Artificial Intelligence and the Future

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has quickly become one of, if not the, defining technological advancements of the 21st century. Proponents have compared it to the Industrial Revolution in terms of scope and scale. Critics, on the other hand, point to real concerns related to copyright, the environment and the economy. Regardless of the spectrum of opinions on the matter though, it seems, at least for now, that AI is here to stay.

One place where AI is causing significant tension is the job market. Over 70% of Americans think that AI will negatively impact the number of jobs in the future.[1] Contrary to what people imagined 20 years ago, the jobs being lost to robots are fewer blue-collar than white-collar professions. Mass layoffs have become a common occurrence in the 2020s particularly in the tech sector with companies like Meta, Amazon, and Microsoft slashing their workforce significantly.[2] This is coupled with the proliferation of AI tools used in the hiring process where now 4 out of every 5 companies in a survey say they use AI to screen resumes.[3] Still despite the pessimism there is real data indicating that some job sectors are making a comeback. In particular software engineering jobs are making a comeback. The current number of listings for software engineers has almost doubled to 67,000 since its lowpoint in 2023.[4]

All of the conversation around the job market and AI sheds light on broader opinions about AI, especially young people. Despite AI usage climbing slowly year over year, there is

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[1]McClain and Park, "Young US Adults Are Increasingly Wary of AI, Concerned It Will Take Jobs." Pew Research Center, August 18, 2026, https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/2026/06/ai-job-market-hiring/687403/.

[2]Crunchbase News, "The Crunchbase Tech Layoffs Tracker." October 28, 2026. https://news.crunchbase.com/startups/tech-layoffs/.

[3] Lowrey, "AI Has Ruined the Job Market." The Atlantic, June 2, 2026, https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/2026/06/ai-job-market-hiring/687403/.

[4]Barr, "AI Isn't Killing Software Coding Jobs — They're Booming." Business Insider, April 3, 2026, https://www.businessinsider.com/ai-isnt-killing-software-coding-jobs-booming-trueup-2026-4.

also a growing anxiety about its effects. From 2025 to 2026, the percentage of young people who AI makes feel hopeful is down from 27% to 18%. Meanwhile the number whom AI makes feel angry is up from 22% to 36%.[5] There is a real and palpable anxiety among the youth about what this technology will lead to in the future.

Even with all of this pessimism there are real reasons to be excited about the possibilities AI provides humanity. It has proved immensely useful in sectors like healthcare and even climate change mitigation. From cancer screenings to drug development to the optimization of renewable energy, AI might be proving itself to be an incredible tool for making us safer, which is good because it seems Pandora's box has been opened when it comes to AI and cannot be closed.

[5]Brenan, "Gen Z's AI Adoption Steady, but Skepticism Climbs." Gallup, April 8,2026, https://news.gallup.com/poll/708224/gen-adoption-steady-skepticism-climbs.aspx.

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