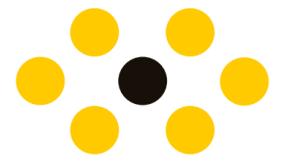


How AI Is (Not) Shaping The Job Market

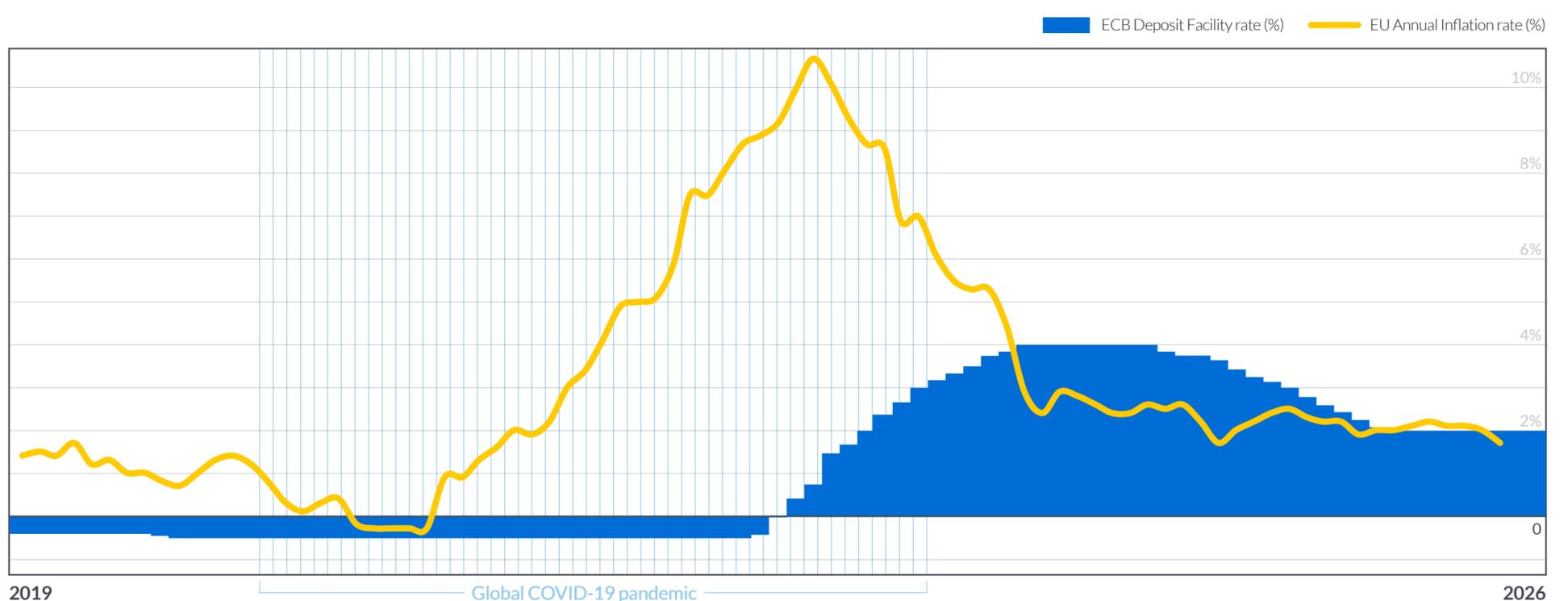


Recent headlines suggest that AI is replacing workers at scale. The data tells a different story. While AI is reshaping the skills employers need and creating entirely new roles, the current slowdown in hiring is largely driven by economic uncertainty – not automation. What is changing rapidly, however, is the **complexity of hiring, the pace of skill evolution, and the global competition for talent.**

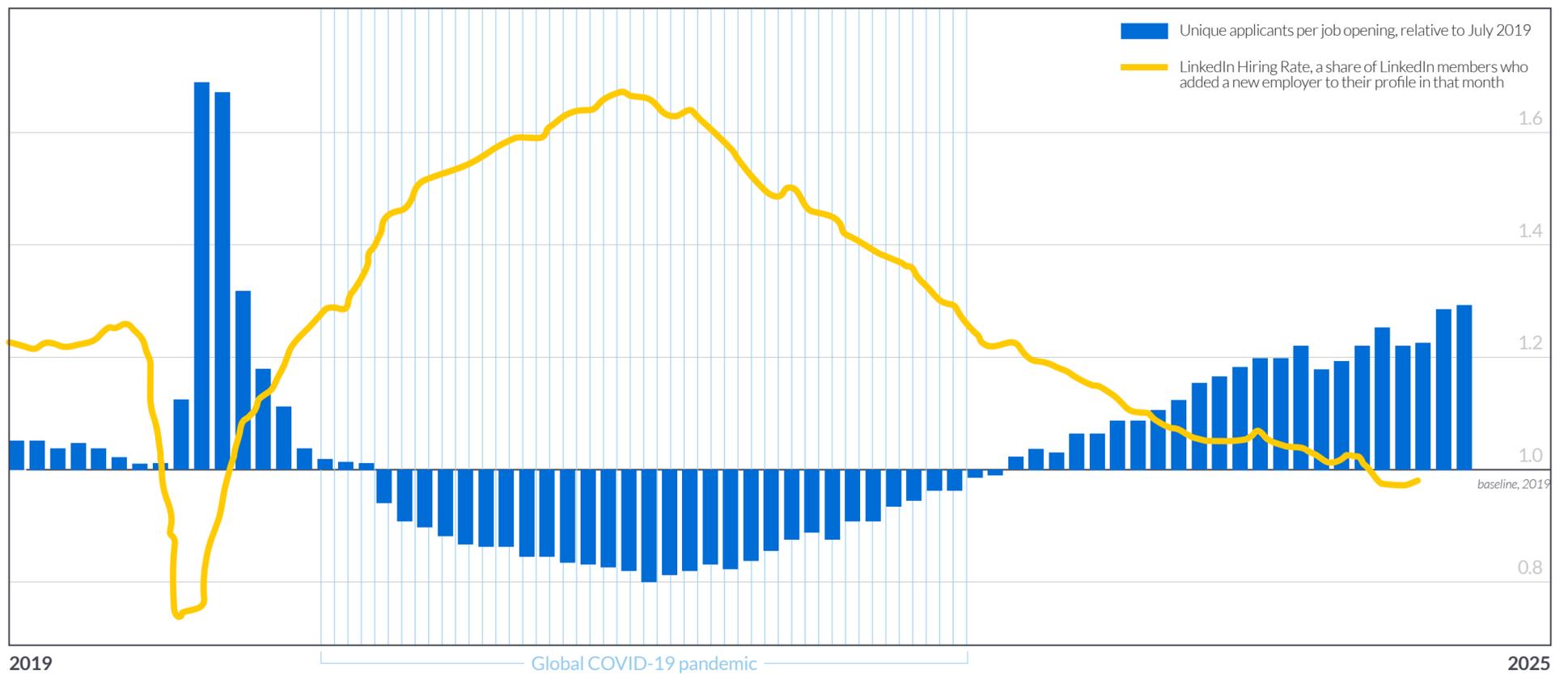
Global hiring remains around 20% below pre-pandemic levels across many advanced economies. This slowdown largely reflects rising interest rates, tighter monetary policy, and broader economic uncertainty following the post-COVID correction. There is little evidence that AI has driven widespread job displacement during this period. In fact, hiring for AI-related roles has increased significantly at the same time.

Overall, the data suggests that **recent hiring trends are primarily shaped by economic cycles rather than automation.** For employers, the key challenge is not replacing workers with AI, but making smart hiring decisions in a more uncertain economic environment. Recruitment businesses play an important role here, helping companies stay precise and strategic with hiring even when overall recruitment slows.

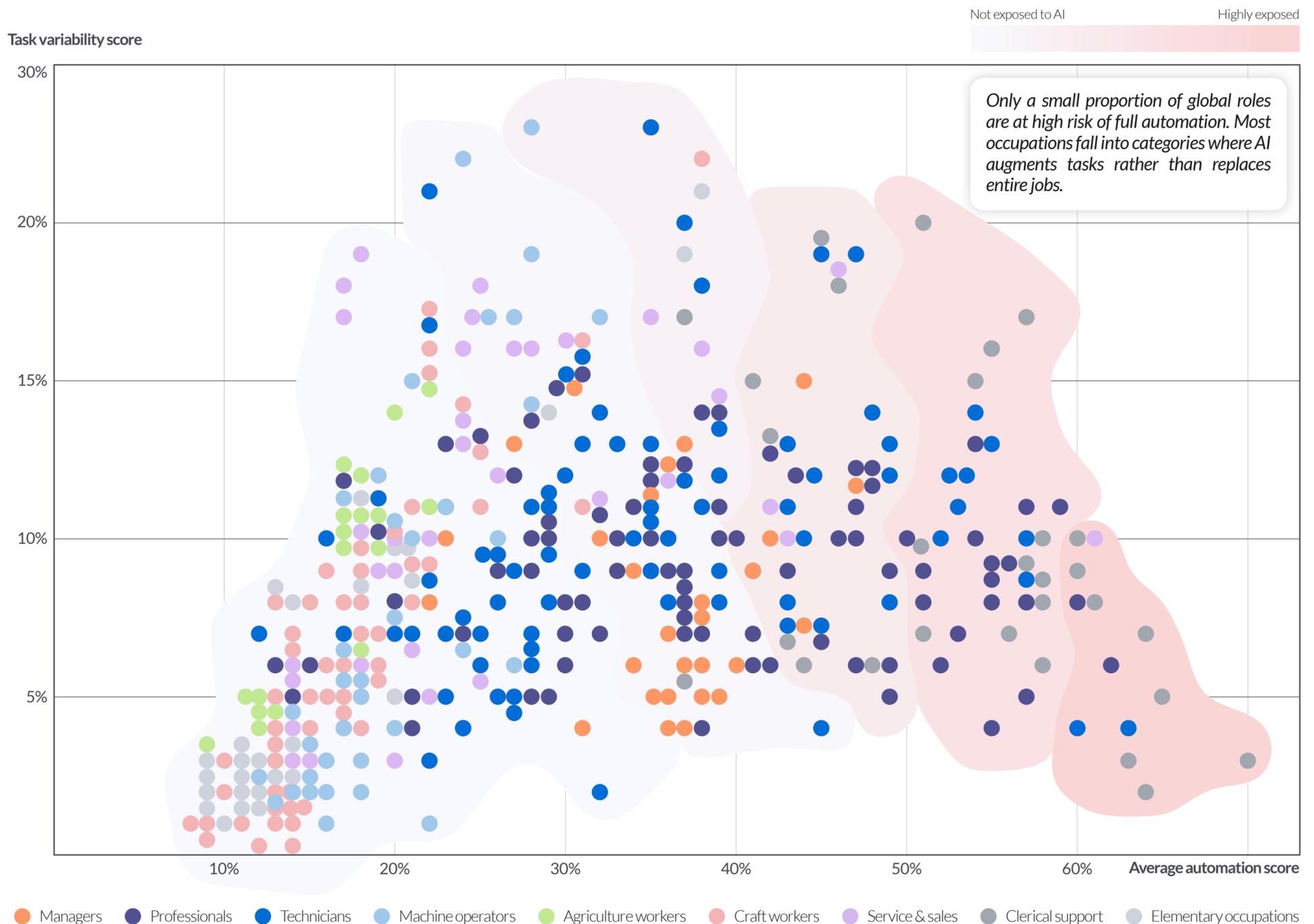
Global hiring down 20% from pre-pandemic levels – driven by economic uncertainty, not AI



Job seekers outpace the number of open roles – driving more applications per role and intensifying competition



1 in 4 workers globally are exposed to AI, however only 3.3% are at high risk of automation



Job applicants are now expected to have an average of 64 distinct skills – including newly emerged AI skills

Jobs requiring AI skills grew 70%, signaling a clear shift in employer priorities – especially, since 75% of new demand is concentrated in three occupational groups: *Computer & Mathematics, Management, Business & Finance*.

At the same time, roles have become more skill-intensive. The average job now lists 64 distinct skills, up from 54 a decade ago, while high-paying roles such as data scientists and economists can require more than 90.

This reflects growing demand for hybrid roles that combine technical and business expertise, making them harder to fill. Recruitment consultancies help interpret job descriptions, identifying which skills are non-negotiable and which can be flexible, while helping candidates present transferable skills effectively.

600

New skills added to job listings in the last two years

+10

More skills expected from workers today vs. 10 years ago

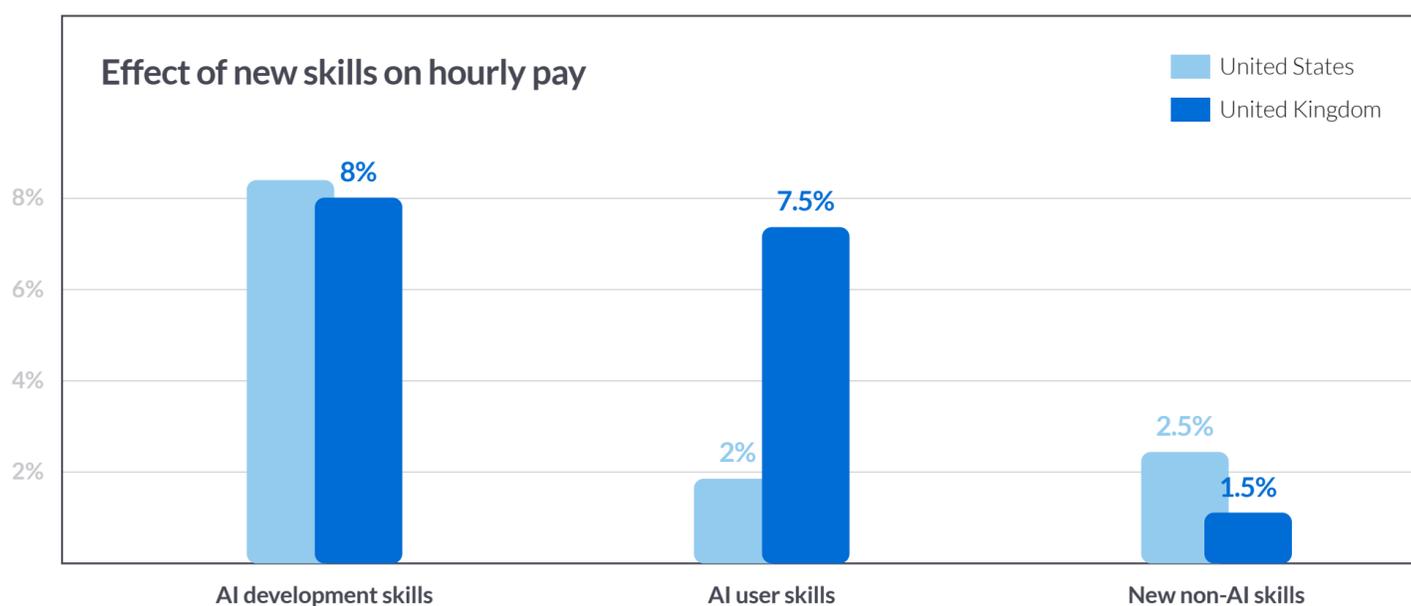
3 in 4

Knowledge workers already use AI – even without formal company rollout

64%

Team leaders expect their employees to train themselves on AI tools

Job openings that require new skills offer up to 15% higher pay

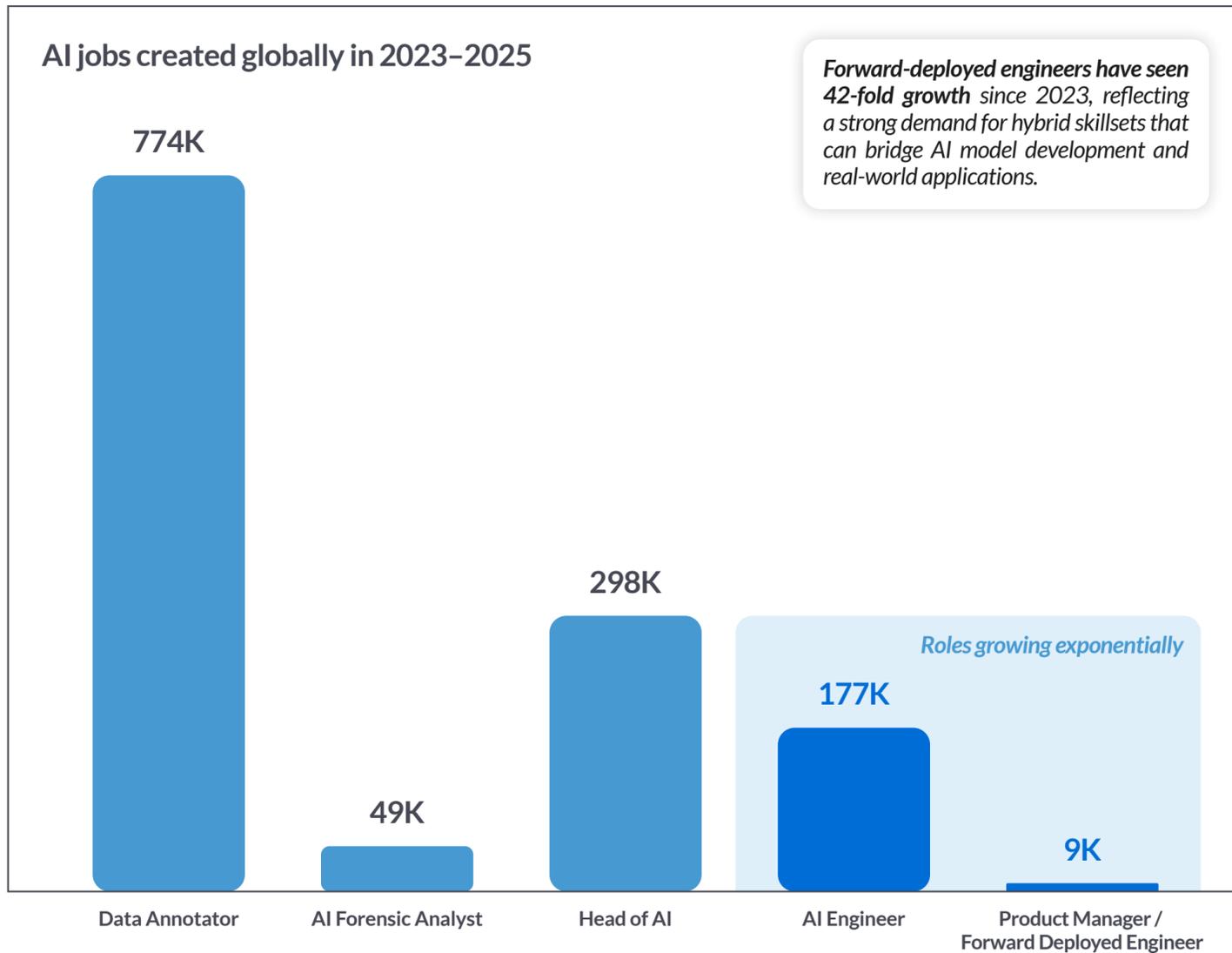


Jobs listing new skills tend to pay 3% more on average, with premiums increasing when several new skills are required – reaching 15% for roles listing four or more new skills in the UK and 8.5% in the United States. The highest premiums are seen in business and data analysis, IT, and engineering.

While the market rewards adaptability and specialization, it also increases hiring risk and cost sensitivity. Partnering with an external recruiter can help benchmark compensation and align skill requirements with realistic budgets, ensuring offers match true market value.

1.3 million new AI jobs created in the last 2 years

Data annotators accounted for more than half of the jobs created. They play a key role in AI model development by processing and categorizing the raw data used to train, test, and improve the model.



As an IT recruiter speaking daily with CTOs, CIOs, and hiring managers, I can clearly see that the push toward GenAI and especially agentic AI is no longer experimental — it's strategic and urgent. This isn't just happening in tech-native companies; traditional enterprises are now fully committed to building and deploying AI solutions at scale. The conversations have shifted from 'Should we explore AI?' to '**How fast can we implement it without falling behind?**'

There is unmistakable pressure from leadership teams to move quickly. Boards and executives don't want to be the ones that reacted too late. What stands out most is the growing focus on agentic AI — **businesses are no longer satisfied with systems that simply generate insights or content.** They want AI that can make decisions, execute tasks, and drive measurable business outcomes. That shift is fundamentally changing the type of talent they're asking us to find.



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Rising demand and uneven skill distribution are driving AI talent migration and global competition

x8

AI professionals are 8 times more likely to move across borders than the average LinkedIn member

AI professionals are far more likely to relocate internationally. In the past year alone, more than 200,000 AI specialists moved across borders, highlighting rapidly growing global mobility. Key destinations include the United States, the UK, and Germany, making **competition for talent increasingly global rather than local**.

For companies, this creates both opportunity and risk. Access to international talent expands options, but competition intensifies. An international recruitment consultancy with cross-border reach and regulatory expertise **helps organizations access global talent while managing relocation, compliance, and market positioning**.

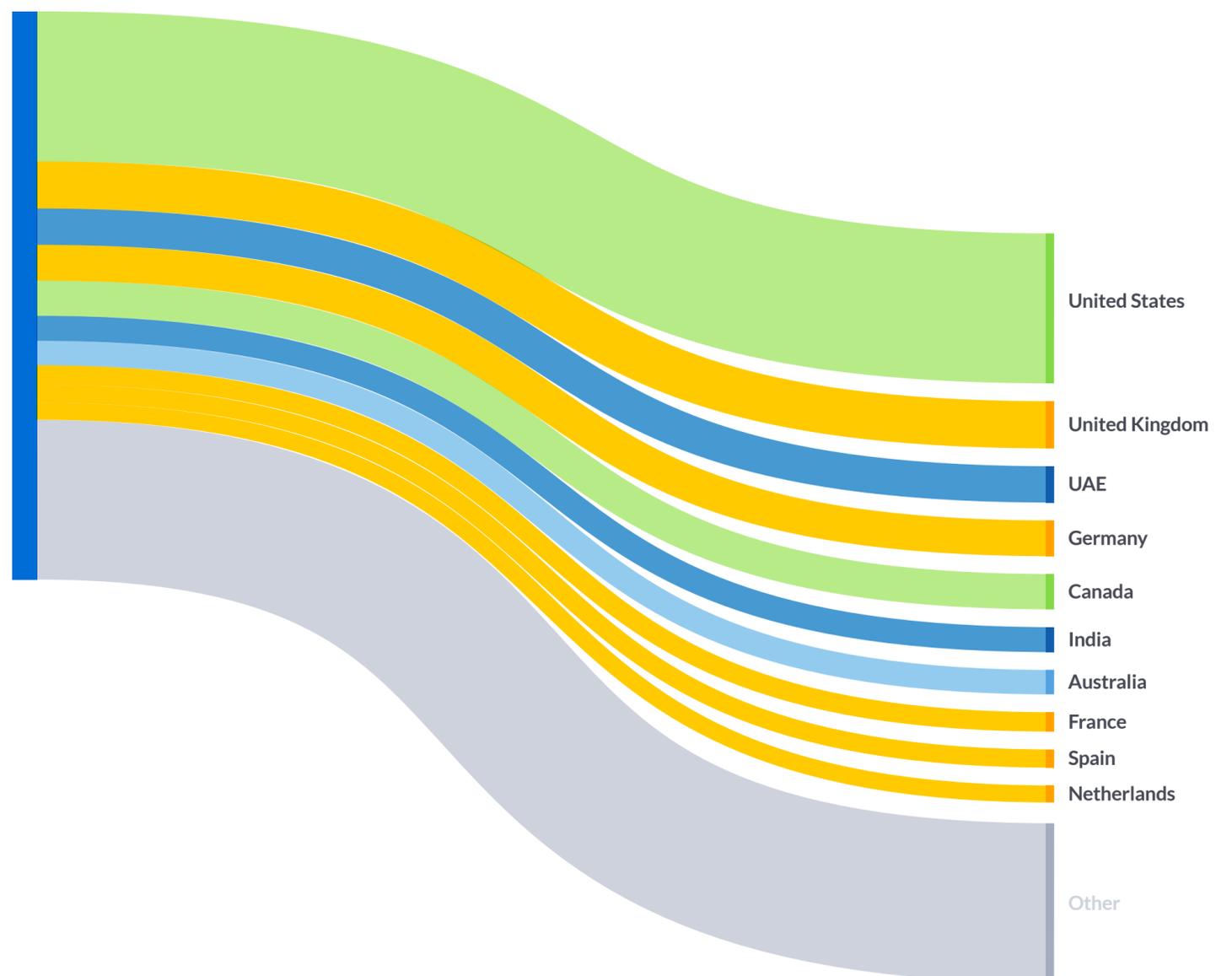
Top AI Talent Destinations

208,000

AI professionals migrated within the last 12 months, x6.3 more than a year before

Line width indicates the proportion of AI talent moving to each destination country

- Europe
- North America
- Asia
- Pacific



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