Two Futures for Jobs in an AI era

2026 Global AI Jobs Barometer

Italy Analysis

Key findings

AI is driving productivity, accelerating skills change and starting to create a redesign of entry level work

AI is strongly linked to significant productivity gains

Since 2022 when AI use soared, companies in the sectors most exposed to AI have tripled their lead in workforce productivity growth over the least AI-exposed companies.

Companies achieving the biggest productivity gains are boosting wages and headcount

Rather than replacing jobs at scale, leading organisations are using AI to amplify human performance and create value.

Harnessing AI is accelerating skills transformation

Skills required for the most AI exposed jobs are changing twice as fast as in least exposed roles - a 75% increase over last year's gap.

Redesigned entry level pathways

AI exposed junior roles are 7x more likely (than the least AI exposed junior roles) to demand traditionally senior skills like leadership and strategic thinking.

A two-track labour market

Jobs professionalised by AI – where AI does the basic work leaving more expert tasks for people (22% of advertised jobs) - are thriving while jobs democratised by AI – where AI takes on the complex work (52% of advertised jobs) - fall behind.

40%

Productivity growth is 40% higher at most vs least AI exposed companies.

52%

The most AI exposed companies see faster headcount growth than the least AI exposed (52% vs 36%) and higher wage growth (24% vs 17%).

2.5x

The most AI exposed jobs are adding tasks that rely on human-intensive skills like empathy, judgment and creativity 2.5x faster - than the least AI exposed roles.

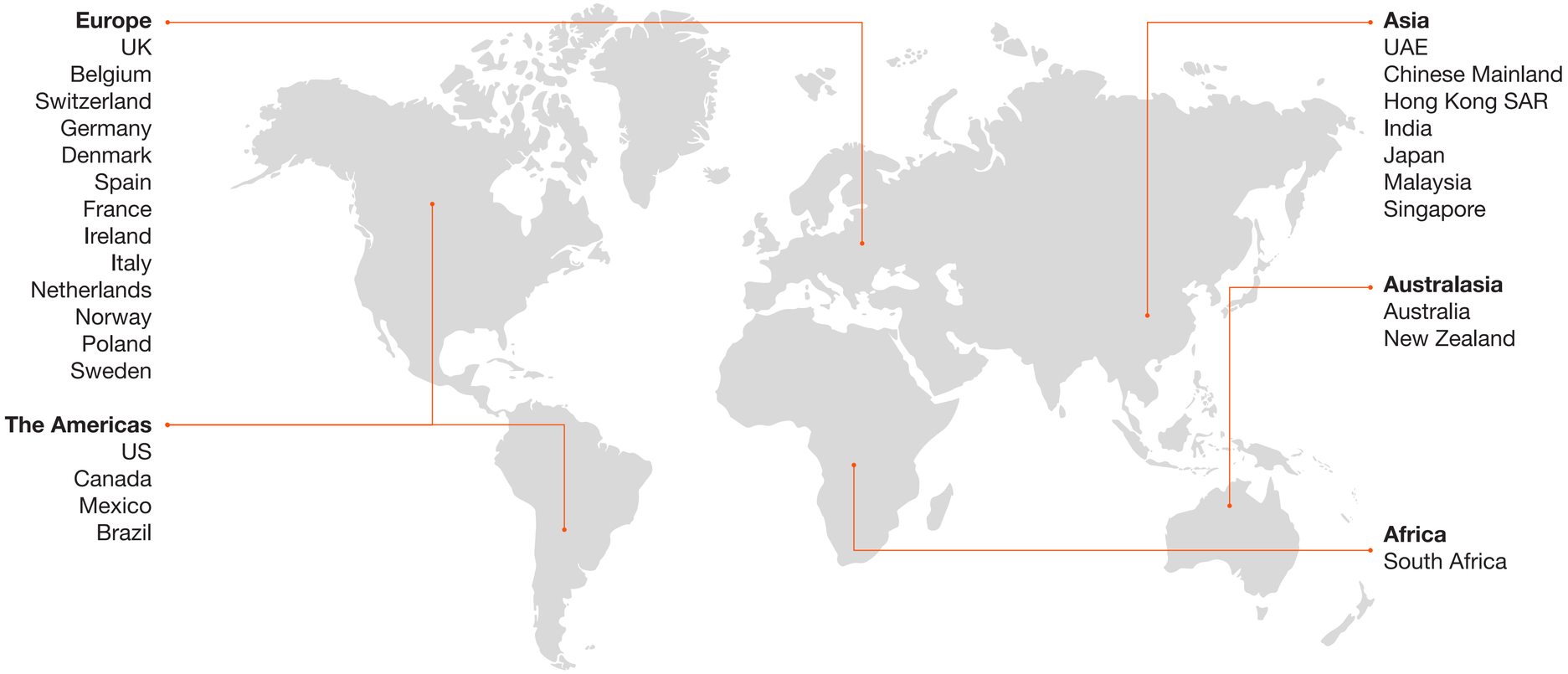
35%

AI-exposed 'seniorised' entry level roles are thriving with 35% growth since 2019 while other entry level roles decline in number.

42%

Professionalised jobs are growing twice as fast as Democratised jobs with 42% higher wage growth since 2021.

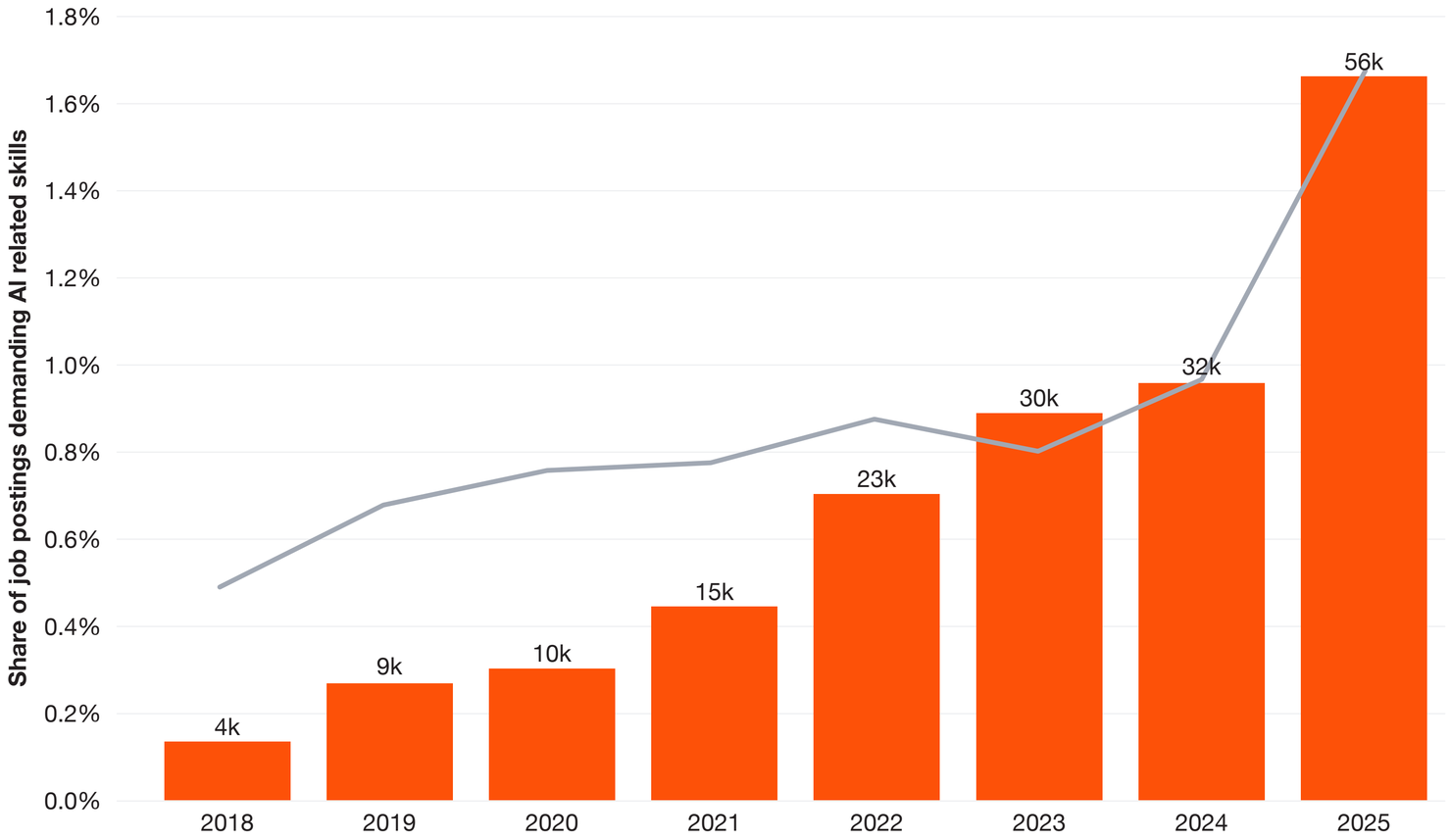
The 2026 AI Jobs Barometer examines over one billion job ads from 6 continents to reveal how AI is affecting jobs, skills, wages, and labour productivity



Italy Insights

AI hiring in Italy has reached new highs in 2025 indicating increased AI adoption in the workforce

Total number and share of job postings requiring AI related skills, Italy, 2018-2025



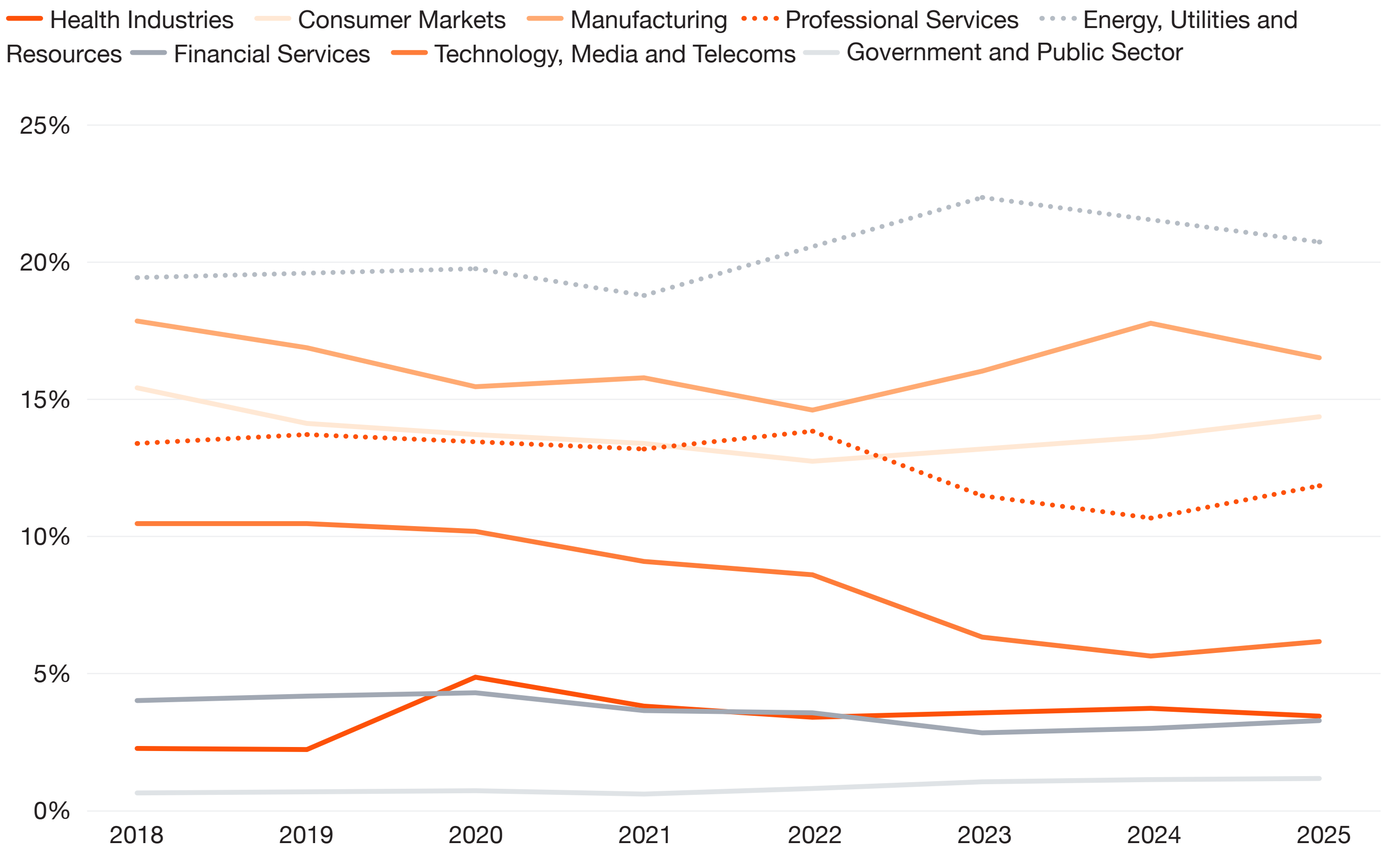
Source: PwC analysis, Lightcast data

Findings

- The number of job postings in Italy requiring AI skills increased by around 24k in 2025.
- As a result, the share of job postings requiring AI skills reached 1.7% in 2025.

Energy and Manufacturing account for the largest shares of hiring in Italy's labour market

Share of all job postings by sector, Italy, 2018-2025



Source: PwC analysis, Lightcast data

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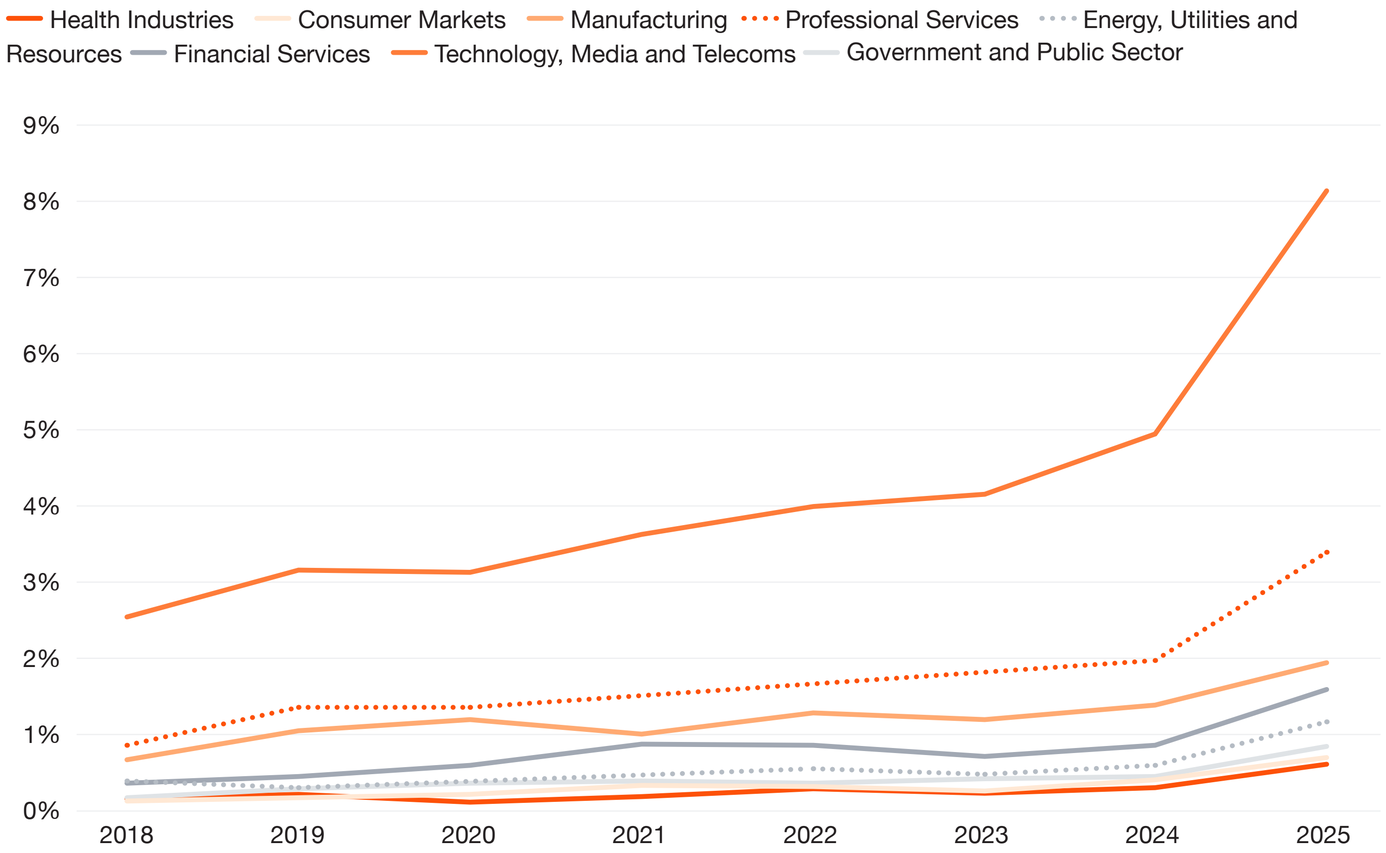
Findings

- Energy, Utilities and Resources and Manufacturing stand out as the largest sources of labour demand, accounting for 20.8% and 16.5% of total Italy job postings respectively.
- Government & Public Sector records the smallest share of job postings at 1.2%.

AI hiring intensity is rising across all sectors in Italy and is led by TMT

Share of AI job postings within each sector, Italy, 2018-2025



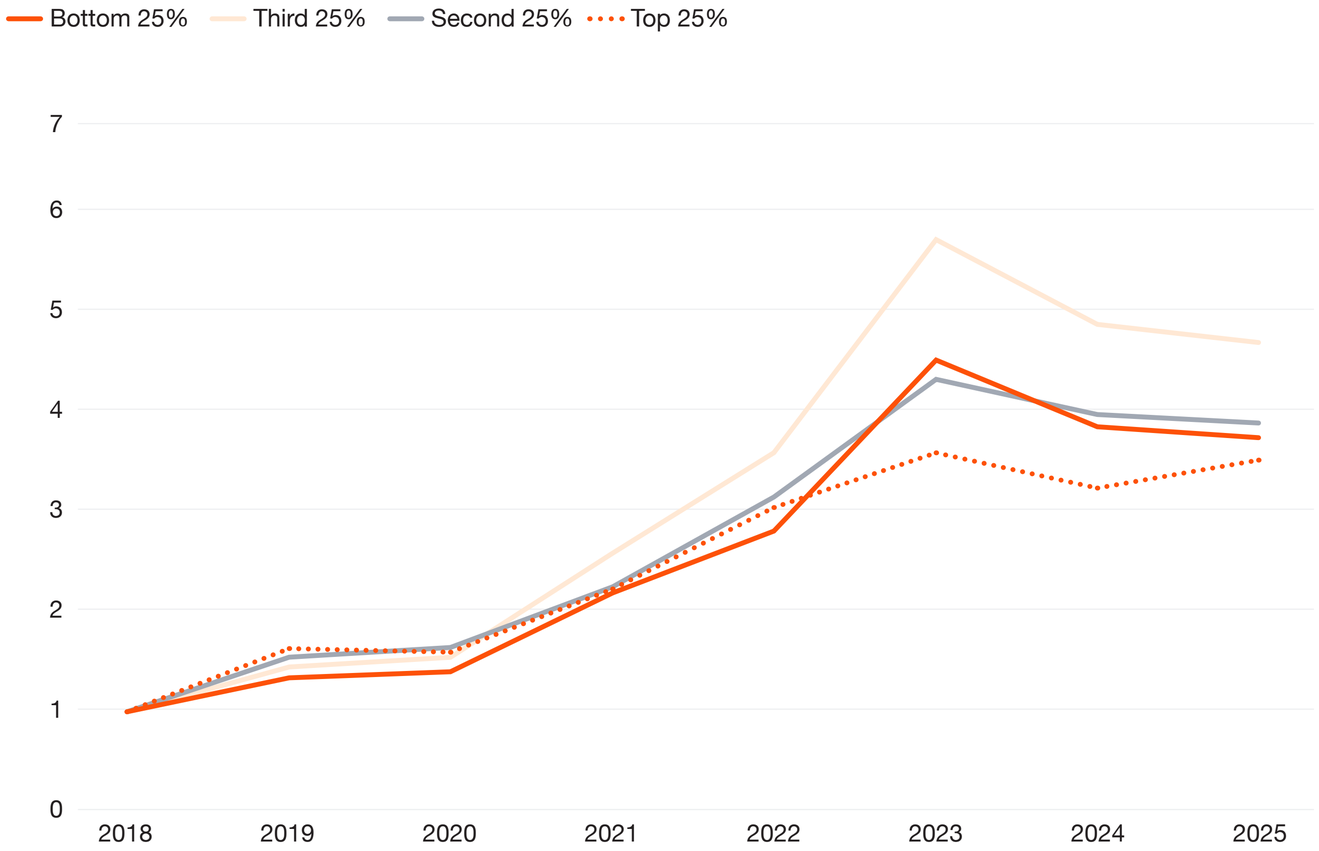
Source: PwC analysis, Lightcast data

Findings

- Technology, Media and Telecoms (TMT) records the highest share of AI job postings in Italy, consistent with its role as the most digitally intensive sector.
- All sectors saw an increase in AI job share in 2025, pointing to broad-based growth in AI hiring.

In Italy, occupations across all AI exposure quartile have seen a general increase in job postings

Number of job postings relative to 2018 by AI exposure quartile, Italy, 2018-2025



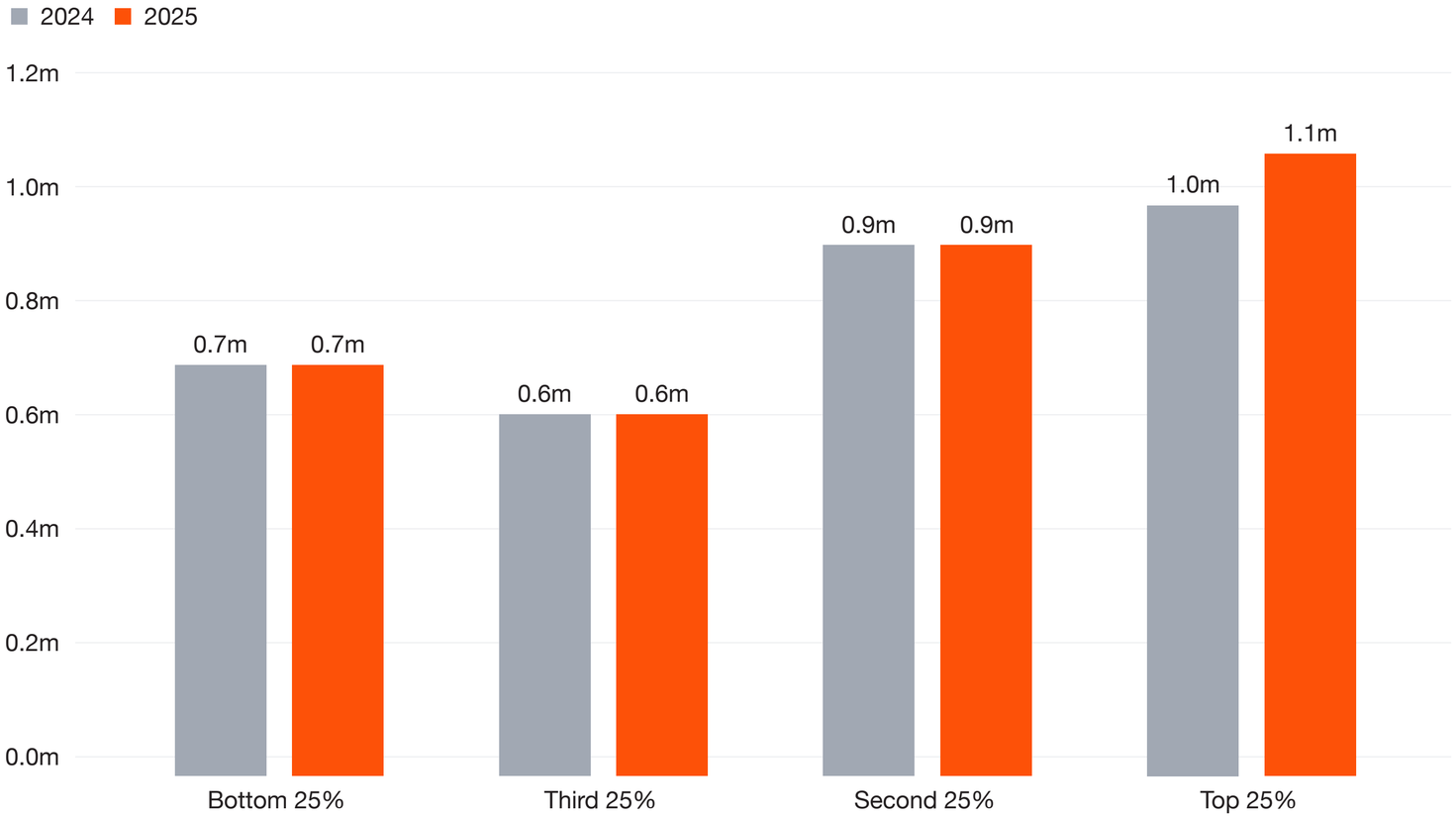
Source: PwC analysis, Lightcast data

Findings

- When grouped by AI exposure, less exposed occupations show stronger growth in job postings relative to the 2018 baseline.
- In recent years however, lower exposure quartiles have declined, while the highest exposure quartile has continued to increase.

However, the top quartile of AI exposed occupations still accounts for the largest number of job postings in Italy

Total number of job postings by AI exposure quartile, Italy, 2024 and 2025



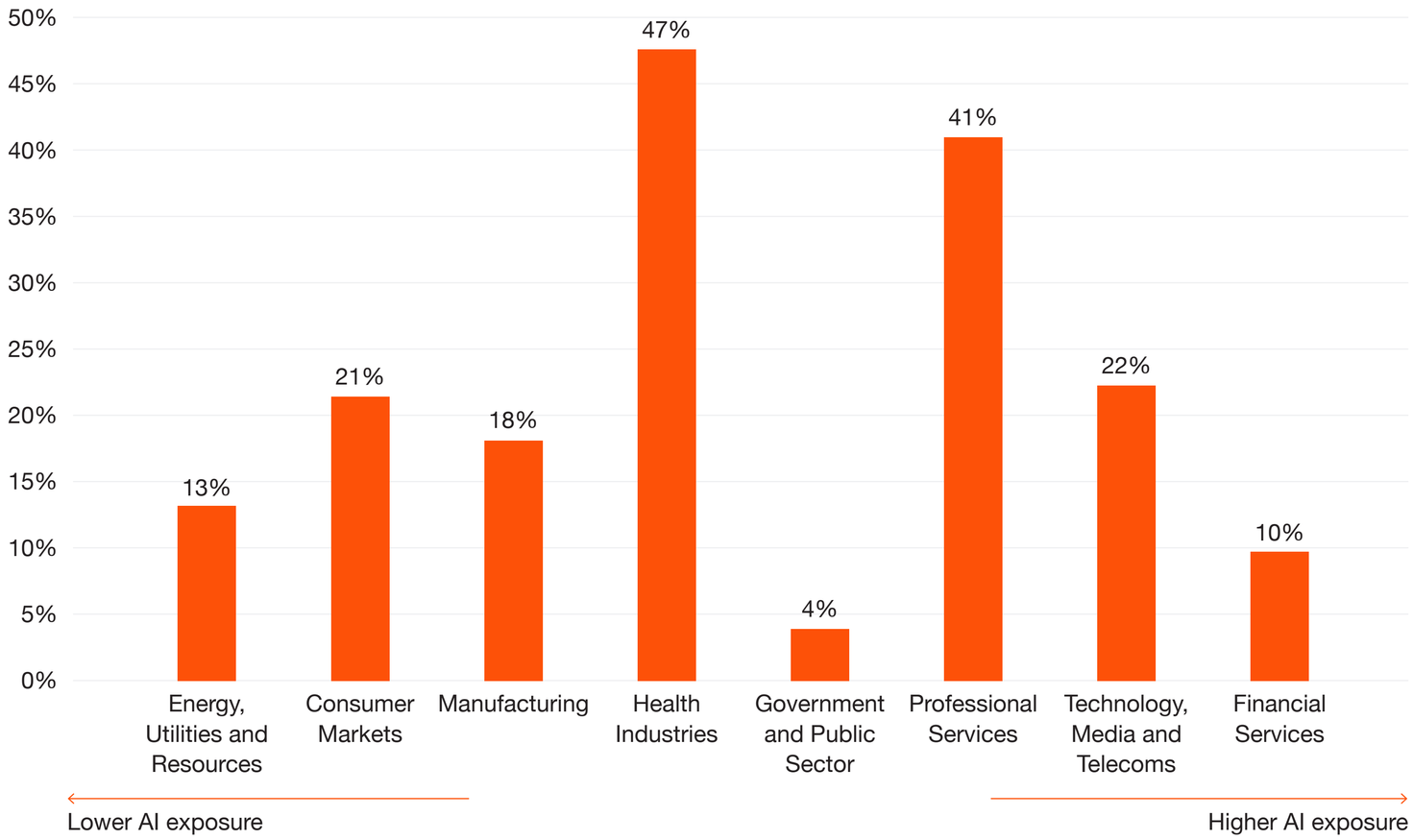
Source: PwC analysis, Lightcast data

Findings

- While job postings have grown faster in less AI-exposed occupations, the highest exposure quartile still accounts for the largest share in absolute terms.
- In 2025, occupations in the most AI-exposed quartile recorded around 1.1 million job postings.
- Between 2024 and 2025, only the highest exposure quartile saw an increase in postings, while lower exposure quartiles declined slightly.

AI wage premiums in Italy vary across sectors, with higher premiums in Health and Professional Services

Wage premium by sector, Italy, 2025



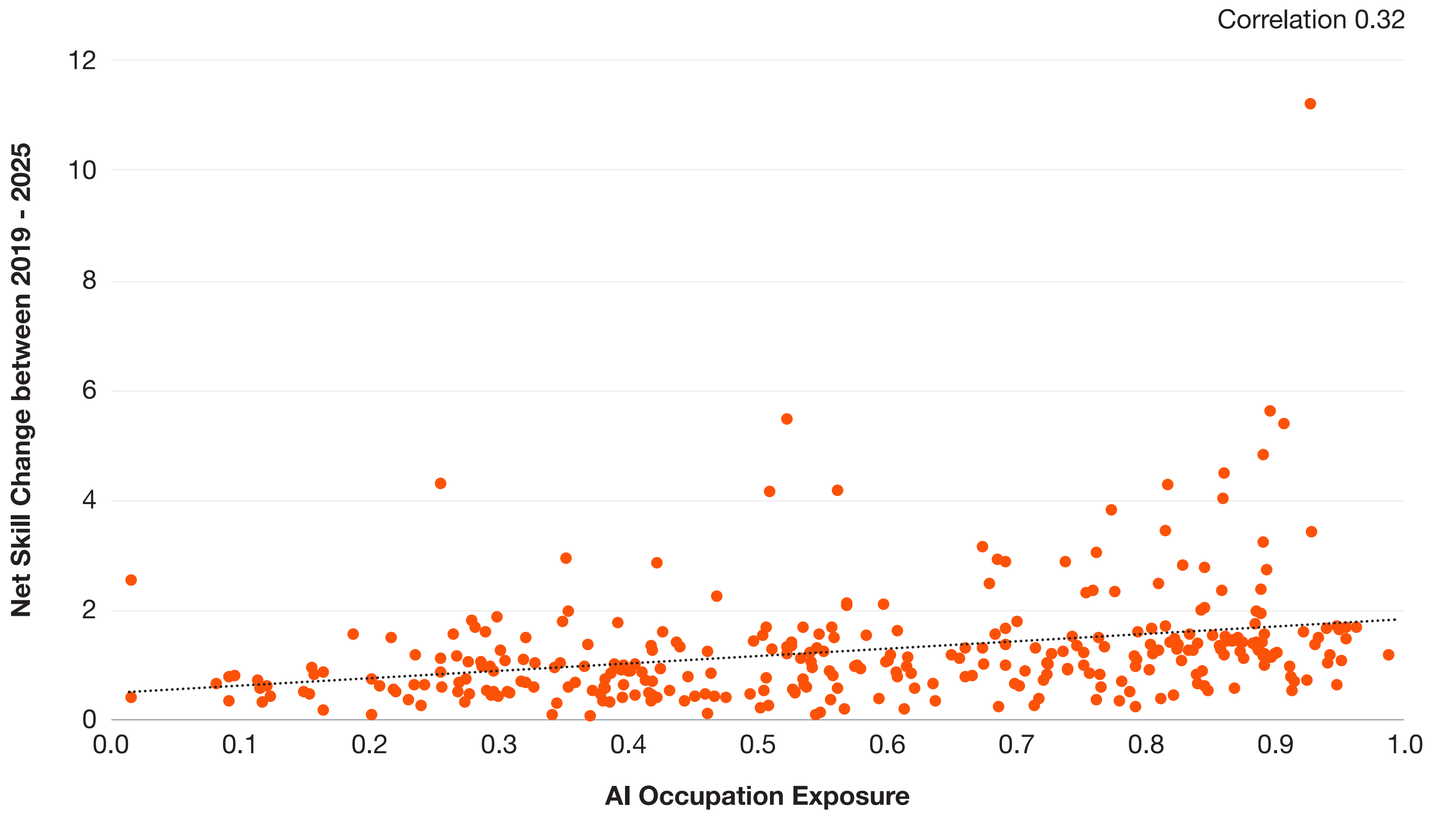
Source: PwC analysis, Lightcast data

Findings

- AI wage premiums vary significantly across sectors, with no consistent relationship to AI exposure.
- Health Industries and Professional Services record the highest premiums, indicating strong demand for AI skills in these sectors. In contrast, Government and Public Sector shows a minimal premium of around 4%, suggesting weaker demand and scope for further adoption.

In Italy, more AI-exposed occupations are experiencing faster rates of skills transformation

Net skill change from 2019 to 2025 for 4-digit ISCO code occupations by AI occupation exposure, Italy



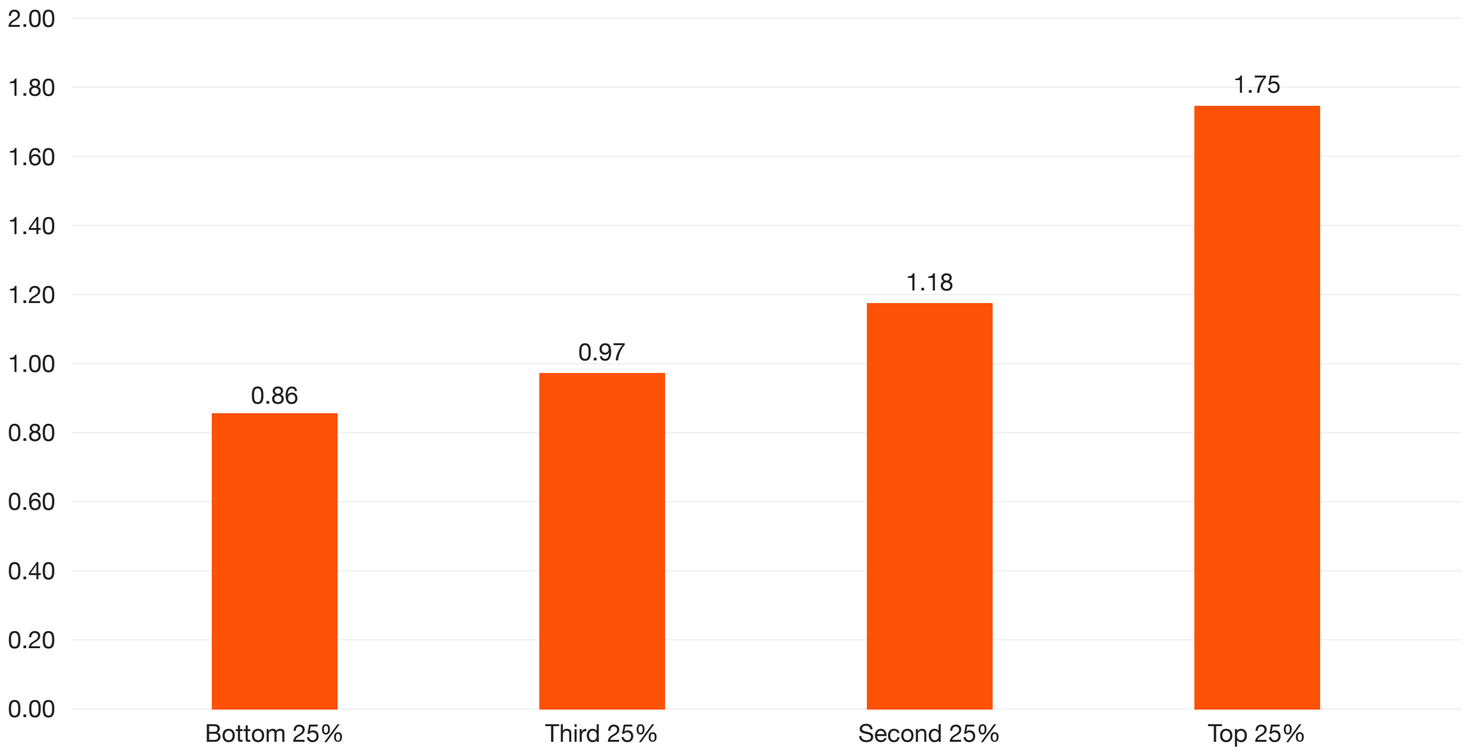
Source: PwC analysis, Lightcast data

Findings

- There is a positive correlation of 0.32 between AI exposure and net skills change between 2019 and 2025, indicating that more exposed occupations tend to see greater shifts in skill requirements.
- This suggests that AI-exposed roles are adapting more rapidly, with evolving task demands reshaping the capabilities required.

This is evident across exposure quartiles, where the most AI-exposed occupations show the largest skill shifts

Average net skill change from 2019 to 2025 for 4-digit ISCO code occupations by AI occupation exposure quartile, Italy



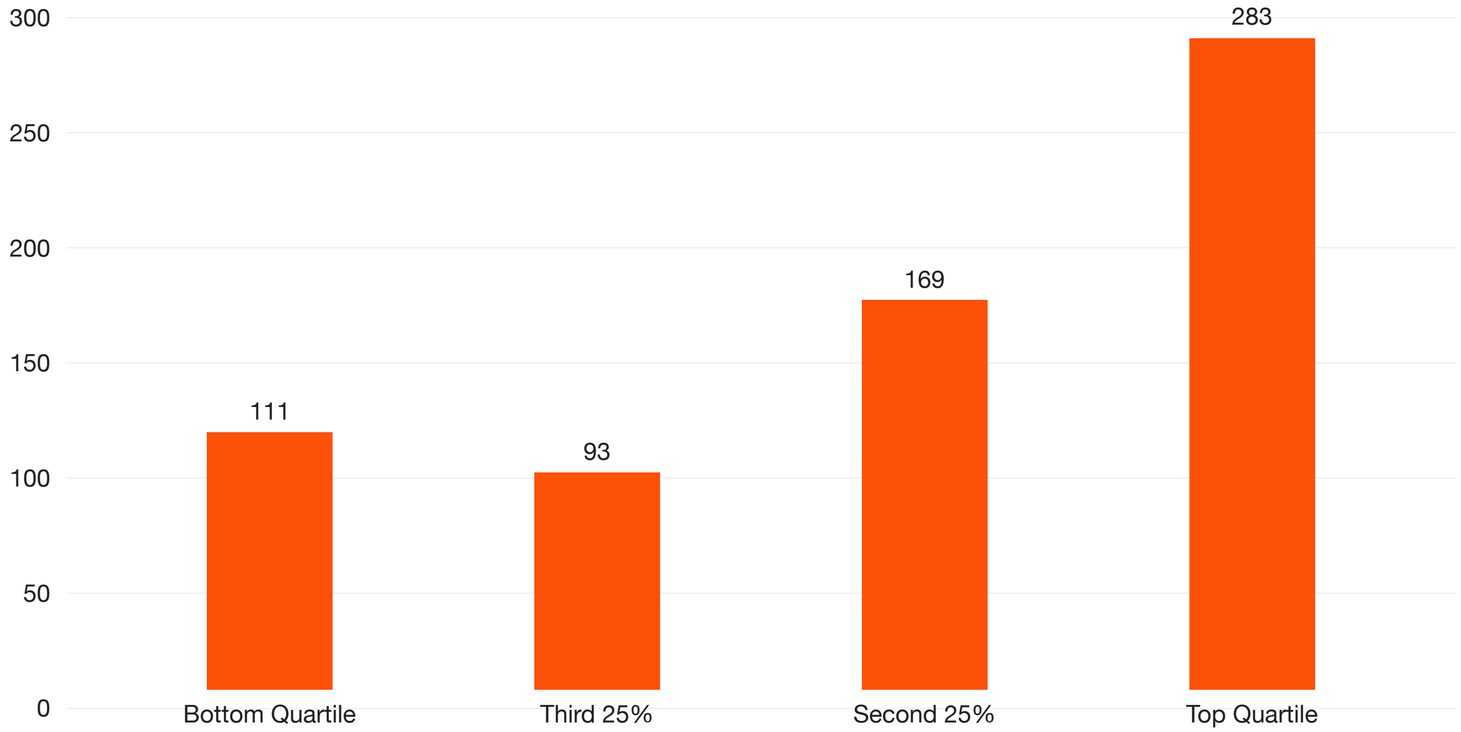
Source: PwC analysis, Lightcast data

Findings

- The same pattern observed earlier is reflected across exposure quartiles: occupations in the highest AI exposure group show the fastest skills transformation between 2019 and 2025.
- Lower exposure quartiles also follow a gradual upward progression, with each successive quartile seeing higher average net skill change.
- This reinforces the earlier finding of a positive relationship between AI exposure and skills change in Italy, where more exposed occupations tend to evolve faster as task requirements shift.

In line with this, the most AI-exposed occupations see greater expansion in the average number of new skills per occupation

Average number of “new” skills per occupation, by AI exposure quartile, Italy, 2025 relative to 2019



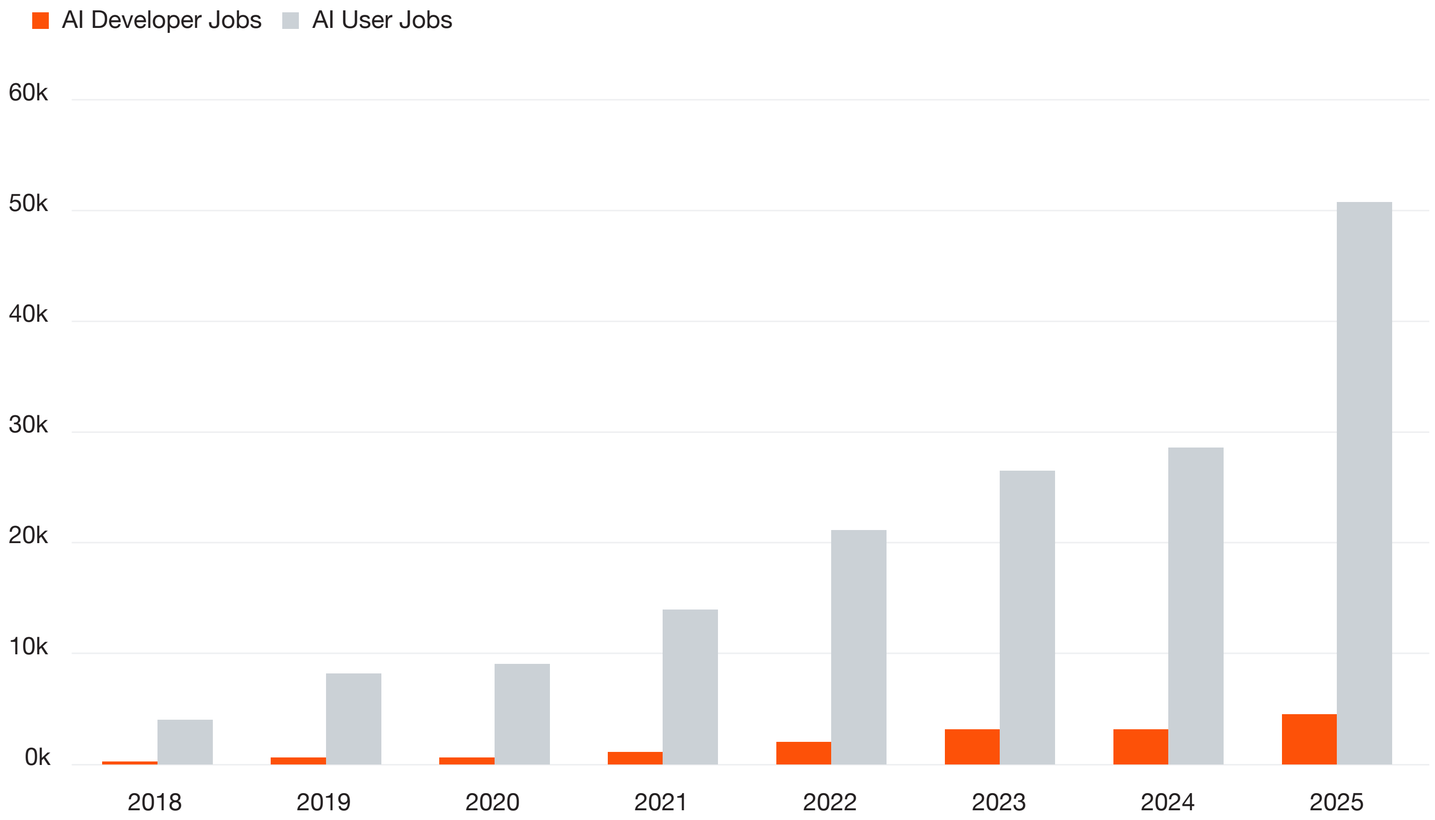
Source: PwC analysis, PwC AI Occupational Exposure Index, Lightcast data
Notes: We define a ‘new skill’ as any skill that has greater than 10 mentions in an occupation in 2025, but five or less mentions in that same occupation in 2019. Across all postings for an occupation in a given country, we count the number of ‘new skills’ required for that occupation.

Findings

- We find a clear positive relationship between AI exposure and the number of new skills required within occupations. Specifically, occupations in higher AI exposure quartiles exhibit a greater average number of newly emerging skills between 2019 and 2025.
- Importantly, this metric reflects the average number of new skills per occupation within each exposure quartile, rather than the total number of new skills observed.
- Although the pattern is not fully linear across all quartiles, the increase becomes more pronounced at higher exposure levels, with the top quartile averaging 283 new skills per occupation. This suggests that skill expansion is greatest among the most AI-exposed occupations.
- Some of this increase may reflect higher posting volumes in more exposed occupations, but it is also consistent with underlying job growth and evolution, as expanding roles require a broader and more diverse set of skills.

AI job demand in Italy is dominated by user roles, with strong growth across both user and developer roles

Total number of AI user and AI developer job roles, Italy, 2018-2025



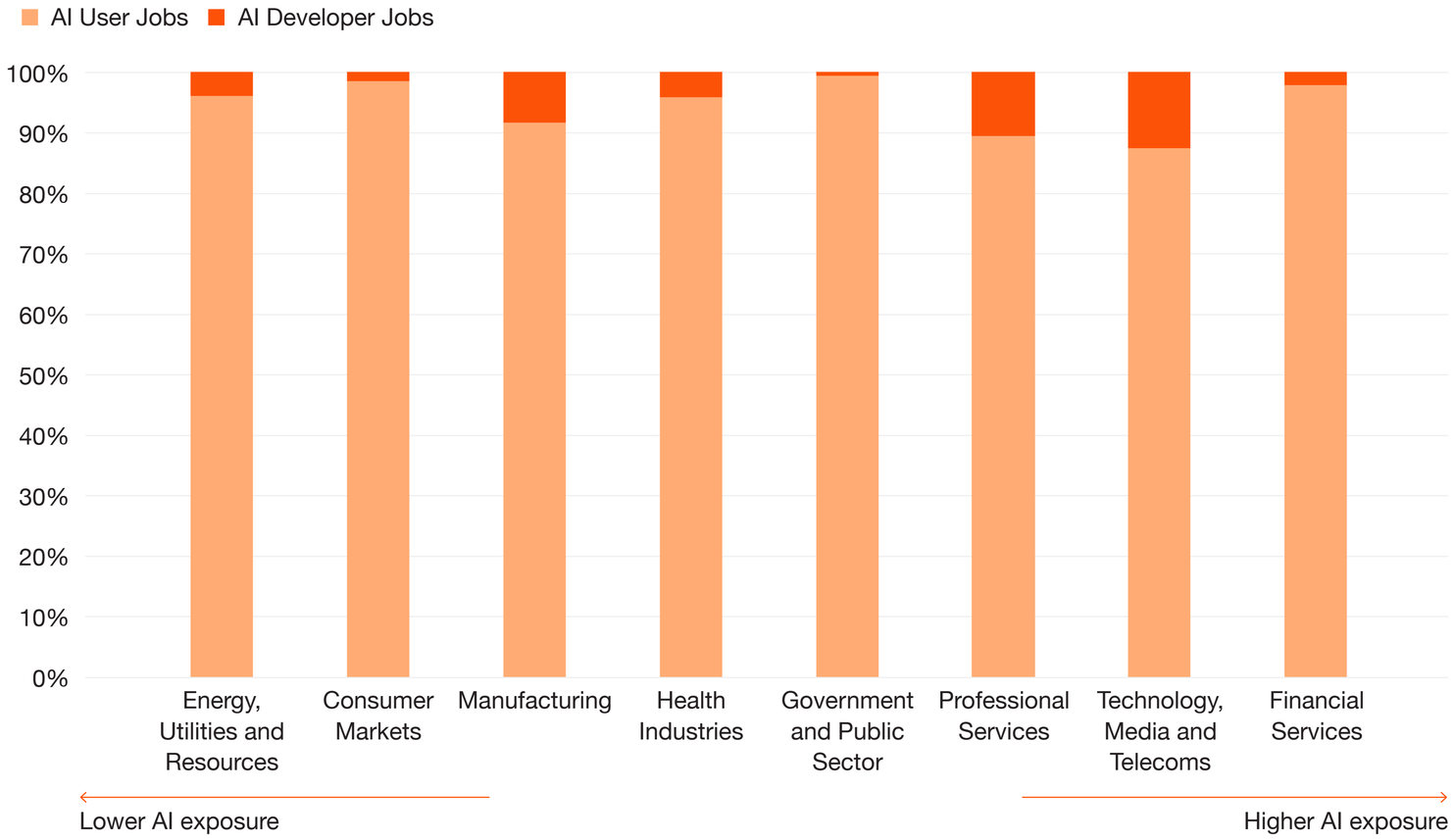
Source: PwC analysis, Lightcast data
Notes: AI user and AI developer job roles are determined as jobs requiring Tier 0 or 1 skills (AI literacy and applied AI skills) for AI user jobs and Tier 2 skills (advanced AI skills) for AI developer jobs. AI developer jobs are tagged as such if there are any skills in the job postings data requiring Tier 2 skills for a specific job role.

Findings

- AI user roles account for the majority of AI-related jobs and continue to drive overall demand, increasing by **~22k** roles in 2025.
- In contrast, AI developer roles remain lower but stable, growing by around **~1.6k** in 2025.
- Growth has been strong across both categories in the last year, with AI user roles increasing by **77%** and AI developer roles by **53.3%,** indicating continued expansion in both adoption and development of AI capabilities.

Across sectors, AI job postings in Italy remain concentrated in capabilities related to the use of AI rather than its development

Within sector shares of AI user and AI developer job roles of all AI related roles, Italy, 2025



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Findings

- AI user roles account for the largest share across most sectors, indicating a strong focus on deploying and integrating AI into existing workflows.
- **Technology, Media and Telecoms (TMT)** shows the highest share of **AI developer** roles **(12.5%),** consistent with its role in developing and advancing AI technologies.
- **Government and Public Sector** records the highest share of **AI user** roles **(99.3%),** reflecting broad-based adoption of AI across operational roles rather than in-house development.

Contacts

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