AI at Work:
A Global Entry-Level Perspective

2025

65%
of Generation graduates are using AI

52%
Over half of alumni are self-taught, using AI independently

"
I use AI tools every single day.

Taina, Brazil

Generation
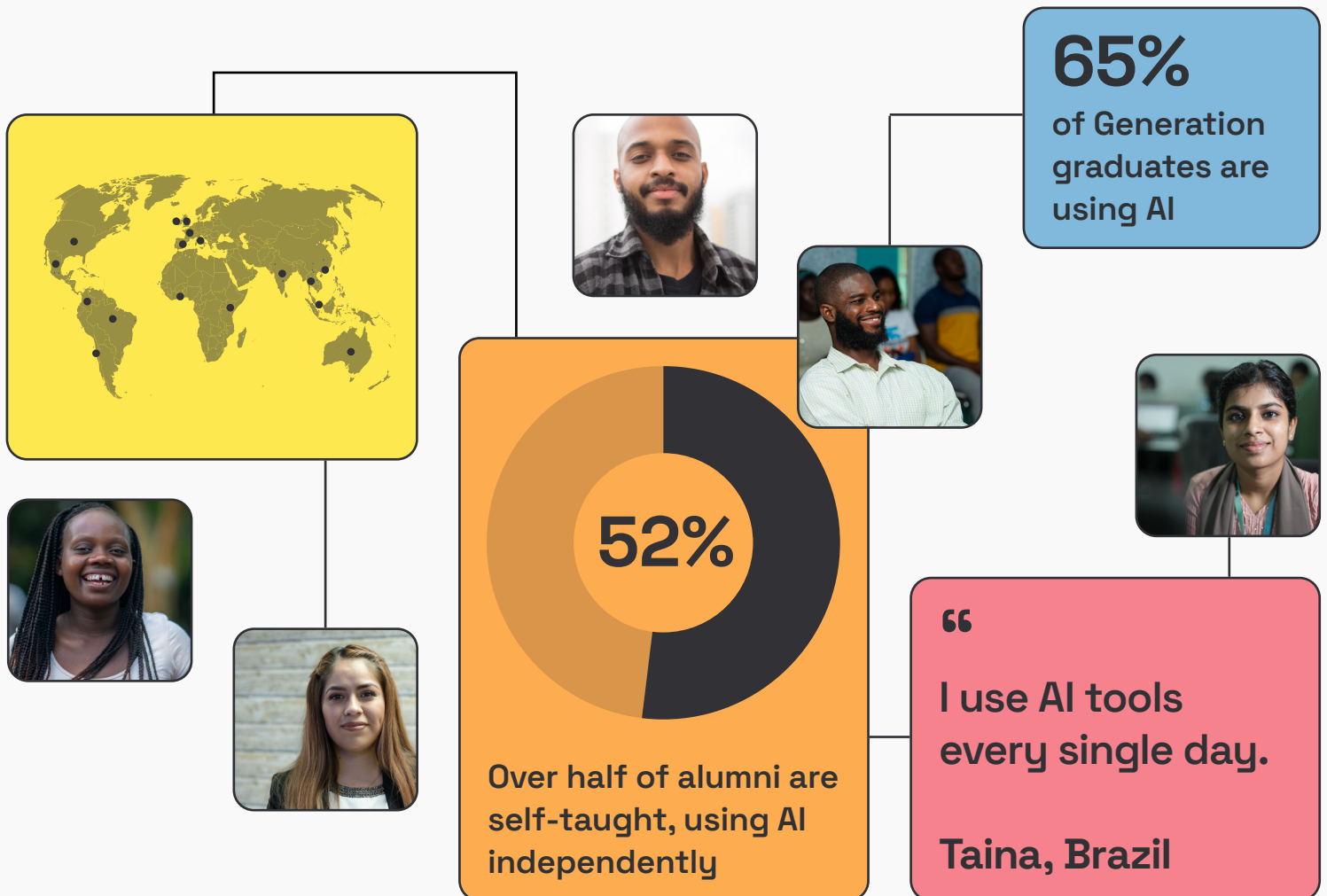
MetLife Foundation

Summary

In the global debate about how AI will affect entry-level roles the headlines are stark. They talk about **"The Great AI Jobs Disruption"**, the **"AI Storm"**, and even the **"AI Job Apocalypse"**. Automation is already transforming jobs. And simultaneously new jobs that require AI skills are cropping up. There is consensus that AI will reshape the workplace, although the how and when are still up for debate.

Multiple recent surveys have sought to understand worker perspectives on AI's impact on their jobs. However, this research has tended to focus on professional service workers in high-income countries. Scant attention has been paid to the AI experience of entry-level workers, particularly those without a college degree, across a range of industries and diverse economies.

So, we decided to ask this population what they thought. Earlier this year, we surveyed 5,549 of Generation's alumni who graduated in the past two years (2023 and 2024) to get their perspective on AI in the workplace. These workers, about evenly split between men and women, span 17 countries and are employed in 40 professions spanning healthcare, customer service, tech, green jobs, and skilled trades.

Generation is a global employment nonprofit organization that trains and places individuals into entry-level roles. We have more than 135,000 graduates to date. 90% of them are unemployed prior to entering our program. They range in age from 18 to 55+ years old. About a quarter have a university degree. The remainder have technical and vocational training, high school attainment, or less.

Working in entry-level roles all around the globe, Generation's alumni have a unique perspective to offer.

The vast majority of respondents (~95%) are alumni in lower-middle-income countries (Ghana, India, and Kenya) and upper-middle-income countries (Brazil, Colombia, Mexico, and Thailand). Five percent of our respondents are alumni from high-income countries, including Australia, Chile, France, Hong Kong (China), Ireland, Italy, Singapore, Spain, the United Kingdom, and the United States.
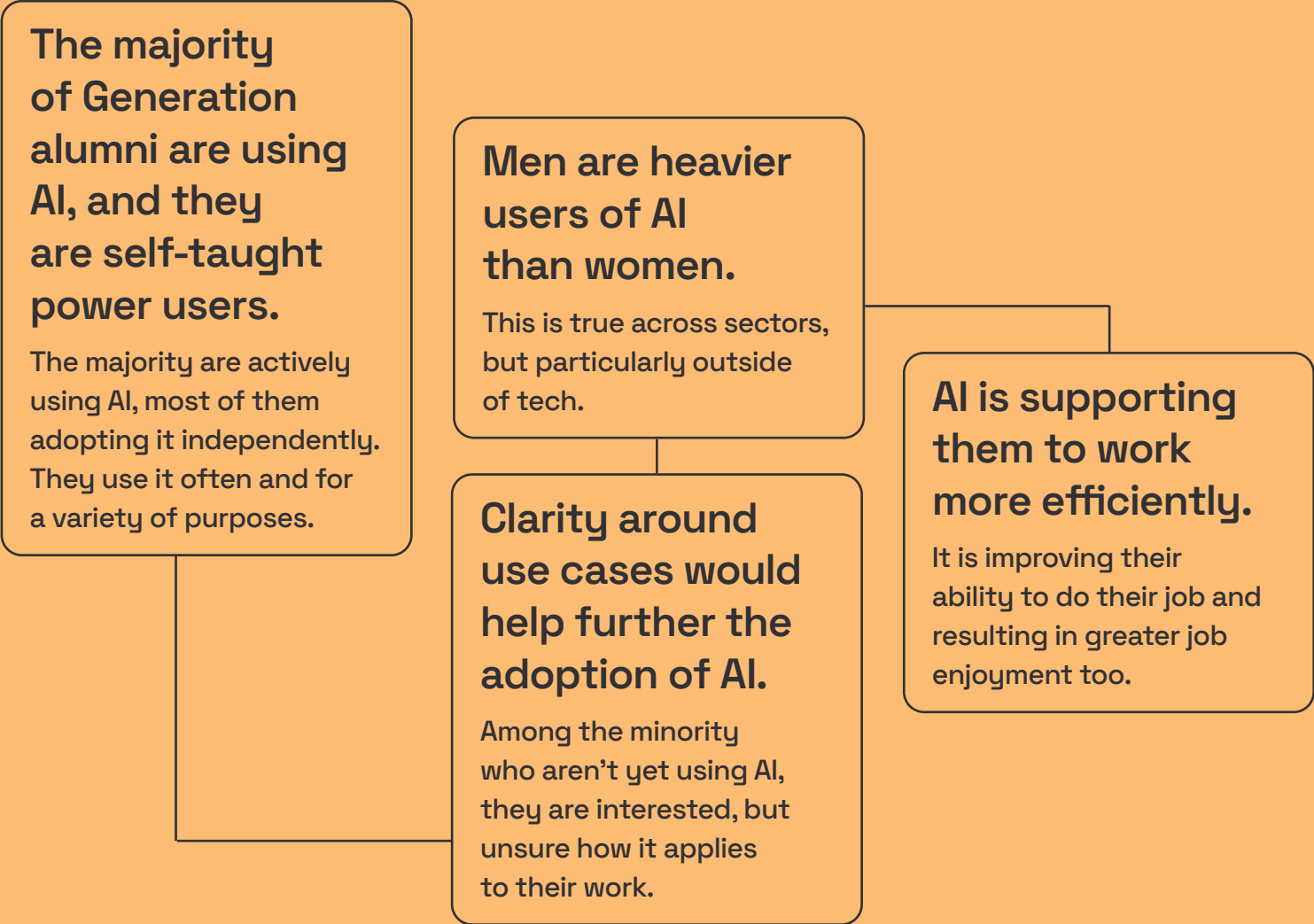
This survey presents a view into how they are experiencing AI at work, with an opportunity to hear from the voices that have been missing from the conversation: entry-level workers without a college degree who come from countries of vastly different income levels across the world.

~95%

of respondents are alumni in lower-middle-income countries and upper-middle-income countries.
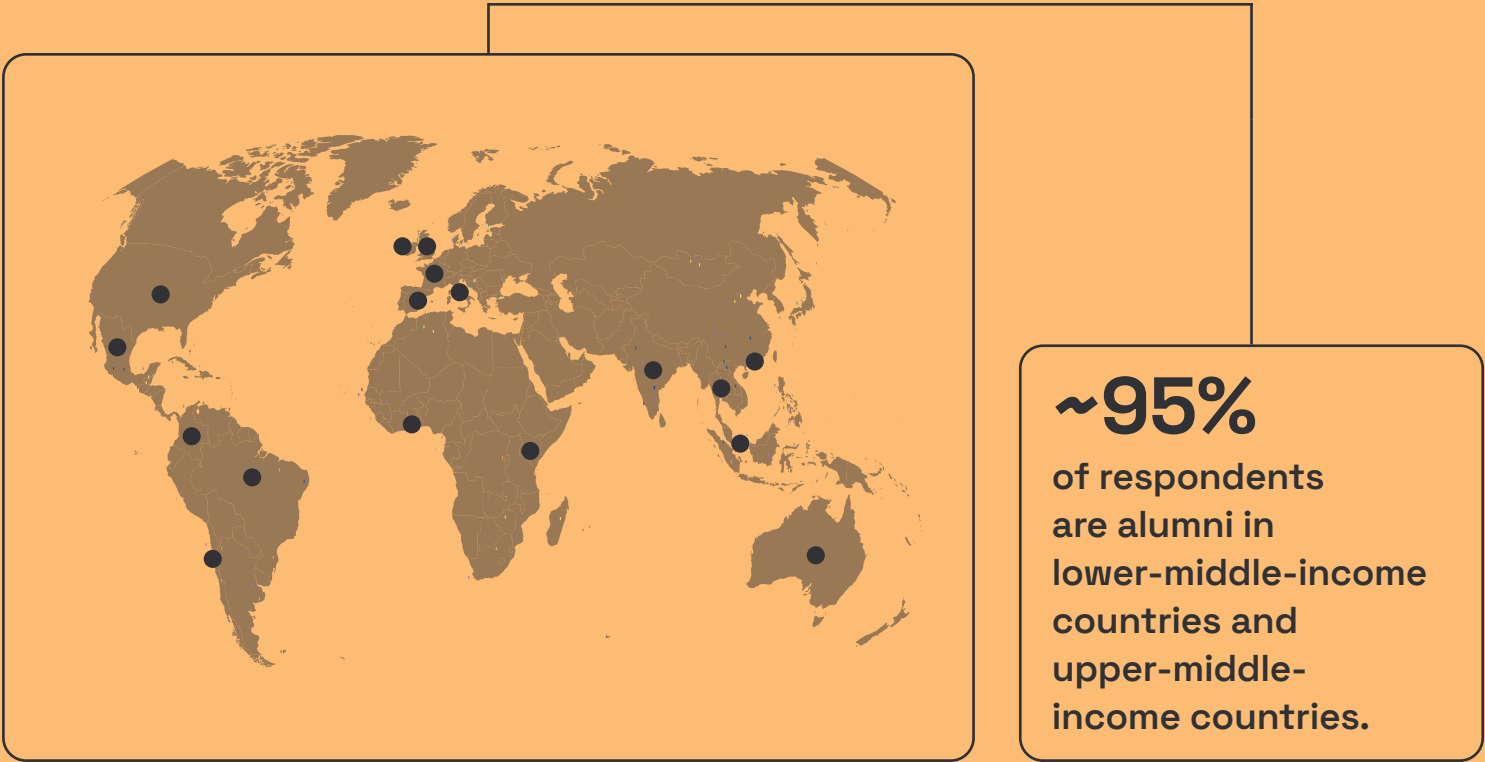
This survey provides a window into how entry-level workers are adjusting to the AI-infused workplace. The picture it paints is one of a group of people who are not only adapting to these new tools, but embracing them. They are finding both the expected productivity gains and also perhaps unexpected enjoyment in using these new tools. And among those not using AI yet, there is clear desire and an opportunity for employers to support them with initial training and use cases so they can quickly integrate these tools into their jobs.

We see the job landscape changing before our eyes, but what we also see is that entry-level workers are resilient and capable, positioning them well to be included in the AI future.
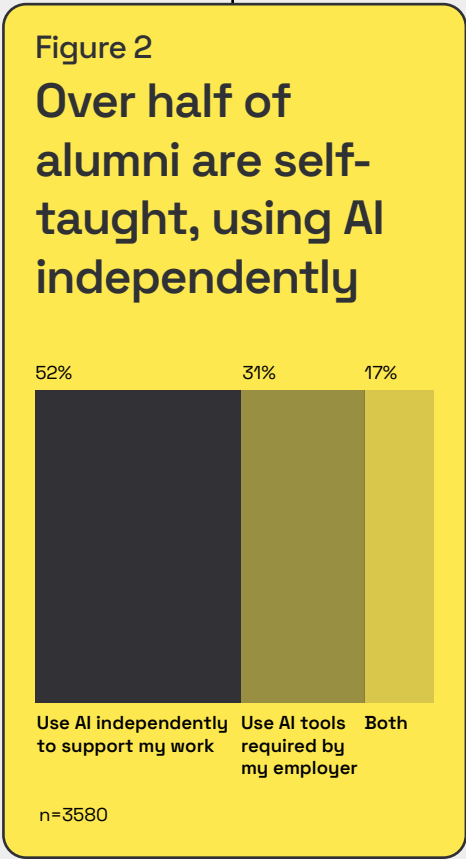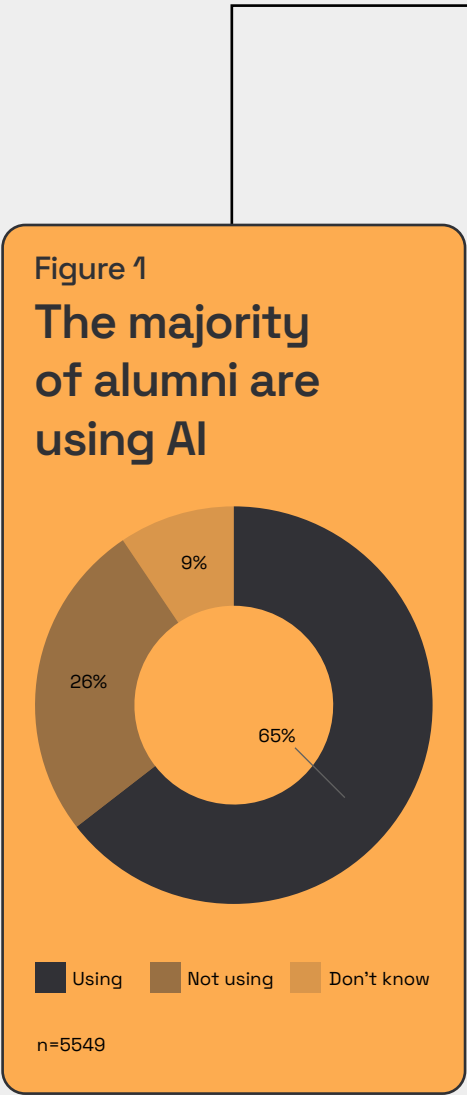
Here is what we heard:

The majority of Generation alumni are using AI, and they are self-taught power users.

The majority are actively using AI, most of them adopting it independently. They use it often and for a variety of purposes.

Men are heavier users of AI than women.

This is true across sectors, but particularly outside of tech.

Clarity around use cases would help further the adoption of AI.

Among the minority who aren't yet using AI, they are interested, but unsure how it applies to their work.

AI is supporting them to work more efficiently.

It is improving their ability to do their job and resulting in greater job enjoyment too.

The majority are using AI, and they are self-taught power users

The majority of surveyed Generation graduates are using AI (65% across all groups). That includes both those using it independently and those using tools provided by their employers (**figure 1**).

Of the alumni using AI, around half (52%) are self-taught, using it independently to support their work. They are proactively adopting the technology. The rest are using AI tools that their employer requires of them along with independent usage (17% use both, 34% use only those required) (**figure 2**).
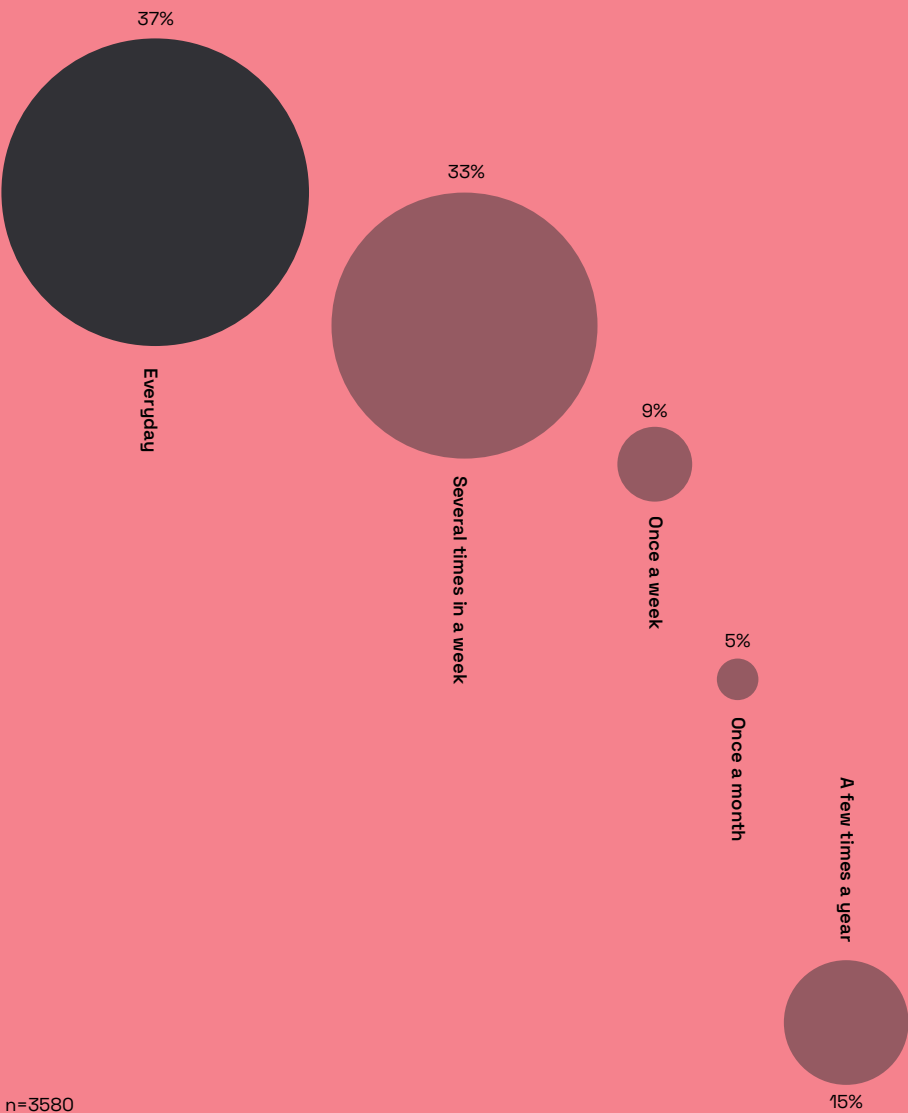
Figure 1

The majority of alumni are using AI

9%

26%

65%

■ Using   ■ Not using   ■ Don't know

n=5549

Figure 2

Over half of alumni are self-taught, using AI independently

52%	31%	17%
Use AI independently to support my work	Use AI tools required by my employer	Both

n=3580

"

I use AI tools every single day.

Taina, Brazil

Among AI users, a majority of them are power users, using AI frequently. 79% use it at least once a week, rising to 89% in the tech sector. And the majority engage with it several times a week or more, with 37% saying they are using it daily **(figure 3)**.

Figure 3

Most alumni who use AI engage with it several times a week or more

37% — Everyday

33% — Several times in a week

9% — Once a week

5% — Once a month

15% — A few times a year

n=3580

89%

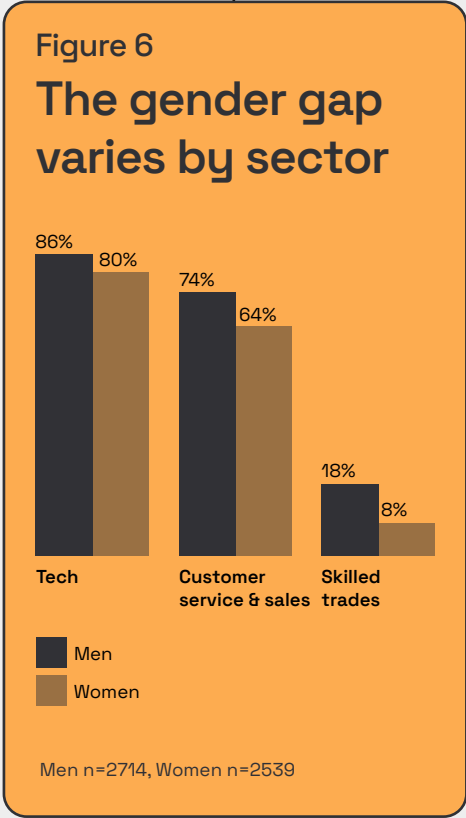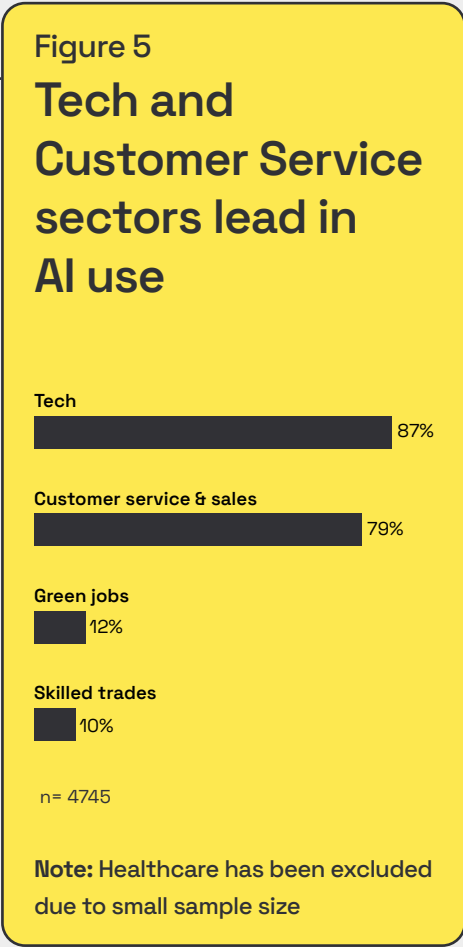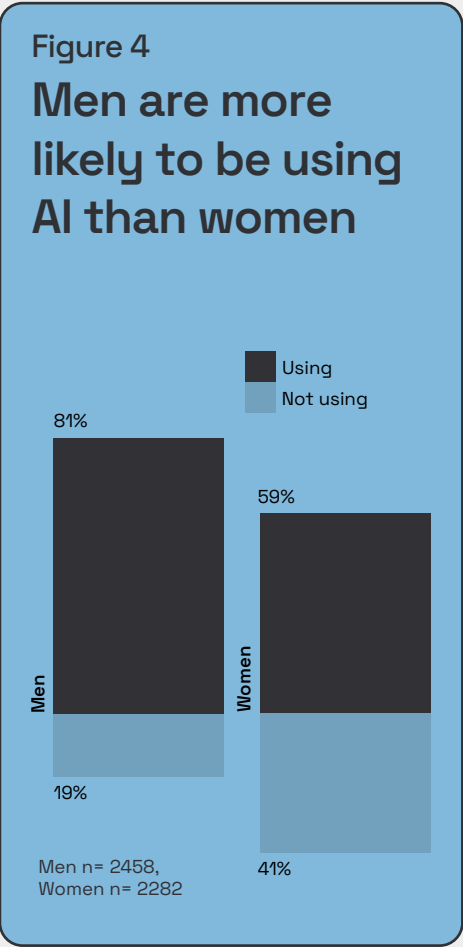of alumni in the tech sector use AI at least once a week

"

AI has become my daily work companion; it helps me debug faster, build smarter, and focus on solving real problems rather than repetitive tasks.

Hritik, India

Men are heavier users of AI than women

While in every case the majority of respondents are already using AI, we do see some differences in extent of adoption along gender and sector lines.

AI use among men is higher than women, with 81.3% of men saying they use it at work versus 58.8% for women **(figure 4)**. This large gap in use is due to a higher representation of women in skilled trades (e.g., sewing machine operator) among our alumni population where AI use is extremely low.

Not surprisingly, tech sector use is highest, with 87% of alumni working in tech using AI at work **(figure 5)**. The gender gap narrows in the tech sector as well, with 86% men versus 80% women saying they are using AI **(figure 6)**.

Figure 4
Men are more likely to be using AI than women

Using
Not using

81%
59%

Men
Women

19%
41%

Men n= 2458, Women n= 2282

Figure 5
Tech and Customer Service sectors lead in AI use

Tech — 87%

Customer service & sales — 79%

Green jobs — 12%

Skilled trades — 10%

n= 4745

Note: Healthcare has been excluded due to small sample size

Figure 6
The gender gap varies by sector

Tech: 86% (Men), 80% (Women)
Customer service & sales: 74% (Men), 64% (Women)
Skilled trades: 18% (Men), 8% (Women)

Men
Women

Men n=2714, Women n=2539

Across the 17 countries we surveyed, we have alumni working in tech roles. And AI use is relatively even for them. Those 17 countries span three World Bank defined country income groups: high-income countries (Australia, Chile, France, Hong Kong (China), Ireland, Italy, Singapore, Spain, the United Kingdom, and the United States), upper-middle-income countries (Brazil, Colombia, Mexico, and Thailand), and lower-middle-income countries (Ghana, India, and Kenya). AI use is 86% in high-income countries, 92% in upper-middle-income countries, and 81% in lower-middle-income countries.

In addition, within the tech sector, AI use is higher in "hard" tech professions like full stack developer or cloud practitioner at 88% compared to 78% in "soft" tech jobs like digital customer support.

92%
of alumni in tech in upper-middle income countries use AI

86%
of alumni in tech in high-income countries use AI

81%
of alumni in tech in lower-middle income countries use AI

" AI makes my day more productive as I can summarise a learning, quickly draft emails and get technical help from it.

Krishma, Australia

Interestingly, AI use in the tech sector also tends to increase the longer alumni are employed. We find that among recent Generation graduates (5–7 months post graduation), AI use is lower (64%) compared to those who graduated more than 7 months ago and have been in their jobs longer (86%)

Alumni across all sectors are using a variety of tools. The most commonly named tool was ChatGPT (69%), followed by Gemini (34%) and Microsoft CoPilot (27%). But many other tools came up as well **(figure 7)**.

Figure 7

There are a wide range of commonly used AI tools

Call translation
Circle to search
LLama and NLP
Singrauli
Google colab
Microsoft Copilot
Meta AI
Chat GPT
Suno AI
Quillbot
Emt
Runway ML
Canva
Atlassian
Siri
Grok
Blackbox
Copy AI
DeepSeek
Gemini
Perplexity
Grammarly
Instagram
Claude
Other
YouTube
Excel
Github Copilot
Phone
Poe
WhatsApp AI Assistant
Resturent
Leonardo AI
Midjourney
Microsoft Designer

"

AI makes my work easier as it grants me more time to work on the more challenging tasks.

Luisa, Italy

"

Sometimes I ask questions to ChatGPT that no one else can answer.
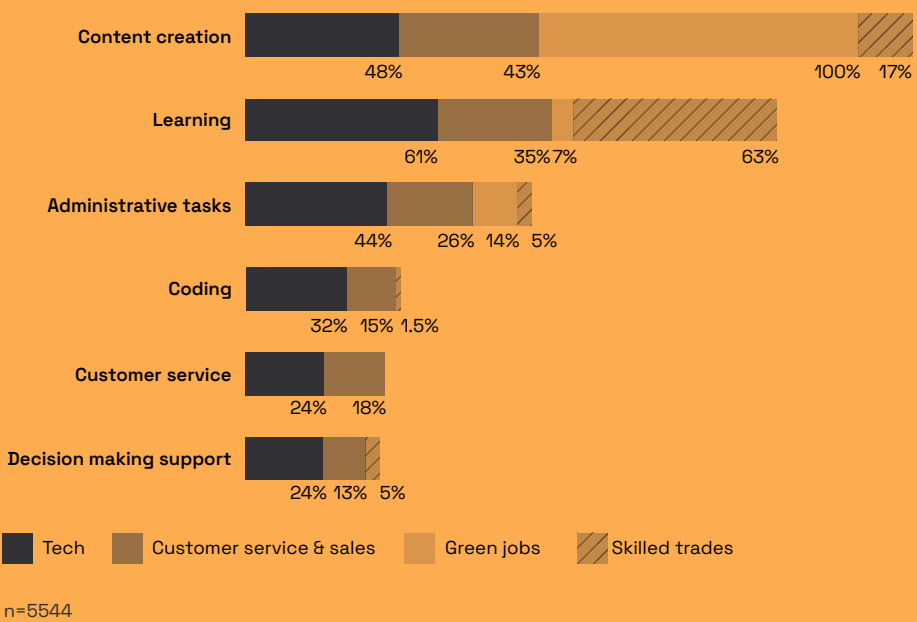
Alejandra, Mexico

And they use AI in a variety of ways, from content creation to learning and from administrative tasks to coding. There are commonalities across sectors as well. In the tech sector, 67% of Generation graduates report using AI for 2 or more purposes.

The top uses include learning (61%), content creation (49%), and administrative tasks (44%) but there are several more with significant use. In customer service and sales, learning (35%) and content creation (43%) are top uses. Green jobs has high content creation use (100%) and skilled trades has high learning use (63%) **(figure 8)**.

> **"**
>
> **AI tools have been good in helping to crush research summaries into a few pages.**
>
> **Isa, Thailand**

Figure 8

Top AI use purposes are similar across sectors, with tech sector uses more varied

Purpose	Tech	Customer service & sales	Green jobs	Skilled trades
Content creation	48%	43%	100%	17%
Learning	61%	35%	7%	63%
Administrative tasks	44%	26%	14%	5%
Coding	32%	15%	1.5%	
Customer service	24%	18%		
Decision making support	24%	13%	5%	

n=5544

Note: Healthcare has been excluded due to small sample size
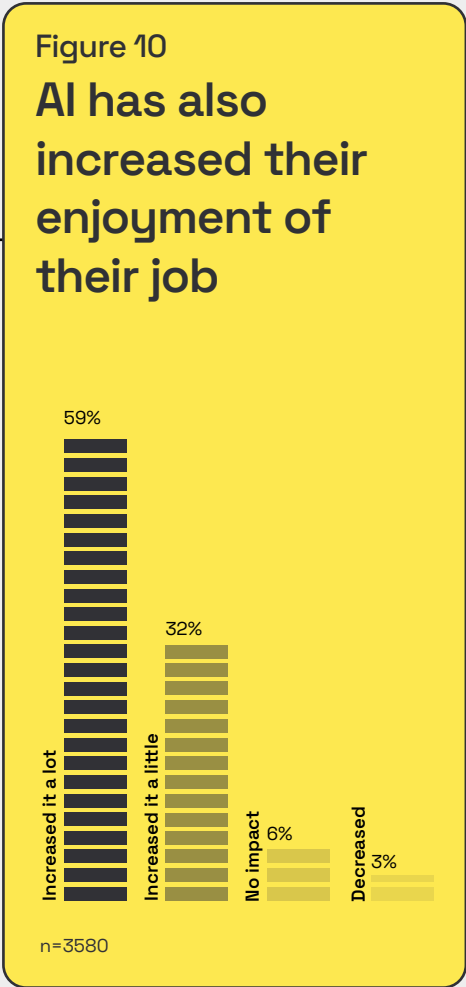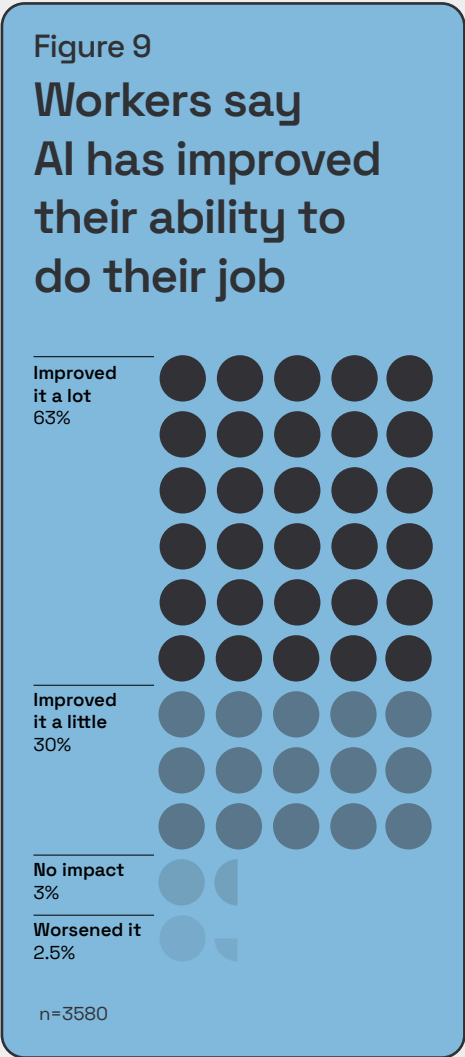
AI is supporting them to work more efficiently

Feedback on the impact of using AI tools is overwhelmingly positive across surveyed alumni.

Given the many predicted productivity benefits, it's not surprising that 94% of AI users say that AI has improved their ability to do their job a little (31%) or a lot (63%) **(figure 9)**.

But perhaps less expected is the positive impact on how much they enjoy their work. 91% say their enjoyment of their job has increased a lot (59%) or a little (32%) **(figure 10)**.

The overall feedback of AI having a positive impact on job performance and enjoyment is consistent across sectors and genders.

Figure 9

Workers say AI has improved their ability to do their job

Improved
it a lot
63%

Improved
it a little
30%

No impact
3%

Worsened it
2.5%

n=3580

Figure 10

AI has also increased their enjoyment of their job

59%

32%

Increased it a lot

Increased it a little
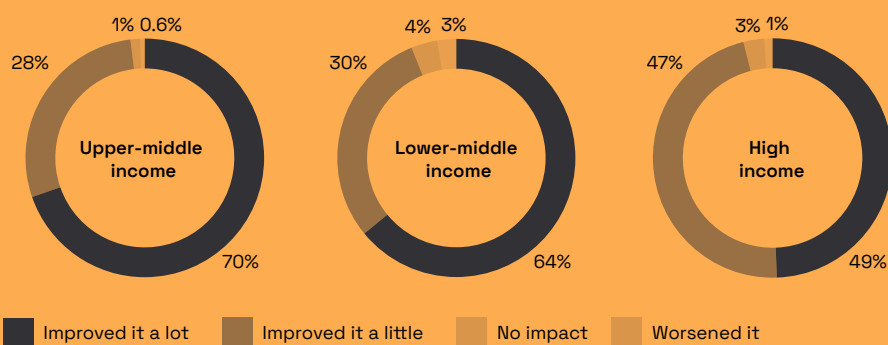
No impact 6%

Decreased 3%

n=3580

There are some differences in how positively alumni rate it across countries. When asked about the impact AI has had on their ability to do their job, the sentiment is most positive in upper-middle and lower-middle-income countries, with 70% and 64% respectively say it improved their ability to do their job a lot, versus 49% in high-income countries **(figure 11)**.

Similar patterns are also reflected in how much alumni found AI to improve their enjoyment of their job.

Figure 11

Positive AI sentiment is strongest in upper-middle and lower-middle income countries

Upper-middle income: 1% 0.6% 28% 70%

Lower-middle income: 4% 3% 30% 64%

High income: 3% 1% 47% 49%

■ Improved it a lot ■ Improved it a little No impact Worsened it

Upper-middle-income n=155, Lower-middle income n=292, High-income n= 178

The sentiment is most positive in upper-middle and lower-middle-income countries.

"

AI has definitely made things simpler and more reliable for me. I believe it depends on how you use it — it's a helpful tool when used sensibly for clarifying doubts and verifying information.
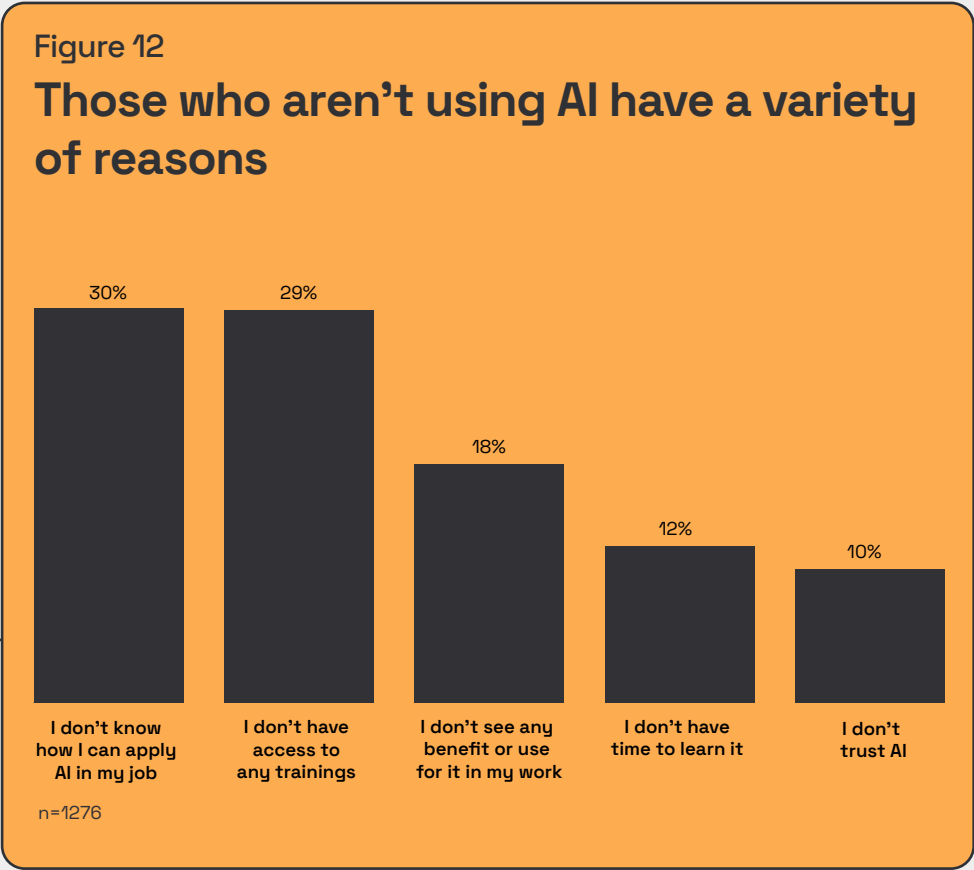
Ganesh, India

Clarity around use cases would help further the adoption of AI

About a third of alumni (35%) are not yet using AI at work. It's not due to a lack of appeal: among alumni who are not using AI, 72% indicate interest in using it. However, they name a range of reasons for not doing it today including not having access to training (30%), not knowing how to apply it in their job (30%), not having time to learn it (12%). A small number say they don't see the benefit (18%) or don't trust it (10%) **(figure 12)**.

These answers point to opportunities for employers and workforce programs as they continue to introduce AI to support onboarding to the tools and make the use cases clear.

35%
of alumni are not yet using AI at work

72%
indicate interest in using it

Figure 12
Those who aren't using AI have a variety of reasons

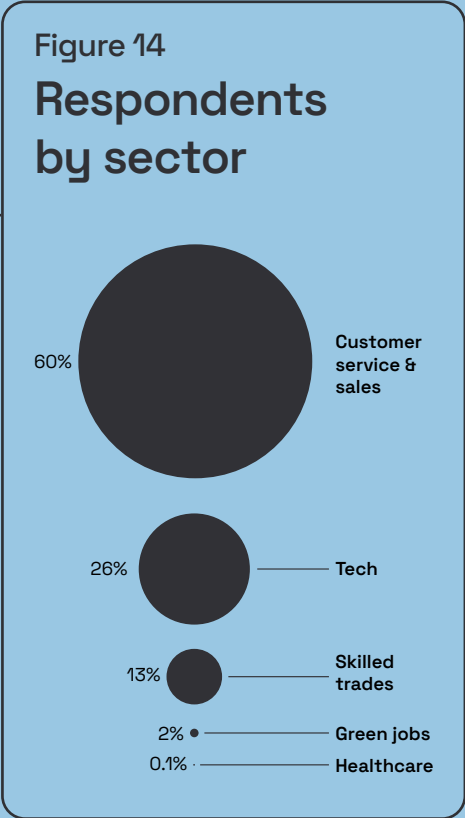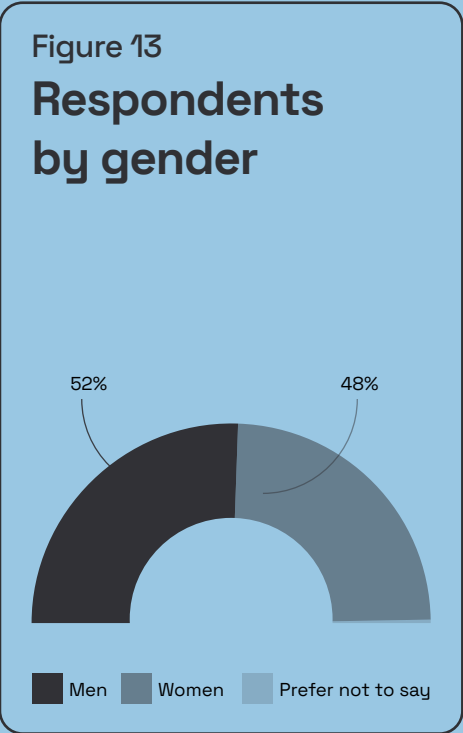| 30%	29%	18%	12%	10%
I don't know how I can apply AI in my job	I don't have access to any trainings	I don't see any benefit or use for it in my work	I don't have time to learn it	I don't trust AI

n=1276

Methodology

We surveyed employed Generation alumni from 2023 and 2024 who were 180 days or more since their graduation. The survey was conducted in January–March 2025. 5,549 employed alumni responded to our surveys of ~21,000 total alumni, a response rate of 26%.

We had a roughly equal representation of men and women in the survey with 48% women respondents and 52% men **(figure 13)**. 25% of the responses are from tech sector alumni, in line with the share of all employed graduates in tech jobs. 60% of responses are from customer service & sales graduates, with the remainder split across skilled trades, green jobs, and healthcare **(figure 14)**.

Responses span 17 countries. Approximately 90% of the responses are from alumni in lower-middle-income countries. The remainder are from upper-middle-income countries or high-income countries.

Examples of the professions included in sector responses are cloud support practitioner and web developer (tech), call center agent and retail sales associate (customer service & sales), bike repair & maintenance tech and solar panel installer (green), sewing machine operator and truck driver (skilled trades), and home health aid and administrative medical assistant (healthcare).

Figure 13
Respondents by gender

52% — Men
48% — Women

Men · Women · Prefer not to say

Figure 14
Respondents by sector

60% — Customer service & sales
26% — Tech
13% — Skilled trades
2% — Green jobs
0.1% — Healthcare

25%
of the responses are from tech sector alumni

Generation

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