

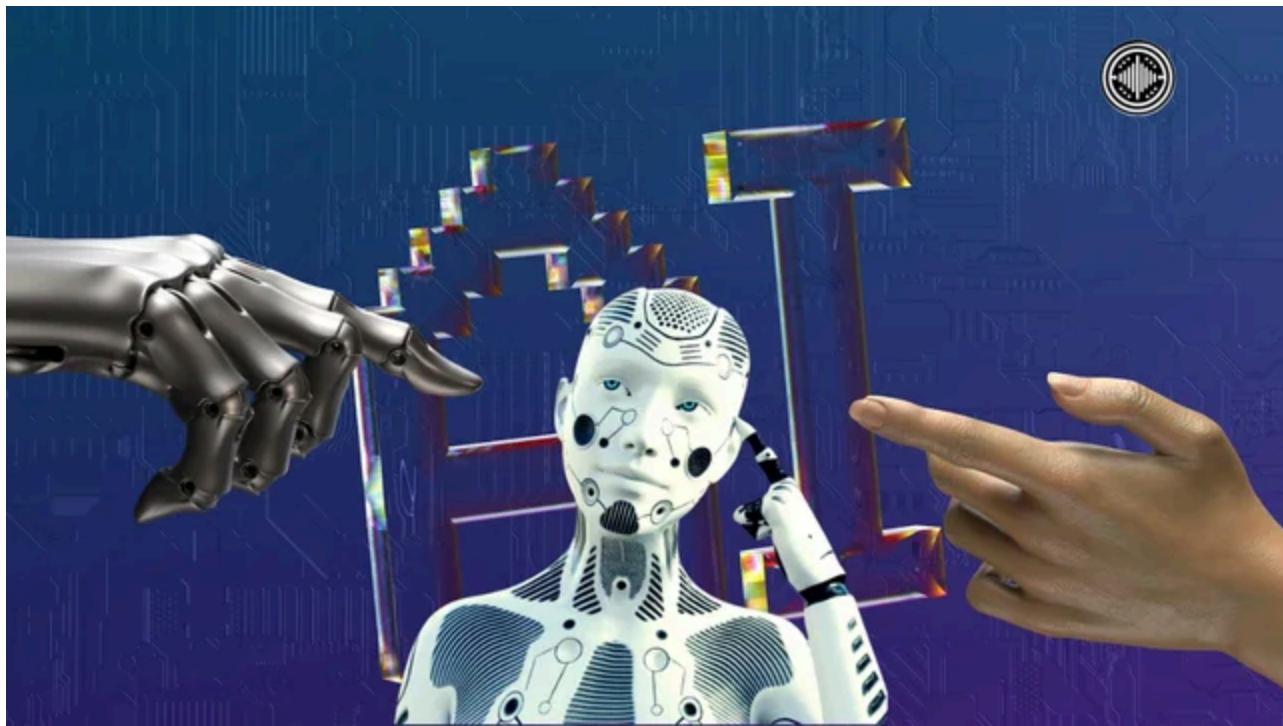
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UK Hiring Declines Sharply as Artificial Intelligence Disrupts Tech and Finance Jobs

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As artificial intelligence rapidly takes hold across industries, British employers are pulling back from hiring in technology and finance, underscoring the challenges businesses face in a stagnant economy burdened by high borrowing costs and policy uncertainty.

A recent analysis by consultancy McKinsey & Company, reported by Bloomberg, revealed that job postings in the United Kingdom dropped by 31 per cent in the three months to May 2025 compared to the same period in 2022. However, the decline was far steeper, around 38 per cent for roles considered especially vulnerable to artificial intelligence, such as

software development, finance, and other technology-driven positions. Over the past three years, demand for skilled professionals in certain fields, including graphic designers, programmers, and management consultants, has contracted by more than half. While some of this trend reflects broader economic headwinds, McKinsey noted that even sectors performing relatively well, such as information technology and professional services, are seeing continued drops in advertised vacancies.

According to Paweł Adrjan, director of Europe, the Middle East, and Africa (EMEA) economic research at the Indeed Hiring Lab, companies have become hesitant to invest in positions tied to developing or deploying artificial intelligence tools. Mathematics and data science roles, which frequently reference artificial intelligence capabilities in job descriptions, have seen listings cut by nearly 50 per cent compared to pre-pandemic levels, according to Indeed. Meanwhile, industries less exposed to automation, including education and real estate, are experiencing growth in job opportunities, suggesting a divergence in the labour market as firms prioritise areas less likely to be disrupted.

The impact has been particularly acute for entry-level positions and those requiring repetitive tasks, such as document processing or scheduling, as companies increasingly deploy generative language models like Chat Generative Pre-trained Transformer (ChatGPT). Data from job search platform Adzuna shows postings for internships, apprenticeships, and junior roles without degree requirements have fallen by nearly one-third since late 2022.

Looking further ahead, the warnings are stark. In comments to The Guardian, Adam Dorr, research director at RethinkX, predicted that artificial intelligence and robotics could automate the majority of current human job functions by 2045, though he acknowledged this scenario depends on technological, social, and policy developments. Dorr's team, which examined over 1,500 cases of technological upheaval, concluded that once an innovation gains traction, it often dismantles incumbent systems within two decades.

Large corporations have already begun restructuring to align with this shift. Microsoft Corporation, for example, announced over 15,000 layoffs globally in 2025, with the most recent round eliminating around 9,000 positions, including roles in gaming, sales, and support functions. Rather than slowing its automation strategy, the company is urging employees to acquire artificial intelligence skills to remain competitive in a rapidly transforming marketplace.

This trend underscores a sobering reality: as policymakers remain preoccupied with expanding regulations and tax burdens, private companies are forced to make tough choices about where to invest and whom to hire. While innovation offers undeniable promise, it also demands an honest reckoning with the economic and social costs of automation.