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## SKEMA x EY Talent Barometer: AI: 96% of young people are already using it – companies must adapt

**While artificial intelligence is sometimes portrayed as a threat to entry-level jobs, the findings of the 2026 SKEMA x EY Talent Barometer, conducted by Ipsos-BVA, suggest a shift in perspective. Already widely adopted by students and recent graduates, AI neither provokes rejection nor excessive fascination. What is new is that it now compels companies to rethink their frameworks, practices, and training models.**

The conclusion is clear: young talent is not subjected to Artificial Intelligence, they have already embraced it:

- 96% of students and recent graduates have already used generative AI tools,
- 61% use them at least once a day.

Far from being an emerging trend, AI has become a daily habit, embedded both in learning processes and in early professional experiences.

### **Rapid, clear-eyed and structured adoption**

For this generation, AI is primarily a lever for efficiency and learning:

- 70% use it to save time on practical tasks,
- 56% to learn,
- 41% to support decision-making,
- 8 out of 10 already expect to use AI in their future jobs to automate repetitive tasks, write content, or analyse data.

The tool is gradually becoming a genuine cognitive assistant, capable of supporting young people in their reasoning and decision-making. This adoption also comes with a more nuanced perception: 74% believe AI could pose a threat to entry-level positions within companies.

Young people are therefore neither naïve technophiles nor resistant to change, they are already anticipating transformations in the labour market.

## **The real challenge: structuring AI integration in companies**

Behind this widespread adoption lies a clear expectation: companies must provide a framework.

Young talent expresses strong expectations towards employers:

- 79% want to be trained in AI tools,
- 40% expect a clear ethical charter,
- 48% insist that AI should remain a support tool, not a control mechanism.

The message is unambiguous: the challenge is no longer to introduce AI, but to organise, regulate, and embed it within a framework of trust.

## **Humans more than ever at the heart of performance**

At this stage, the responsibility of companies and educational institutions is crucial. The challenge is not to slow down AI, but to structure its integration: clarify its uses, invest in training, rethink early-career pathways, and restore the importance of progressive skill development.

Faced with AI, young people reaffirm the value of human qualities: 60% believe critical thinking will be the most decisive skill for professional success, ahead of emotional intelligence and creativity.

“At SKEMA Business School, we do not simply train students to use artificial intelligence: we develop talents capable of understanding its challenges, mastering its applications, and leveraging it as a driver of responsible organisational transformation. In a world where reference points are rapidly evolving, our role is to equip this generation with the tools to combine performance, critical thinking, and impact,” says Amine Ezzerouali, Academic Director of the MSc in International Human Resources & Performance Management.

“At EY, our priority is to support young talent in adopting artificial intelligence by training them and helping them turn it into a lever for developing their skills from the very start of their careers,” adds Muriel Olivaud, Head of Recruitment at EY France.

Through their joint work on the transformation of work, skills development, and the responsible use of AI, SKEMA Business School and EY are supporting both companies and students through this transition. Their conviction is simple: AI will be a driver of economic and social progress if it is designed as a tool serving career paths, rather than a substitute for early-stage jobs.

In a rapidly changing labour market, young talent is not asking for less AI, but for more vision.

## **Another key insight: a more pragmatic generation**

Beyond the technological dimension of AI, the barometer also highlights a broader shift in attitudes towards work.

74% of young people now rank salary as their top professional priority, a sharp increase over one year.

This reflects less disengagement than a need for reassurance in a context perceived as increasingly uncertain. At the same time, expectations regarding quality of life at work are rising: professional relationships, flexibility, and work-life balance are becoming central components of meaning at work.

## Methodology

The 2026 SKEMA x EY Talent Barometer, conducted by Ipsos-BVA, is based on a sample of 1,609 students and recent graduates (with less than three years of experience) from higher education institutions (business schools: 44%; engineering schools: 26%; universities: 14%; other institutions: 16%), surveyed via an online questionnaire between 3 and 22 February 2026.

**Download the full results of the SKEMA x EY Talent Barometer (in French):**

[Baromètre Talents 2026 | SKEMA BUSINESS SCHOOL](#)

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### About SKEMA Business School

With 11,000 students from over 130 nationalities, 190 professors, and 63,000 alumni in 145 countries, SKEMA Business School is a global education and research institution that develops committed talent to transform the world sustainably. The hybridisation of social sciences and data sciences is at the heart of its model, and global exposure is its operational mode.

Multi-accredited (AACSB, EQUIS, EFMD Accredited EMBA), the school is recognised worldwide for its research, its more than 70 excellent programmes, and its international multi-campus structure across six countries: South Africa, Brazil, Canada, China, the United Arab Emirates, the United States, and France.

[www.skema-bs.fr](http://www.skema-bs.fr)

### About EY

EY is committed to building a better working world by creating long-term value for our clients and our people, as well as for society and the planet as a whole, while strengthening trust in financial markets.

Drawing on data, artificial intelligence and new technologies, EY teams help to build the confidence our clients need to shape a future that is resilient in the face of today's and tomorrow's most pressing challenges.

Across a full range of services, from audit and assurance to consulting, tax, strategy and transactions, EY teams are able to deploy their expertise in more than 150 countries and territories. Deep sector knowledge, a global and multidisciplinary network, and a broad and diverse partner ecosystem are key strengths that enable EY to contribute to building a more balanced world.

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