and opportunities to demonstrate the combined skills.

03

# Critical thinking leads human skills development

Enrollments in human skills are primarily driven by learner interest in critical thinking and judgment, which stands as the foremost theme within the human skills domain. Critical thinking enrollments, in particular, grew by 107% year over year. Other highly sought-after domains include complex problem-solving, which grew by 126% year over year, as well as ethics and governance. Combined, these trending themes emphasize the accountability, adaptability, and discernment required in AI-assisted workflows.

Labor-market research places this learning activity in a broader workforce context. PwC's analysis of more than one billion job advertisements found that new tasks in AI-exposed roles were 2.5 times more likely to require capabilities such as judgment, empathy, and creativity than new tasks in less-exposed roles.[27] Aon reports that 84% of surveyed employers see a greater need for employees to emphasize human skills.[28] While research from Lightcast finds job postings that explicitly ask for AI skills, eight of the top 10 required skills are human skills like communication, problem-solving, and leadership.[29]

READING THE DATA

### Human skills themes

The human skills themes are presented in a directional evidence order developed through analyst review. For each theme, we considered current Coursera enrollments, current Udemy consumption hours, year-over-year growth within each platform, the strongest constituent skill signals, breadth of supporting skills, and cross-platform comparability. Coursera and Udemy measures were evaluated separately and were not normalized, combined, or assigned numerical platform weights. For human skills themes, we also considered whether the theme had a specific role in AI-enabled work.

> *At Elisa, we believe successful AI transformation is built on continuous learning, access to the latest knowledge, and opportunities to experiment in practice. We started our AI skills journey by building a strong foundation of AI literacy for all employees while providing deeper, role-based development opportunities for specialists and AI pioneers. As AI skills continue to evolve, we are now placing increasing emphasis on fostering human capabilities in tandem with GenAI skills, placing less emphasis on what the technology can accomplish and more on what our workforce can achieve through it.*



**Piia Säylä**
Learning Development Lead, Elisa

# Trending human skills themes

| Rank | Skill theme | Definition |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Critical thinking and judgment | Evaluating evidence, questioning assumptions, recognizing limitations, and reaching reasoned conclusions |
| 2 | Ethics and governance | Applying ethical standards, accountability, and governance practices to technology use and decisions |
| 3 | Complex problem-solving | Defining multifaceted problems, analyzing contributing factors, and developing workable responses |
| 4 | Stakeholder alignment and influence | Understanding stakeholder needs, building support, resolving disagreement, and aligning people |
| 5 | Cross-functional leadership and collaboration | Coordinating expertise, responsibilities, and decisions across teams |
| 6 | People leadership and management | Setting direction, clarifying roles, supporting people, and maintaining team performance |
| 7 | Data storytelling | Turning data and analysis into narratives and visuals that help others understand evidence |
| 8 | Strategic thinking and decision-making | Assessing options, anticipating consequences, and making choices that support longer-term goals |
| 9 | Adaptability and resilience | Adjusting to changing conditions and continuing to work effectively through uncertainty |
| 10 | Innovation and ideation | Generating, developing, and testing new ideas, approaches, products, or ways of working |

*Note: The order reflects an analyst-constructed directional evidence order across Coursera and Udemy, not a blended platform ranking. A lower position does not mean a skills theme lacks workplace value.*

# Critical thinking safeguards the quality of AI-supported work

The top trending human skills theme is critical thinking and judgment, which speaks to the importance of defining problems, evaluating evidence, and exercising judgment. This skill set is especially important when working with AI. Microsoft's *2026 Work Trend Index* shows that advanced AI users identify quality control/auditing AI output (50%) and critical thinking/reasoned judgment (46%) as the two most critical human skills needed alongside AI tools.[30] Taken together, these signals highlight a need for institutions to prioritize reasoning and discernment alongside technical AI proficiency.

Additional research produced in partnership with Microsoft underscores the importance of critical thinking when working with AI. In a 2025 study of 319 workers covering 936 examples of GenAI-assisted tasks, greater confidence in GenAI was associated with less critical thinking, while greater confidence in one's own ability was associated with more critical thinking. Participants described critical thinking as verifying information, integrating AI responses with other knowledge, and maintaining responsibility for the task.[31] Without a foundation of strong critical thinking skills, individuals stand to lose accountability and accuracy in AI-supported work.

EXPERT INSIGHT

> *Hallucinations may be an inherent feature of generative AI. Yet, these systems sound authoritative across various domains. Recognizing that AI output is not as trustworthy as it sounds, and knowing how to check it, is now a core skill for anyone who relies on these tools.*



**Dr. Josh Pasek**
Professor of Communication & Media and Data/AI Leader, University of Michigan

**+107%** increase in **critical thinking enrollments** year over year

# Ethics and governance are becoming increasingly central to everyday work

Ethics and governance, another top trending human skills theme, reflects the widening scope of AI oversight. These skills appear in daily choices about data, acceptable use, human review, documentation, and accountability.

The need to prioritize ethics and governance skills is already visible inside organizations. Aon reports that only 28% of organizations have fully operational AI guidelines with oversight mechanisms.[32] In a recent global survey from McKinsey, 51% of respondents at organizations using AI reported at least one negative consequence, and nearly one-third of all respondents reported consequences related to inaccuracy.[33] While policies can help set expectations for AI use, employees and managers must still cultivate skills for recognizing risk, documenting decisions, and escalating concerns.



## What governance means in practice

Governance is the system of decisions, responsibilities, and controls that determines where AI may be used, who is accountable, what evidence and data are acceptable, and what happens when something goes wrong.

In the context of the workplace, governance skills pertains to the ability to:

- Set expectations for acceptable AI use.
- Assign accountability for decisions and outputs.
- Evaluate risk and challenge questionable results.
- Document decisions and escalate concerns.
- Align day-to-day practice with organizational values and policy.
- Protect sensitive data and comply with privacy requirements.

# Leadership skills are expected for AI-exposed entry-level roles

Learners are also prioritizing the development of skills related to stakeholder alignment, cross-functional and people leadership, data storytelling, and strategic decision-making. These capabilities help individual contributors and managers lead through explaining evidence, building agreement, coordinating expertise, and guiding implementation.

Labor-market research from PwC illustrates how AI is a driving factor in the demand for leadership skills. Analyzing AI-exposed roles such as software developers, finance managers, and employment recruiters, the study found that 52% of the newly acquired skills in US entry-level positions (0–2 years of experience) were traditionally associated with senior roles—compared to just 7% in low-exposure roles such as mechanics and food-service workers. The requirements spanned strategic decision-making, people leadership, stakeholder management, and data-driven decisions.[34]

**In the AI era, individual contributors must develop leadership skills long before they take on formal leadership roles.**



## Your next step

- **Business and workforce leaders:** Establish clear standards for decision quality, accountability, and AI use. Give managers and teams practice applying those standards, and evaluate performance alongside course completion. Treat training as an opportunity to address compliance risk early.
- **Higher education leaders:** Require students to critique AI-supported work, verify evidence, explain their reasoning, and address ethical consequences. Use assessment to make these human capabilities visible.
- **Government leaders:** Include critical thinking, governance, leadership, and communication in AI readiness and workforce frameworks. Connect these capabilities to public accountability, recognized credentials, and sector needs.

04

# AI learning is becoming more applied and specialized

Generative AI leads the report's cross-platform AI skills themes, with model-and assistant-specific skills and prompting also being top areas of interest. Around this broad base, learners are developing AI skills for working with agents, orchestration, security, personalization, LLM applications, and technical infrastructure.

Labor-market data adds context for this trend. Unique job postings mentioning generative AI in the US, for example, rose from 187 in July 2022 to more than 209,000 in July 2026. Across a set of agentic AI skills, average year-over-year growth in unique postings exceeded 1,800% from 2025 to 2026.[35]

The breadth of AI learning reflects different responsibilities. Many people need enough proficiency to use AI effectively in their work; others need deeper knowledge to build and operate AI systems or guide the application of them.

READING THE DATA

## AI skills themes

The AI skills themes are presented in a directional evidence order developed through analyst review. For each theme, we considered current Coursera enrollments, current Udemy consumption hours, year-over-year growth within each platform, the strongest constituent skill signals, breadth of supporting skills, and cross-platform comparability. Coursera and Udemy measures were evaluated separately and were not normalized, combined, or assigned numerical platform weights.

# Trending AI skills themes

| Rank | Skill theme | Definition |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Generative AI | The use of artificial intelligence systems to create new text, images, code, audio, and other content from instructions or data |
| 2 | Model- and assistant-specific skills | Practical proficiency in using named AI models and assistants such as ChatGPT, Gemini, Claude, Copilot, and DeepSeek to complete tasks and solve problems |
| 3 | Agentic AI and AI agents | The design and use of AI agents that can plan, make decisions, use tools, and carry out multi-step tasks with limited human direction |
| 4 | Prompting and AI interaction | The practice of writing, refining, and evaluating instructions that guide AI systems toward useful and reliable outputs |
| 5 | LLM application and modeling | The development and use of large language models and LLM-based applications to understand, generate, and transform language |

| Rank | Skill theme | Definition |
|---|---|---|
| 6 | AI security | The practice of protecting AI systems, data, and outputs against vulnerabilities, misuse, and unintended consequences |
| 7 | AI workflows, integration, and orchestration | The process of connecting and coordinating AI systems within existing applications, workflows, and organizational processes |
| 8 | AI development frameworks and infrastructure | The tools, frameworks, and infrastructure used to build, train, connect, deploy, and operate AI and machine learning systems |
| 9 | AI and machine learning foundations | The core concepts and methods used to design systems that learn from data, recognize patterns, and make predictions or decisions. |
| 10 | AI product strategy and personalization | The use of AI to shape product direction and tailor products, content, or interactions to individual needs and behavior |

*Note: The order reflects an analyst-constructed directional evidence order across Coursera and Udemy, not a blended platform ranking. A lower position does not mean a skills theme lacks workplace value.*

# Foundational AI enrollment reflects broad, practical demand

Generative AI has the largest learning base among the AI skills themes, followed by model- and assistant-specific skills like those for working with specific tools like Claude, ChatGPT, Google Gemini, and Microsoft Copilot. Skills for prompting and interacting with AI tools more broadly are growing in demand, as well.

AI learning is growing rapidly. Yet surveys of technology leaders, employees, students, and educators indicate that formal training and institutional guidance have not kept pace.

- **Among technology leaders:** 88% believe their planned AI investments will not succeed without increased investment in training.[36]
- **Among employees:** 48% rank formal training as the factor most likely to increase their day-to-day use of GenAI, suggesting that organizational enablement is not keeping pace with employee interest in GenAI.[37]
- **Across higher education:** 95% of surveyed students and educators use AI tools, and nine in 10 students want GenAI training included in their degree programs. Only 26% of educators say their institution has a formal AI policy.[38]

## AI learning is outpacing overall platform growth

Longitudinal analysis of Coursera data reveals:

- AI enrollments grew 67% year over year, outpacing overall platform enrollment growth.
- By course level, Beginner AI enrollments grew 77%, Intermediate enrollments grew 46%, and Advanced enrollments remained comparatively static.
- Generative AI enrollments grew 132%.

**45+**

**GenAI enrollments per minute**
Up from 25 per minute in 2025 across Coursera and Udemy combined

The data illustrates a stark disconnect between AI ambitions and AI enablement. Individuals are adopting AI, yet organizations lack the policies and training that are key to safe and effective AI use. Learning programs should provide individuals with enough grounding to understand AI and enough practice to use it within the standards of their work.

# Agentic AI and orchestration are on the rise

Among the top-ranking AI skills themes are skills pertaining to agentic AI, AI agents, and AI workflows. This points to learner interest in systems that can carry out multistep work and connect with the tools, data, and processes around them.

Employer activity places this learning in context. The consulting firm Capgemini reports that the share of organizations using AI agents or multi-agent systems more than doubled to 21% in 2025.[39] Meanwhile, McKinsey found that 62% of respondents said their organizations were at least experimenting with AI agents, yet no more than 10% reported scaling agents in any individual business function.[40]

# Applied AI skills themes center on security, personalization, and product strategy

AI security is a top learning priority, while product strategy and personalization help learners define, target, and adapt AI solutions. These capabilities bridge development with the risks and outcomes that determine if an application is fit for use. The stakes are high: 13% of organizations have reported AI model breaches, and 97% of those compromised lacked proper access controls.[41]

Foundational technical skills themes—like LLM application and modeling, AI development frameworks and infrastructure, and AI and machine learning foundations—provide the depth needed to build robust AI. Learner demand for these areas indicates growing interest in the skills for working with underlying systems in addition to end-user tools. This technical depth is key for teams to balance security, performance, and user experience effectively.

Tailoring AI learning to specific roles can help connect capabilities to measurable outcomes. Across fields, 62% of employers report a significant productivity boost from targeted, role-based learning delivered through micro-credentials, and 52% report a significant impact on profitability.[42] AI programs should give learners practice with the tools, decisions, safeguards, and workflows their role requires.

> *At eDreams ODIGEO, we built an AI learning strategy that empowers every eDOer to innovate in their role. What began as company-wide foundational learning rapidly evolved into specialized upskilling for critical functions like IT and Product. The internal momentum has been incredible, far exceeding our initial expectations as eDOers actively leverage AI to drive business results.*



**Bettina Menaldo**
People Development Director,
eDreams ODIGEO

## Hands-on learning can support applied use cases

In a Coursera and AWS survey, technology leaders ranked real-world projects relevant to work (60%), practical skills assessments (56%), and risk-free experimentation (51%) as the most valuable elements of hands-on learning for technical teams.[43]

## MCP: A newer skill with high demand

Model Context Protocol, or MCP, is an open-source standard for connecting AI applications to external data sources, tools, and workflows.

MCP-related enrollment grew rapidly from a small prior-year base. Because percentage growth is unstable at that scale, we treat it as an emerging signal rather than rank it among the top themes.

Alongside other AI skills, the growth in MCP enrollments signals growing demand for the ability to connect, orchestrate, secure, and govern AI agents across systems.

*Our decision to upskill in AI came from the ambition to lead in a rapidly diversifying market. We built tiered learning pathways where employees start with foundational skills around generative AI, large language models, and prompt engineering, then move into training tailored to their daily work. Our teams are now proactively spotting AI opportunities in their own workflows—one team built a solution that cut customer support request completion time by 27%.*



**Rola Fattal**
VP HR, Almosafer Travel & Tourism Co.

## Your next step

- **Business and workforce leaders:** Establish a broad AI learning base, then build role-specific pathways around agentic workflows, MCP, technical depth, security, product decisions, and priority business applications. Assess whether learners can apply these skills in real work.
- **Higher education leaders:** Embed broad AI literacy training across disciplines and create deeper learning pathways for AI agents, LLM applications, infrastructure, security, and AI product development. Pair learning with applied projects and clear institutional guidance.
- **Government leaders:** Support accessible foundational learning alongside specialist pathways tied to sector and occupation needs. Prioritize secure implementation, public accountability, and practical applications in public services and workforce programs.

05

# Trusted credentials are gaining value as workforce signals

Enrollments in micro-credentials offered grew by 33% year over year, while enrollments in micro-credentials for AI topics grew 122%.

A shared need drives this growth. Learners want coherent programs that connect concepts, tools, and applied practice. Meanwhile, employers, higher education institutions, and workforce development organizations want evidence that travels with the learner and communicates developed expertise in what a program was designed to teach. Micro-credentials are meeting both these needs at once.

## Making career-relevant learning visible

Micro-credential programs typically combine courses, projects, and assessments, then award a credential when the learner meets the program requirements. This structure gives learners a clearer incentive for learning and gives employers or institutions more information than a record of participation alone.

Employer perceptions help explain the value of that signal. In Coursera's *Micro-Credentials Impact Report 2026*, 95% of surveyed employers said micro-credentials are a key differentiator between candidates, and 87% rated them as highly important in hiring



decisions. Ninety-two percent said entry-level hires with micro-credentials perform better during their first year, while 73% said candidates with micro-credentials progress through hiring more quickly.[44]

The value extends beyond hiring. Micro-credentials can help employers identify individuals for new responsibilities and give workers a more tangible way to demonstrate recently developed skills. They can also help higher education institutions respond to emerging demand without waiting for a full degree redesign: 81% of surveyed higher education leaders said embedding micro-credentials accelerates curriculum updates.[45]

Some micro-credentials, like AWS Certified Cloud Practitioner or CompTIA Security+, are tied to an external certification exam rather than a credential that an online learning provider issues directly. In these cases, certification preparation pathways build underlying knowledge, offer practice opportunities, and clarify the standards that learners are expected to meet.

Whether through a Professional Certificate or other micro-credentials, learners and employers are increasingly relying on validated, transferable skills as an important signal of expertise.

> *At FPT Software, we have embedded continuous learning into career progression to build AI and digital capabilities at scale. By aligning learning with both business priorities and employee growth, we have fostered a strong learning culture that has generated over 108,000 learning hours and 22,500 course completions, helping our workforce stay future-ready in a rapidly evolving technology landscape.*



**Prajith Nair**
Senior Vice President, Head of Learning & Innovation, FPT Software

**82%** **of students** preferred project-or industry-based micro-credentials over content-only options[47]

**88%** **of graduates** preferred project-or industry-based micro-credentials over content-only options[48]

## What's a micro-credential?

A micro-credential verifies specific skills that a learner demonstrates through assessments aligned to clear standards. Issued by a trusted provider, it holds standalone value that can also contribute to a larger qualification such as a full degree.[46] Industry-aligned micro-credentials, like Professional Certificates offered by Coursera and Udemy, are built on standards and assessments that provide a more interpretable signal in skills-first hiring.

## What makes a micro-credential valuable?

- **A clear purpose:** The credential addresses defined skills tied to a role, field, or progression opportunity.
- **A trusted issuer:** Employers and institutions can identify who designed the program, who awards the credential, and what requirements the learner met.
- **Current standards**: Content and assessments reflect present-day tools, practices, and expectations.
- **Visible outcomes:** The credential connects to evidence such as skill application, job readiness, mobility, or continued education.



*AI capability building is a cornerstone of our talent transformation strategy. By integrating foundational literacy, advanced specialization, and certification pathways, we are creating a workforce equipped to thrive in an AI-enabled future and drive business growth at scale.*





**Mary Andrews**
Global Talent Management & AI Talent Transformation Leader - DES, Sutherland Global

**Aravindan Chandrasekaran**
Head of PMO, Strategic Initiatives & AI Capability - PSG, Sutherland Global

## Your next step

- **Business and workforce leaders:** Select micro-credentials and external certifications that map to real role requirements. Fund preparation where an external standard is valuable, and pair credentials with projects or performance evidence when making hiring and mobility decisions.
- **Higher education leaders:** Embed micro-credentials where they strengthen career relevance or help update curricula. Offer certification-preparation pathways in fields where external standards matter, and clearly identify which organization teaches, assesses, and awards each credential.
- **Government leaders:** Expand access to recognized credentials, certification preparation, and exam fees for workers and job seekers. Use transparent quality and labor-market relevance criteria when deciding which programs receive public support.

# Conclusion



# Turning learning demand into readiness

The growing demand for AI proficiency will lead to organizational value only when paired with deliberate investment in human capabilities. People still need to frame the right problems, assess the quality of AI-supported work, manage risk, communicate decisions, and coordinate action.

Readiness will look different across regions, sectors, and roles. Some learners need only foundational AI literacy. Others need deeper expertise with agents, security, infrastructure, governance, or product applications. All can benefit from opportunities to apply what they learn and credible ways to demonstrate that capability.

**The most effective skills development strategies will connect learning to real work, pair AI and human skill development, and use trusted credentials and applied evidence to make progress visible.**

The pace of regional progress hinges on how well public and private institutions work together.

- **Employers** can identify how roles and workflows are changing and validate whether training prepares people for those roles.
- **Higher education** can translate those needs into curricula, applied learning, and assessment.
- **Governments** can convene partners, expand access, and align funding and quality standards with regional and sector priorities.

All three use learning and workforce outcomes to update their priorities over time.

The learning signals in this report show where momentum is building. It's up to leaders across sectors to turn that momentum into impact.

## See how we can support your skills-based goals

Contact Coursera

Contact Udemy

# Technical appendix



# Influencing factors and interpretation

Learning behavior reveals how people are responding to changes in technology and work. It cannot demonstrate workplace application or economic outcomes on its own. But, it can show where learners are investing their time, which capabilities are attracting demand, and how patterns differ across countries and platforms.

An individual's ability to access and use Coursera and Udemy is influenced by many factors, including internet infrastructure, educational background or past training, and local culture or norms. We also use learner profile data such as location.

The results may also be influenced by:

- **Local economic or social conditions:** For example, economic downturns sometimes drive learners to Coursera and Udemy.
- **Creator and partner promotion:** How creators and partners promote content hosted on Coursera and Udemy may affect enrollment.
- **Availability of new content:** Enrollment trends in any category are inherently shaped by what content is available in Coursera's and Udemy's catalogs.

Our analysis describes learning activity within the Coursera and Udemy ecosystems. In some cases, the results may align with economy-led trends. They should not, however, be assumed to represent an entire economy.

Coursera learners may differ from the broader population in their demographics, access, and learning behavior. The results should therefore be interpreted as platform-specific signals of learner activity unless external evidence supports a broader population-level conclusion.

# Metrics in this appendix

**M1–AI-Human Skills Synergy Index.** A blended country ranking across 98 countries measuring how broadly and effectively learners build AI and human skills together, combining Coursera behavioral data (60%) with Oxford Insights' *Government AI Readiness Index 2025* (40%).

**M2–Top AI and Human Skills, Global.** The AI and human cohort skills with the highest enrollment volume and fastest year-over-year growth among the 98-country eligible Coursera population in the current 12-month window.

**M3–Top AI-Human Skills Pairs, Global.** The AI and human skill combinations that learners most commonly build together within the same window, ranked globally by volume.

**M4–Year-over-Year Enrollment Trends, Global.** The percentage change in enrollment activity across multiple course-level and micro-credential skill categories between the prior window (April 2024 to March 2025) and the current window (April 2025 to March 2026).

# Data period and scope

All Coursera metrics are based on learner activity in 98 countries during two consecutive 12-month windows. The current window runs from April 2025 through March 2026. The prior window runs from April 2024 through March 2025. Year-over-year comparisons reflect changes between these two periods.

# Section 1. AI-Human Skills Synergy Index

## Technical definition

*Ranks 98 countries on how broadly and effectively learners build AI and human skills together. The final score blends a Coursera behavioral score (60%) with Oxford Insights' Government AI Readiness Index 2025 (40%). The Coursera score is built from three components: proficiency (weighted 75% AI, 25% human), co-enrollment overlap (the share of learners building both skill types), and skill breadth (the number of distinct skills with meaningful uptake). A balance score to address the AI-to-human skill enrollment ratios is included along with a credibility adjustment for countries with small and potentially unrepresentative samples. Additionally, the Oxford Insights component adds context on government capacity, policy infrastructure, and technology readiness at a national level.*

## Skill classification

Skills are drawn from Coursera's precision skill tagging system. Only high-confidence tags are used. Skills are organized into two cohorts.

The AI cohort covers 55 skills, including machine learning, generative AI, prompt engineering, agentic AI, AI security, large language models, AI infrastructure, and related technical domains.

The human cohort covers 65 skills, including critical thinking, leadership, communication, problem-solving, ethics and governance, collaboration, adaptability, and related workforce capabilities.

## Score components

**Proficiency.** Average skill assessment performance of a country's learners relative to all other countries in the Synergy Index. Weighted 75% AI and 25% human.

**Co-enrollment overlap.** Jaccard similarity of the AI and human learner cohorts: the number of learners enrolled in both AI and human skill courses divided by the number enrolled in either. This is the most direct measure of synergy. A country where every AI learner also learns human skills scores close to 1.0.

**Skill breadth.** The number of distinct AI and human skills in which country's active learners enrolled. Countries that concentrate learning in a narrow set of skills score lower than those with broad coverage. The maximum possible breadth is 120 skills (55 AI and 65 human).

**Balance penalty.** A light discount applied when AI and human skill enrollment rates are highly varied. A country that is overwhelmingly AI-focused with minimal human skill learning does not demonstrate synergy in the fullest sense. The penalty is intentionally small. The maximum possible discount is 25% of the raw score, and it only becomes meaningful for extreme outliers.

**Credibility weighting.** Countries with smaller learner populations are partially adjusted toward the global average. This prevents a country with very few active learners from achieving an extreme score based on a small and potentially unrepresentative sample. Countries with large learner populations are trusted fully.

**Oxford Insights AI Readiness Index.** The Coursera behavioral score is blended with Oxford Insights' *Government AI Readiness Index 2025*, which measures government capacity, policy infrastructure, and technology readiness at a national level. The Oxford Insights percentile rank is computed within the 98-country *Global Skills Report* eligible universe, not across all 193 countries in the full Oxford Insights Index. This ensures the benchmark reflects where each country stands relative to its *Global Skills Report* peers. Proxy scores were used for countries missing Oxford Insights rankings: the United States for Puerto Rico and China for Hong Kong.

# Section 2. Top AI and Human Skills, Global

## Technical definition

*Identifies the AI and human skills with the highest enrollment volume and fastest year-over-year growth across the 98-country eligible population. Skills are assigned to courses through Coursera's precision skill tagging model. Enrollments are counted at the raw level across both the AI cohort (55 skills) and human cohort (65 skills). Skills are ranked within each cohort by volume and by growth rate. Skills with no prior-window enrollments are reported as emerging signals only.*

## How skills are counted

Skills are counted at the enrollment level. If a learner enrolls in three courses tagged with the same skill, that contributes three to the skill's enrollment total. This measures engagement intensity, not unique reach, and is consistent across both cohorts.

## Skills themes

Source skills were mapped to common report-facing themes. Current activity was measured separately as Coursera enrollments and Udemy consumption hours; these measures were not combined into a cross-platform score.

For each platform and theme, aggregate year-over-year growth was calculated as:

**Theme growth = (summed current-period activity ÷ summed prior-period activity) − 1**

The calculation includes only mapped source skills with an observed prior-period baseline. New skills without a prior-period baseline contribute to current activity totals but are excluded from the aggregate growth calculation.

Analysts then reviewed current activity, aggregate growth, the strongest constituent skill growth ranks, breadth of supporting source skills, evidence across both platforms, and comparability between platform taxonomies. Human skills themes were also assessed for their specific relevance to evaluating, governing, applying, communicating, or implementing AI-enabled work.

The resulting positions should be interpreted as a directional editorial ordering, not as precise numerical differences between themes.



## Udemy data

Udemy data includes enrollments and hours consumed across our tracked AI and human skill topics. The data is broken out by plan type (Marketplace, Udemy Business, and Personal Plan) and compares April 2024–March 2025 against April 2025–March 2026.

Courses are mapped to skill topics using Udemy's standard taxonomy. A course can be tagged with multiple topics, so enrollment/hours figures may overlap across topic categories (e.g., a course tagged both "AI Security" and "Generative AI" contributes to both topic totals).

# Section 3. Top AI-Human Skills Pairs, Global

## Technical definition

*Identifies the AI and human skill combinations learners build together within the same 12-month window. A pair is formed when a learner enrolls in at least one AI-tagged course and at least one human-tagged course during the window. Global pairs are ranked by co-learner count.*

## Pair definition

A pair is formed when a single learner enrolls in at least one course tagged with an AI cohort skill and at least one course tagged with a human cohort skill during the current window. Same-course co-tagging is allowed. Each combination of learner, AI skill, and human skill is counted at most once.

# Section 4. Year-over-Year Enrollment Trends, Global

## Technical definition

*Tracks the percentage change in enrollment between the prior window and the current window across the 98-country eligible population. Course enrollments are counted as unique learner-course combinations. Micro-credential enrollments are counted at the base program level.*



## The data scientists behind the *Global Skills Report 2026*

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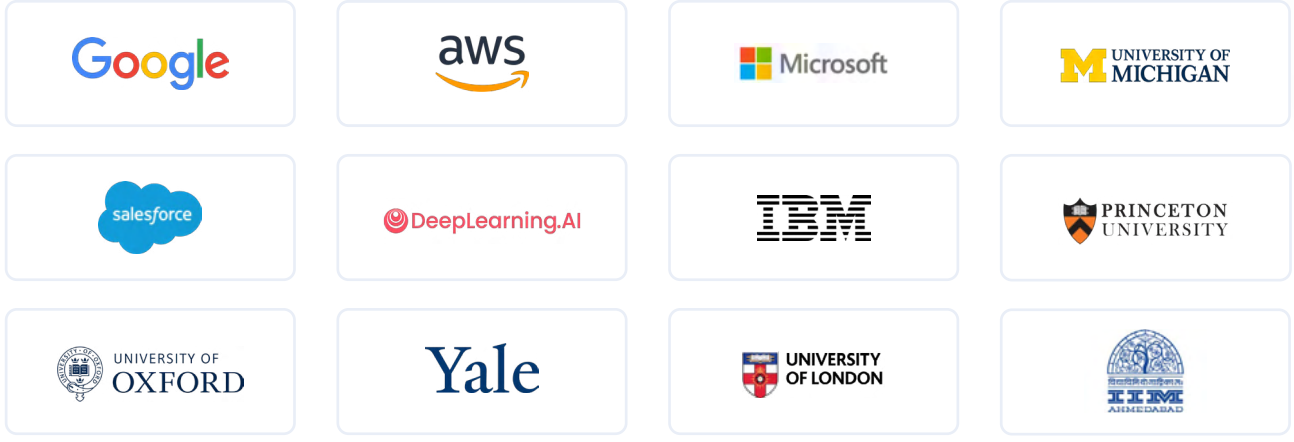
**Data sources**
Certain data in this report is drawn from the *Government AI Readiness Index 2025* by Oxford Insights (*2025 Government AI Readiness Index*), made available under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International Licence (CC BY-SA 4.0, *Deed - Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International - Creative Commons*).

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# About Coursera + Udemy

Coursera and Udemy are now one company, offering two powerful skills platforms to help organizations turn skills into outcomes faster. Trusted by more than 12,000 organizations and over 300 million learners worldwide, we help businesses, universities, and governments become AI-ready, accelerate digital transformation, and prepare people for what's next. Our AI-powered platforms deliver personalized learning paths, hands-on practice, and skills validation.

## Collaborating with over 400 university and industry partners



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