

Future of work

The world of work is changing rapidly as a result of new technologies, such as artificial intelligence (AI), the emergence of new forms of work, as well as greening, demographic change and globalisation. There is an urgent need for policies that allow countries, firms and individuals to benefit from these changes, while also addressing the risks.

Policy issue

Key links

Full list of OECD reports and papers on Future of Work >

AI and work >



Key messages

Artificial intelligence and jobs: An urgent need to act

While firms' adoption of AI is still relatively low, rapid technological progress, falling costs and the increasing availability of workers with AI skills suggest OECD countries may be on the cusp of an AI revolution. AI can bring many benefits to the workplace such as higher productivity, improved job quality and stronger occupational safety and health.

However, there are risks too, such as automation, loss of agency, bias and discrimination, breaches of privacy and a lack of transparency. The OECD's research on the impact of AI on the labour market show the urgent need to act now, with policies that allow countries, firms and individuals to benefit from AI, while addressing risks.

Read more on AI and jobs 

Teleworking, workplace policies and trust: A critical relationship in the hybrid world of work

Teleworking has become a permanent feature in working practices. However, much remains unknown about its impact on employment relationships within firms. OECD research highlights the importance of teleworking policies. When firms have such policies in place, telework is more common and teleworkers have better work experiences.

Workplace trust is also higher among teleworkers covered by teleworking policies. Despite this, many teleworkers are still not covered by such policies.

Learn more about teleworking policies 

The rise of domestic outsourcing across OECD countries

Many workers in OECD countries are legally employed by one firm but, in practice, work for another. Such employment arrangements have been on the rise and, even though they may bring productivity gains, they have contributed to earnings losses for outsourced workers in low-wage occupations. With the right policies, governments can counteract or reduce some of the negative consequences of domestic outsourcing on

workers.

Learn more about domestic outsourcing [▶](#)

Context

Risk of automation

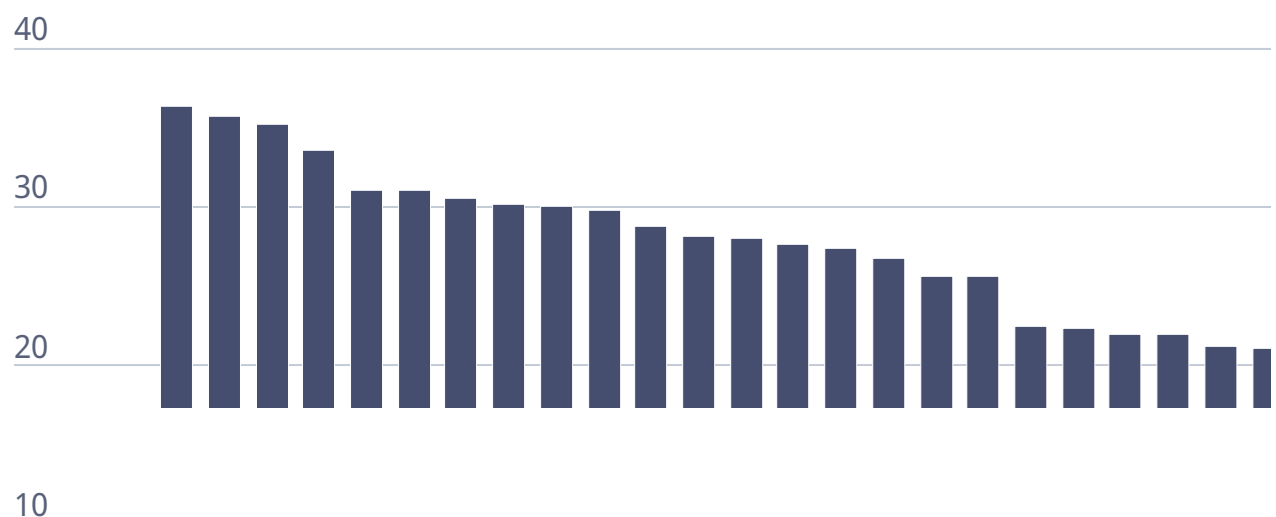
Recent advances in Artificial Intelligence have broadened the set of skills and abilities that can be replicated by automation technologies. In the past, computers and robots could only follow rules specified by programmers. However, machine learning algorithms, the branch of AI that has experienced the most important advances recently, can now make decisions without following pre-specified rules. Furthermore, AI technologies are able to work with unstructured environments and data. As a result, AI can help automate non-routine activities, contrary to computers that need codified environments and could only replace workers in routine tasks.

On average across OECD countries, occupations at highest risk of automation account for about 28% of jobs. Workers in occupations with the highest shares of automatable skills and abilities continue to be low-skilled, young, and male.

Learn more about the risk of automation [▶](#)

Risk of automation

% of total employment of jobs at highest risk of automation, 2019



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Lassebie and Quintini (2022), "What skills and abilities can automation technologies replicate and for workers?: New evidence", <https://doi.org/10.1787/646aad77-en>.

Domestic outsourcing

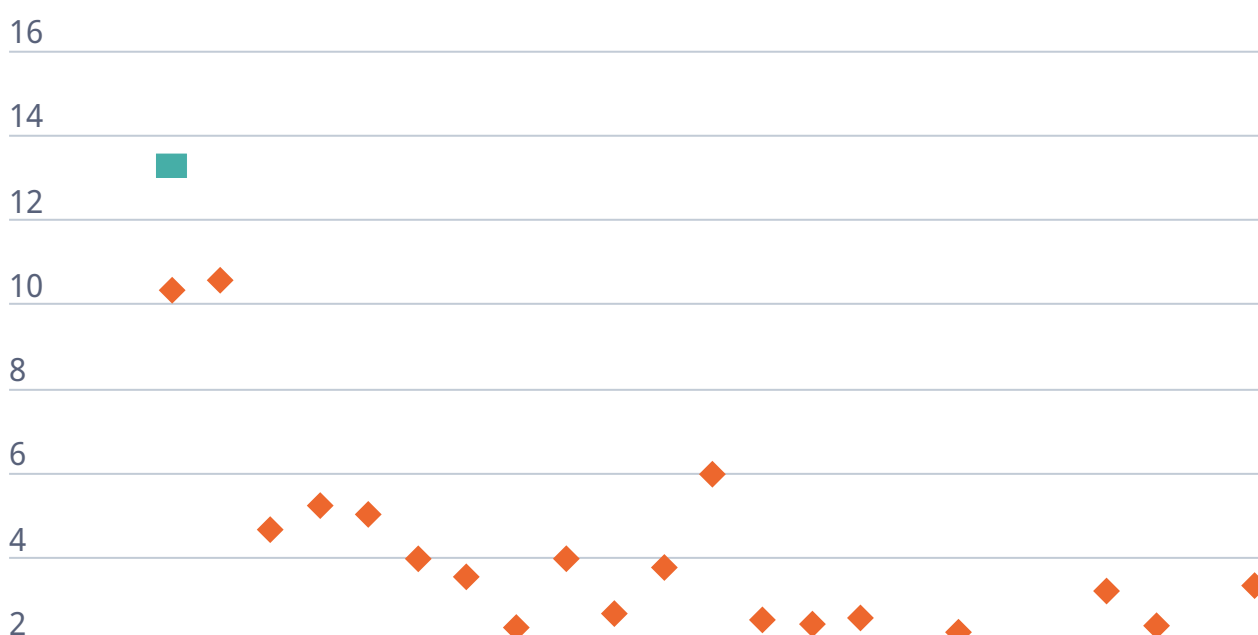
An increasing share of workers in OECD countries are legally employed by one firm but in practice work for another. Cleaners, security guards and cafeteria staff are examples of occupations where workers often physically work on the premises of one firm, but their legal employer is a third-party support services firm. Such third-party employment relationships are often referred to as "domestic outsourcing".

Employment in the administrative and support services industry provides a broad measure across countries of the growth of domestic outsourcing. This industry captures general business support services provided to other firms. Examples include temporary employment agencies, travel agencies, as well as cleaning and security services to firms. Over the past 20 years, employment has grown briskly in the administrative and support services industry. From 1995 to 2005, the share of total employment in this industry grew from 3.6% to 4.9%. From 2005 to 2018, it continued to rise to 6.3% of total employment.

Employment in support services industries continues to grow in almost all OECD countries

Share of total employment in administrative and support service activities, 1995-2018

■ 2018 ◆ 1995



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Note: Industry classification ISIC Rev 4. Administrative and Support Activities [N]. Year 1995 refer United States, 2005 refers to 2007 for Korea, and 2018 refers to 2017 for France.

Source: OECD STAN Industrial Analysis (2020 ed.), <http://stats.oecd.org//Index.aspx?QueryId=952>

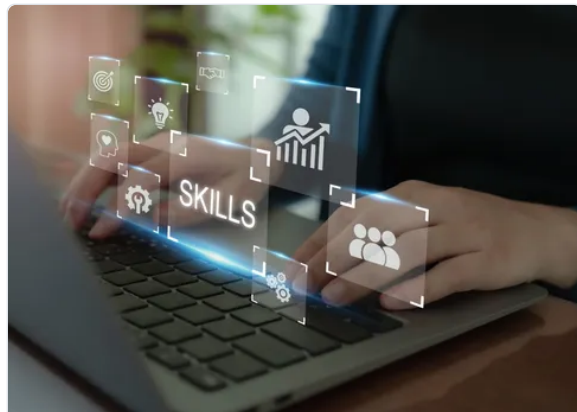
Latest insights



Press release

OECD job markets remain strong, but real wages are lagging

7 July 2026



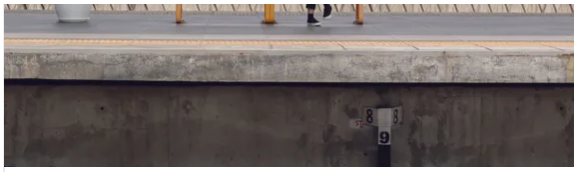
Blog

Making AI Work: Why Investing in Skills Matters

2 February 2026 • 3 min read

Related events





Hybrid

Publication launch

Launch of OECD Employment Outlook 2026

7 July 2026



Webinar

AI and skills: What we know so far

5 June 2026

2026 international conference on AI in work, innovation, productivity and skills

Following the last AI-WIPS conference held in December 2024, the 5th edition taking place **online from 30 March to 1 April 2026** will feature 10 live sessions over three days. The conference will gather leading voices from policy, business, academia and civil society to

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academia and civil society to examine the impact of AI on employment, skills, productivity and innovation, and to explore how policymaking can respond. From the rise of agentic AI to the governance of algorithmic management, we will discuss AI's impact on productivity, competition and innovation as well as its potential to support neurodivergent learners, among many other topics.

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[Information and registration](#)

Related publications

Report

OECD Employment Outlook 2026

7 July 2026 • 392 Pages



Report

The Global Forum on Productivity at 10

15 September 2025 • 234 Pages



Policy briefs and papers

Working paper

Recent policy developments on AI in the labour market

24 July 2026 • 64 Pages

Policy paper

Skills in the AI age

8 July 2026 • 36 Pages



OECD AI surveys of employers and workers

Since 2022, these multi-country surveys have captured workers' and employers' own perceptions of the impact of AI on their workplaces. The surveys complement one another: the employer survey is a valuable source of information about

how and why AI is being implemented, while the worker survey captures first-person experiences of using AI.

[Discover the OECD AI surveys](#)

OECD survey on generative AI and the SME workforce

In late 2024, the OECD surveyed over 5 000 Small- and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) in Austria, Canada, Germany, Ireland, Japan, Korea and the United Kingdom. The survey delivers new evidence on how SMEs use generative AI, whether it is helping them address labour and skill needs, and how they are preparing employees to use these tools.

[Discover the SME survey](#)

Related policy issues

AI and work

