The Fearless Future: 2025 Global AI Jobs Barometer

South Africa Analysis

Global Insights

The AI Jobs Barometer reveals AI's global impact on jobs, wages, skills, and productivity by examining close to a billion job ads from six continents.

Our data suggests:

The AI revolution is accelerating in all industries including industries less obviously exposed to AI such as agriculture and construction.

AI is redefining job roles faster and faster. Skills sought by employers for AI-exposed jobs are changing 66% faster than for other jobs – up from 25% last year.

AI is associated with gentler growth – but not sharp declines - in job numbers. Like electricity, AI has the potential to create more jobs than it displaces if it is used to pioneer new forms of economic activity. Our data suggests that companies are indeed using AI to help people create more value rather than simply reduce headcount.

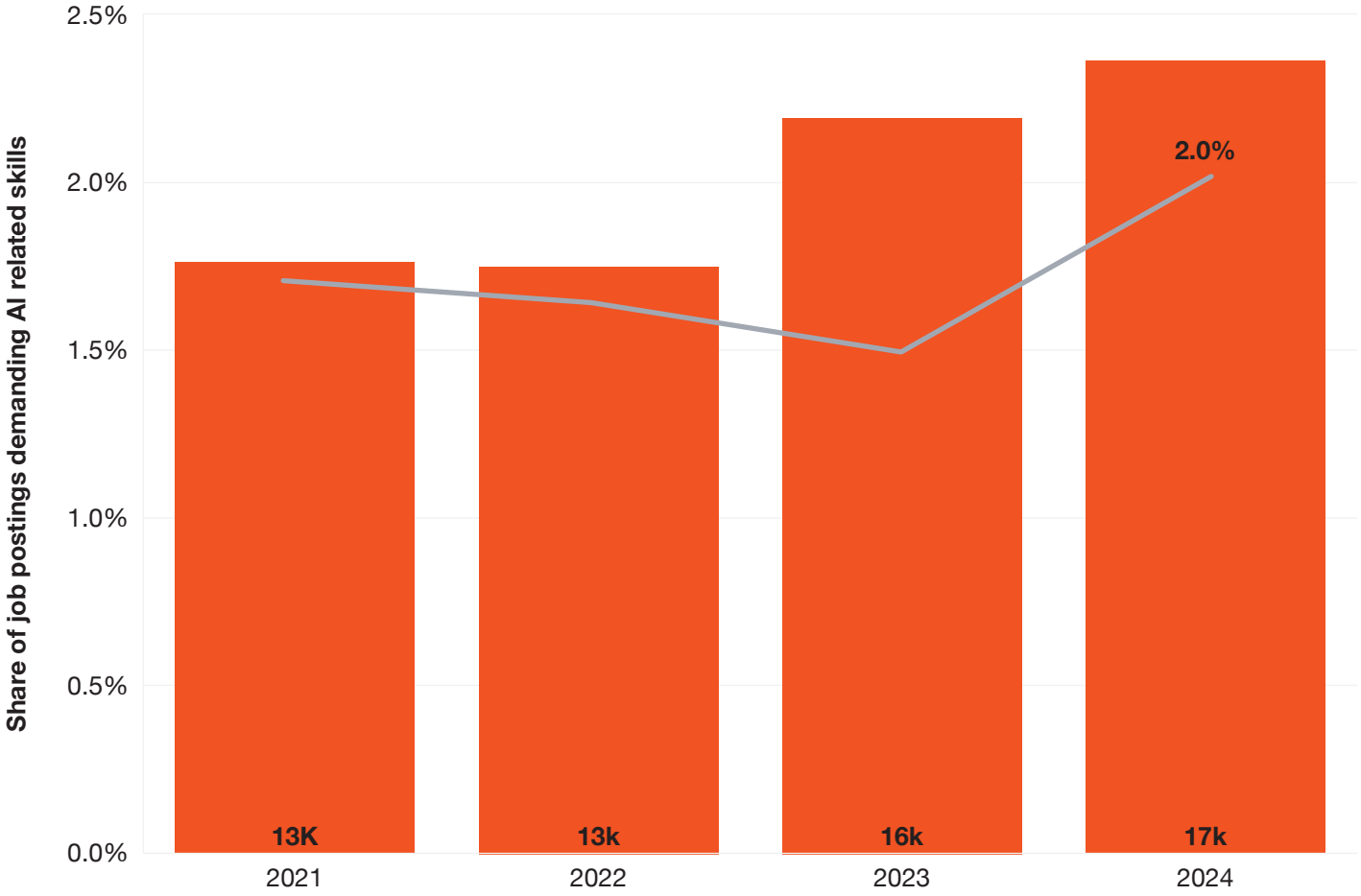
AI is helping to democratise opportunity for people who lack the time or resources to obtain formal degrees. Employer demand for formal degrees is declining particularly quickly for jobs exposed to AI, especially jobs more highly automated by AI.

Please see the global findings report for more insights.

South Africa Insights

Given a weakening labour market in 2024, with fewer job postings overall, demand for roles requiring AI-related skills declined

Total number and share of job postings requiring AI related skills, South Africa, 2021-2024



Sources: PwC analysis, Lightcast data

Key findings

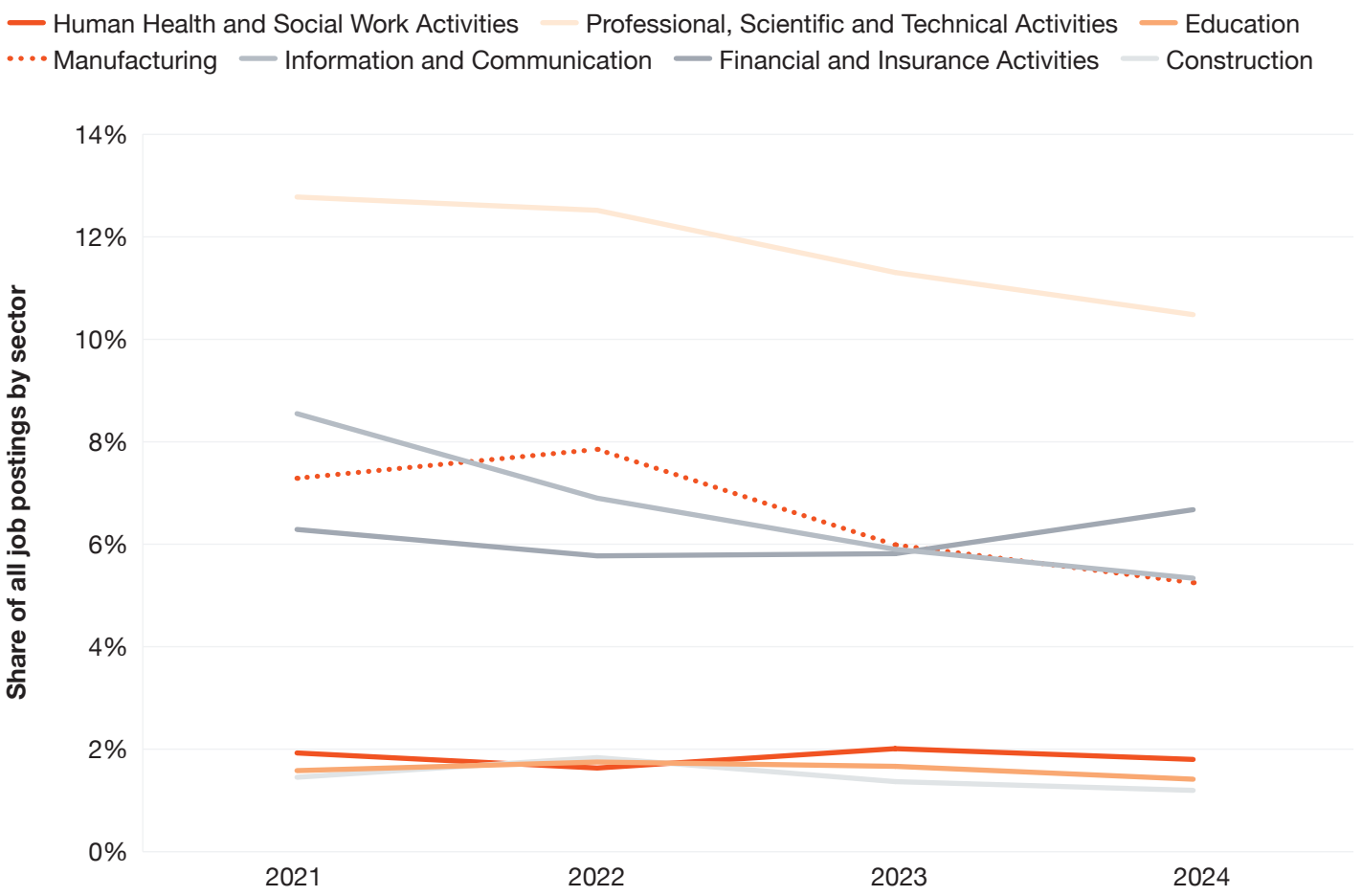
- The share of job postings requiring AI-related skills steadily increased from 2021 to 2024.
- This was also the case for the total number of AI jobs, which peaked at 17k in 2024.
- Despite a weaker South African job market with fewer roles being posted, the share of AI-related jobs increased significantly, with only a small drop in AI jobs postings. This indicates relative strength in the demand for AI skills

Notes

- We use Lightcast data for jobs postings, including associated skills.

The professional services sector leads job postings in South Africa at 11%, however has experienced reducing share over time

Share of all job postings by sector, South Africa, 2021-2024



Sources: PwC analysis, Lightcast data

Key findings

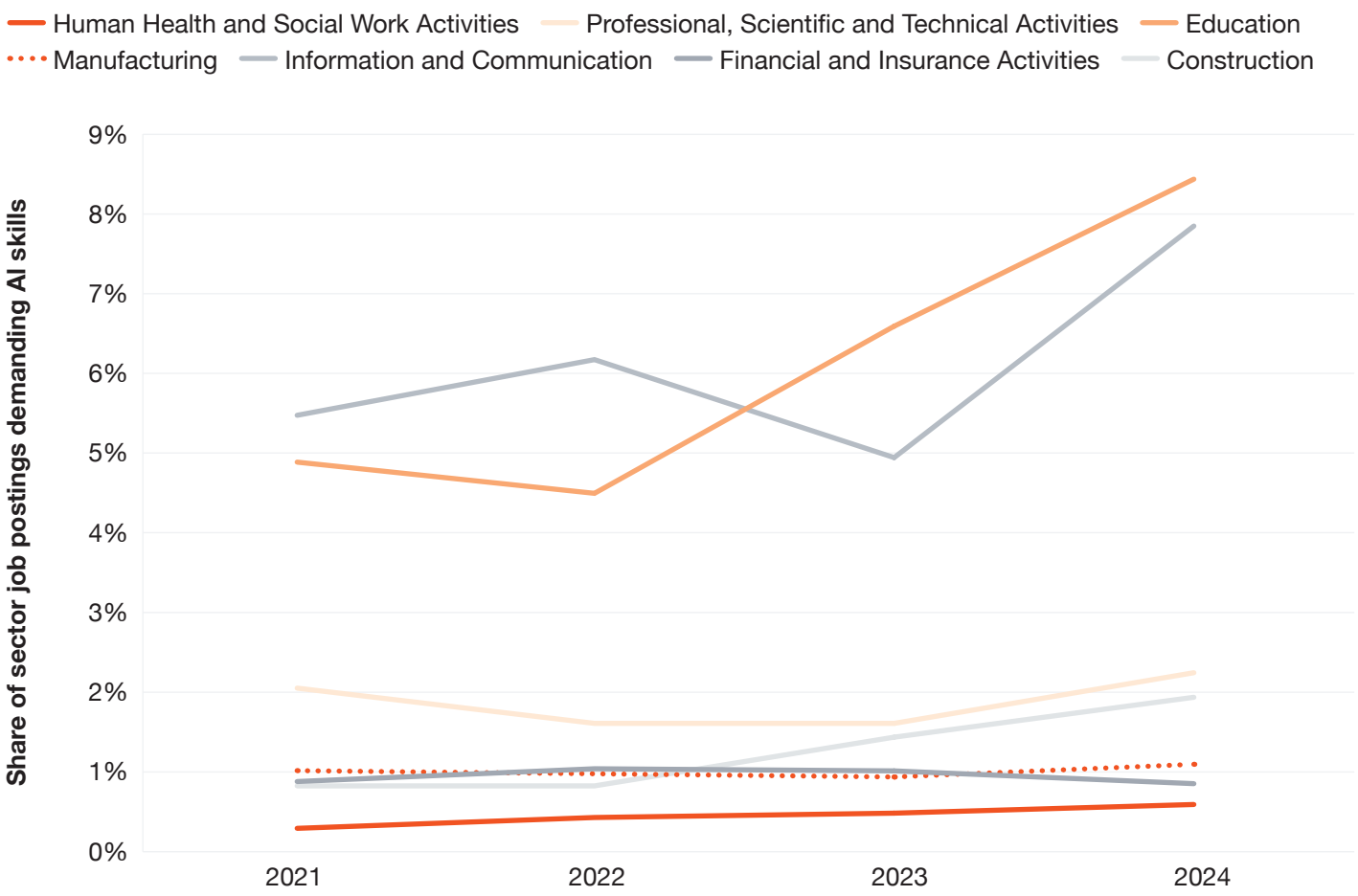
- The proportion of job vacancies in the Professional services sector has shrunk from 12.8% in 2021 to 10.5% in 2024
- The Financial and Insurance sector has grown steadily, rising from 6.3% in 2021 to 6.7% in 2024, surpassing ICT and manufacturing to become the second largest sector by share of job posts

Notes

- The number of uncategorised jobs changes over time, causing shifts in the shares of other sectors in our data.

Demand for AI skills is rising fast in Education and Information & Communication, but growth in other sectors remains slow

Share of AI job postings by sector, South Africa, 2021-2024



Sources: PwC analysis, Lightcast data

Key findings

- The education sector has seen the largest increase in share of job postings requiring AI skills, from 4.9% in 2021 to 8.5% in 2024. This is closely followed by ICT, rising from 5.5% to 7.9% over the same period.
- Other sectors are lagging behind in AI skill demands, with professional services only having AI skill requirements in 2.2% of posts as of 2024. Over 3x lower than either Education or ICT

Notes

- We use Lightcast data for jobs postings, including associated skills and sectors

Job numbers in GenAI exposed occupations have grown 32% since 2021 - including growth in virtually every type of occupation

Cumulative growth rate in all job postings against exposure to AI, South Africa, 2021-2024

Sources: PwC analysis, Lightcast data

Key findings

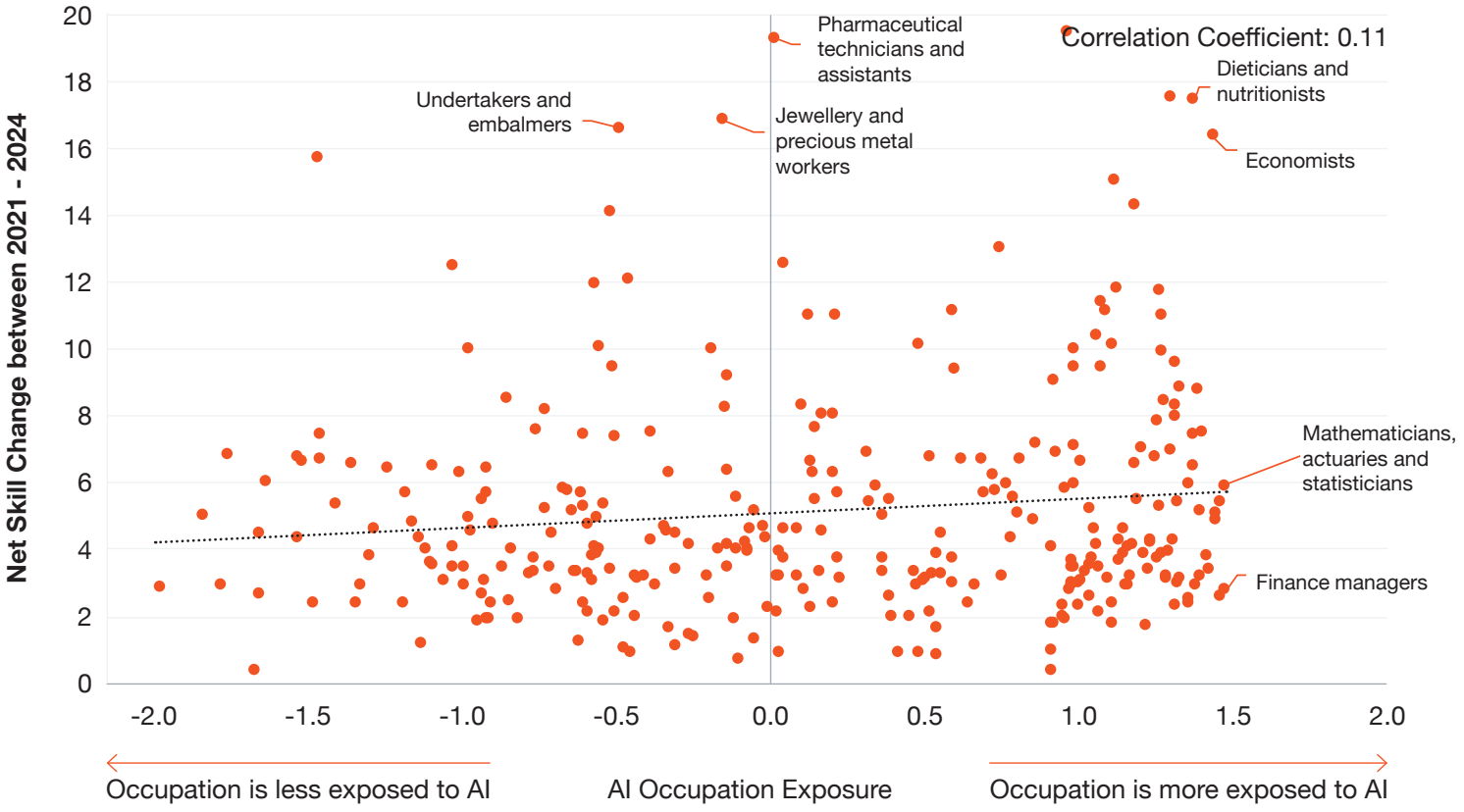
- In South Africa, being associated with higher AI Operational Exposure (AIOE) is linked with slower growth in job postings between 2021 and 2024
- Overall, the average change in job postings is positive, at 23%, and while lower AI exposed jobs have seen lower growth they have still grown in aggregate

Notes

- This metric uses ISCO codes at the 2-digit level, whereas the remainder of our analysis uses the 4-digit level
- We remove all errors and observations with zeros to filter the data

Occupations which are most exposed to AI have seen a 1.32x greater change in demanded skills

Cumulative growth rate in all job postings against the projected exposure to Generative AI, South Africa, 2021-2024



Sources: PwC analysis, Lightcast data

Key findings

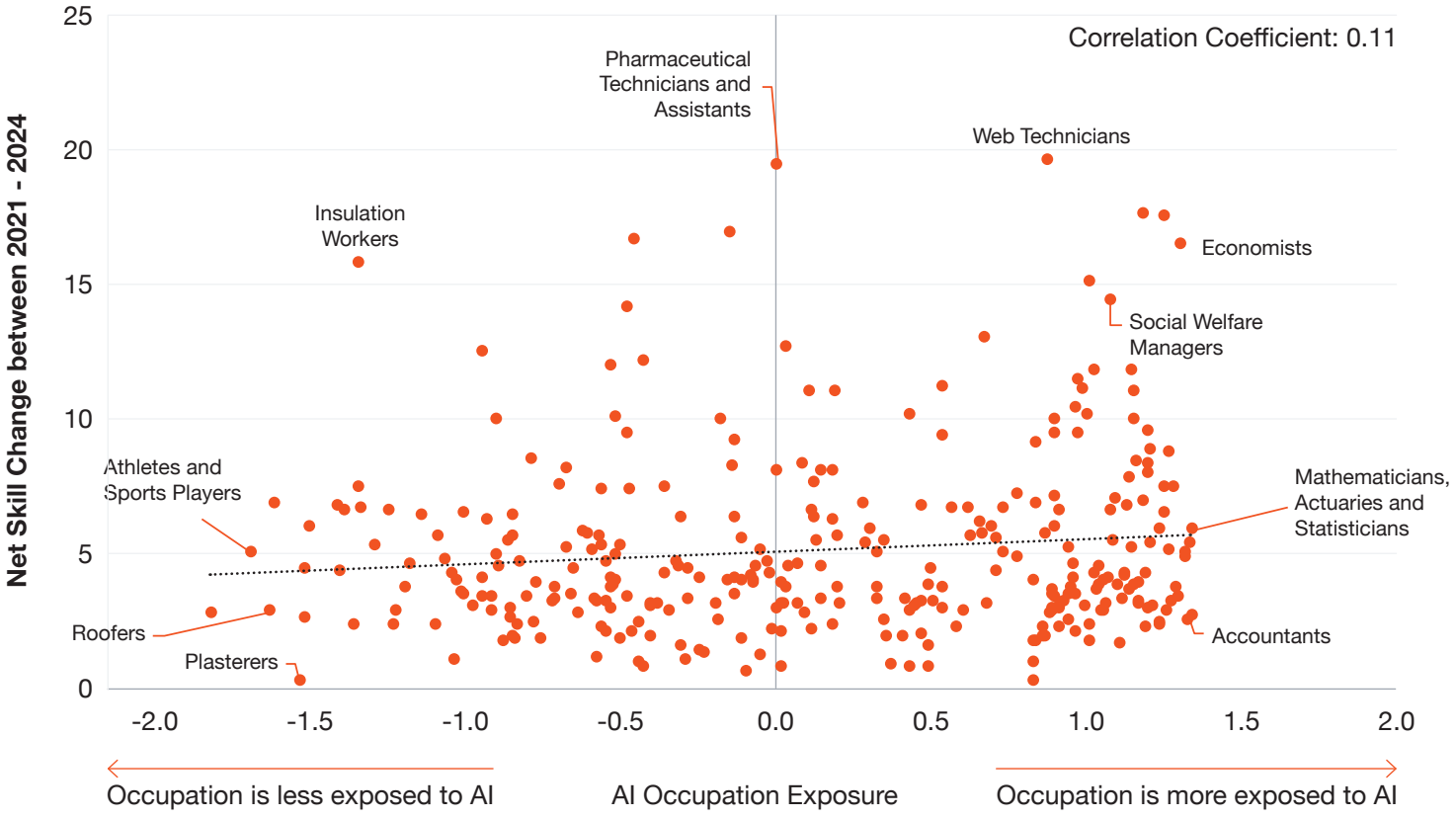
- Occupations with higher AI exposure show a positive correlation with net skill change from 2021 to 2024
- Occupations with low AI exposure experience an average net skill change of 4.5 compared to the top quartile's 6.0, suggesting that roles less affected by AI have remained more stable in their skill requirements.
- The top quartile experiences a 37% higher rate of net skill change compared to the bottom quartile, further highlighting the greater impact of AI on skill evolution in highly exposed occupations.

Notes

- We remove all errors and remove all observations with zeros to filter the data.
- Net skill change is measured as the change in frequency of skills required in the job posting
- Most exposed and least exposed are defined as the top and bottom quartiles

Occupations which are most exposed to AI have seen a 1.32x greater change in demanded skills

Net change in the number of skills demanded against AI exposure, South Africa, 2021-2024



Sources: PwC analysis, Lightcast data

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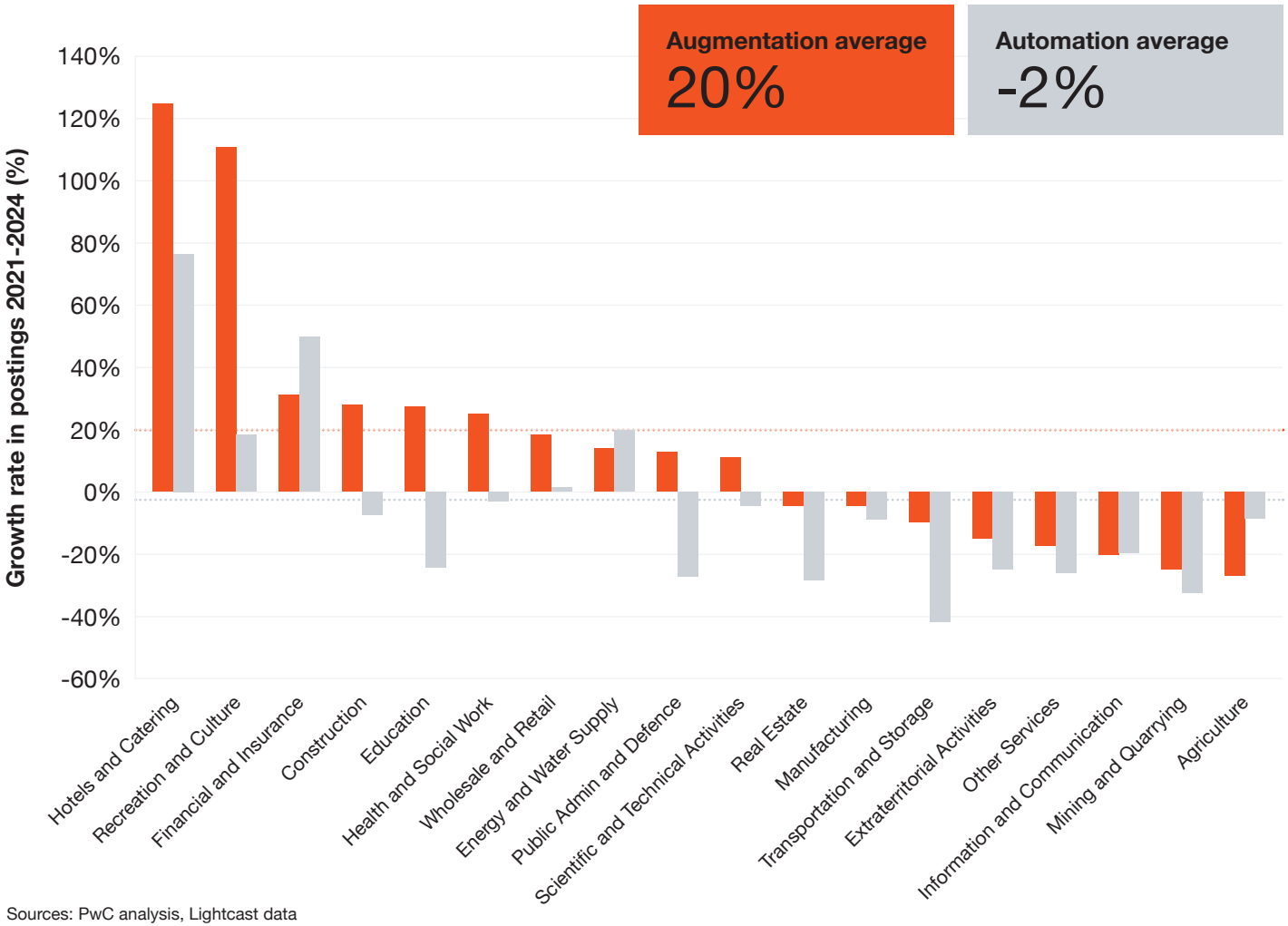
AI-augmented jobs have grown while automated jobs have declined

Growth rate in postings by sector for augmented and automated jobs, South Africa, 2021-2024



Sources: PwC analysis, Lightcast data

Key findings

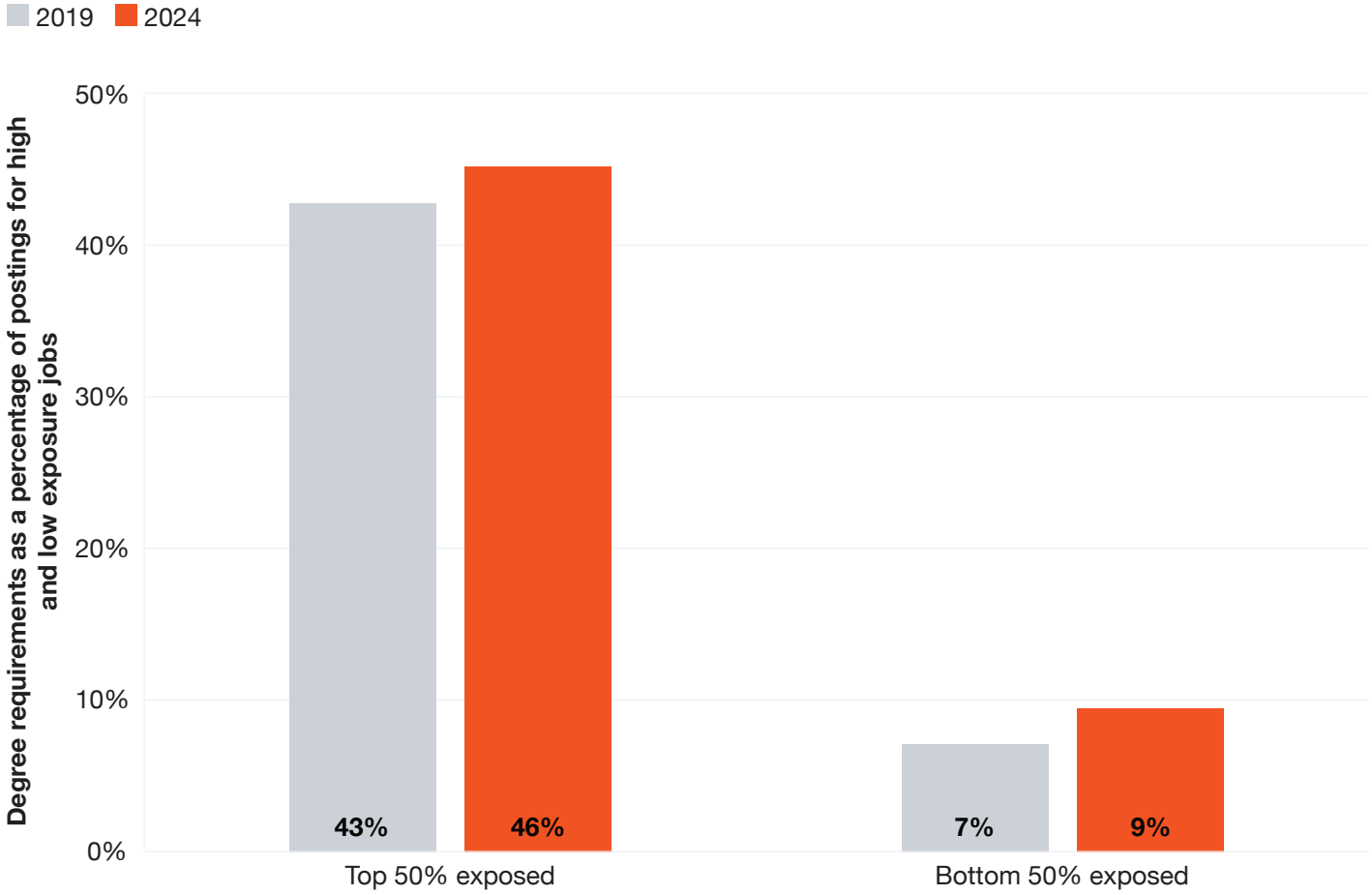
- Augmentation exposed jobs have seen more job growth / less job loss than automation exposed jobs across almost all sectors, reflecting demand for workers who are enhanced by AI tools.
- The hotel and recreation sectors have seen strong growth across both automation and augmentation jobs, this reflects strong growth within the tourism industry within South Africa which, despite covid dampening global tourism demand, had well exceeded 2019 levels by 2024.

Notes

- After filtering, observations are categorised by Augmented, Automated, or Neither. We remove observations labelled as Neither.
- We remove the sector labelled Unknown from the graph.

Degree requirements for the most AI exposed jobs have risen to 47% while less exposed jobs hit 10% in 2024

Degree requirements for jobs with high and low AI exposure, South Africa, 2021-2024



Sources: PwC analysis, Lightcast data

Key findings

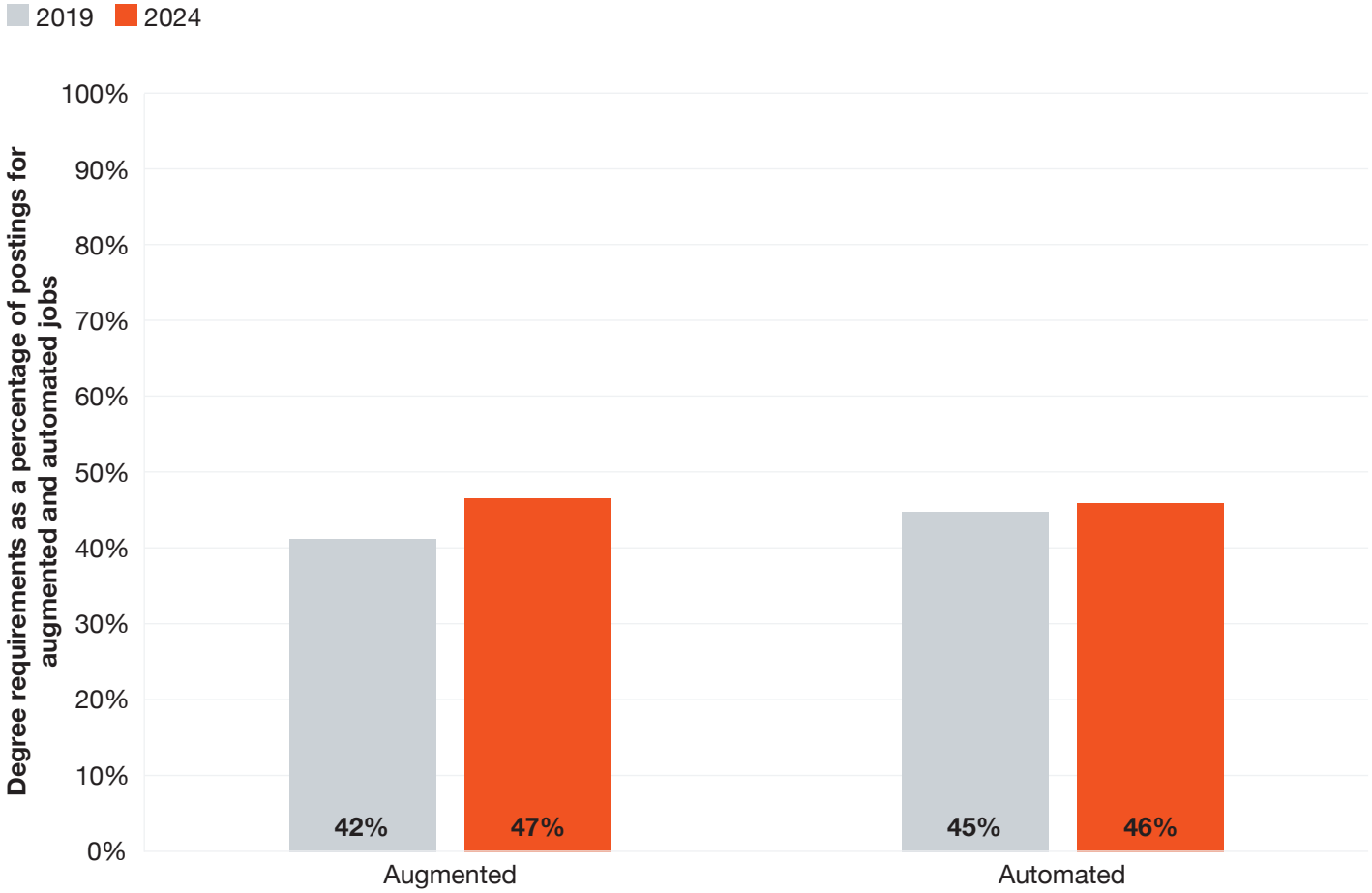
- Jobs with high AI exposure in South Africa have seen an increase in degree requirements, rising 3pp from 43% in 2019 to 46% in 2024.
- Jobs with lower AI exposure have seen a increase in degree requirements, rising 2pp from 7% in 2019 to 9% in 2024.
- Jobs in the top half of exposure now require a degree almost five times as often as those in the bottom half.

Notes

- Job postings are only classified as degree jobs if it is explicitly listed in the posting
- High exposure (top 50% exposed) is defined as jobs in the top half by AIOE

Degree requirements for jobs more exposed to augmentation have risen to 47%, remaining higher than for automated jobs

Degree requirements for jobs more exposed to Augmentation and Automation, South Africa, 2021-2024



Sources: PwC analysis, Lightcast data

Key findings

- Jobs exposed to augmentation have seen rising degree requirements between 2019 and 2024, increasing from 42% of postings to 47% of postings.
- Similarly, jobs exposed to automation also require degrees more often (46%) than they did in 2019 (45%)
- The majority of augmented and automated jobs in South Africa no longer require education.

Notes

- After filtering, observations are categorised by Augmented, Automated, or Neither. We remove observations labelled as Neither.
- Job postings are only classified as degree jobs if it is explicitly listed in the posting

Due to data limitations these metrics are not presented for South Africa

Unavailable metrics:

- Number of jobs postings relative to 2012 split by quartile AI exposure is unavailable due to data not being available from 2012
- Degree requirements as a percentage of postings for AI jobs and all jobs is unavailable due to data not being available from at least 2019
- Net skill change for automated and augmented jobs by sector is unavailable due to many sectors not having a significant sample size

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