



Indeed Hiring Lab

Global Labor Market and Workforce Trends

Presented by Indeed,
a Recruit Holdings subsidiary

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Chief Economist
Indeed

Labor markets worldwide are caught between the promise of an AI-driven, transformative future and the realities of an uncertain, stagnant present. Labor demand has cooled, and risks stalling without renewed dynamism. Structural pressures — aging populations, declining participation, and limited mobility — are worsening. AI offers a chance to relieve these pressures and amplify what workers can do, but its impact so far has been modest and uneven.

Indeed Hiring Lab research shows that AI's full effect is still emerging. Adoption is advancing quickly in large tech and professional services firms, but much more slowly across the broader economy. Virtually every job will eventually be touched by AI to some degree, but the current tools are better at enhancing existing skills and reshaping tasks rather than entirely reinventing work itself.

Meanwhile, the global economy feels unsteady. Inflation remains high in many markets, shifting trade policies are rewiring supply chains, and migration is tightening despite employers' hiring challenges. Affordability is deteriorating and access to essential services is under strain. Even in an AI-enabled future, aging populations will require more hands-on labor — but today, critical industries such as construction and care face severe worker shortages.

AI's potential is immense — but potential is not progress. Realizing it will require balancing innovation with present needs, keeping people at the center of productivity, and ensuring that technological gains translate into shared opportunity across people within and beyond our borders.

In times of uncertainty, data is a compass. Indeed's real-time insights from employers and job seekers reveal where opportunities are growing, where skills are scarce, and where mismatches could impede recovery. At the Hiring Lab, it always starts with the data. It lets us look around corners and interpret the world we live in. It is our mission to share these insights and help others make better decisions with data.



Indeed provides the tools, data, and insights companies need to anticipate and adapt to the future of work.

About Indeed

Indeed, a subsidiary of Recruit Holdings, is **the world's #1 job site**¹ and the leading global two-sided talent marketplace. With 27 hires made per minute, more people find jobs on Indeed than anywhere else.

Across Indeed and Glassdoor, we see how people search for work, how companies hire, and how roles and skills are evolving across industries and geographies. With over 635 million Job Seeker Profiles and 3.3 million employers, Indeed has a front-row seat to what's changing and what comes next.

About Indeed Hiring Lab

As the economic research arm of Indeed, Hiring Lab is driven by a team of leading economists and data scientists who provide real-time thought leadership on global labor market conditions and emerging workforce trends.



About Recruit Holdings

Recruit is a global technology company transforming the world of work, connecting millions of job seekers and employers around the world.



Global Labor Market Overview

- **Global labor markets cooled but did not collapse over the past year.**
But further slowdowns may mean that currently cool conditions could quickly turn cold.
- **While today's conditions are generally stable, longer-term structural challenges are growing.**
Populations are aging, immigration is slowing and labor supply shortages are already a concern in some areas.
- **Demographics may shrink the workforce, but AI will help expand what the workforce can do.**
AI adoption is growing quickly, but remains limited and uneven.

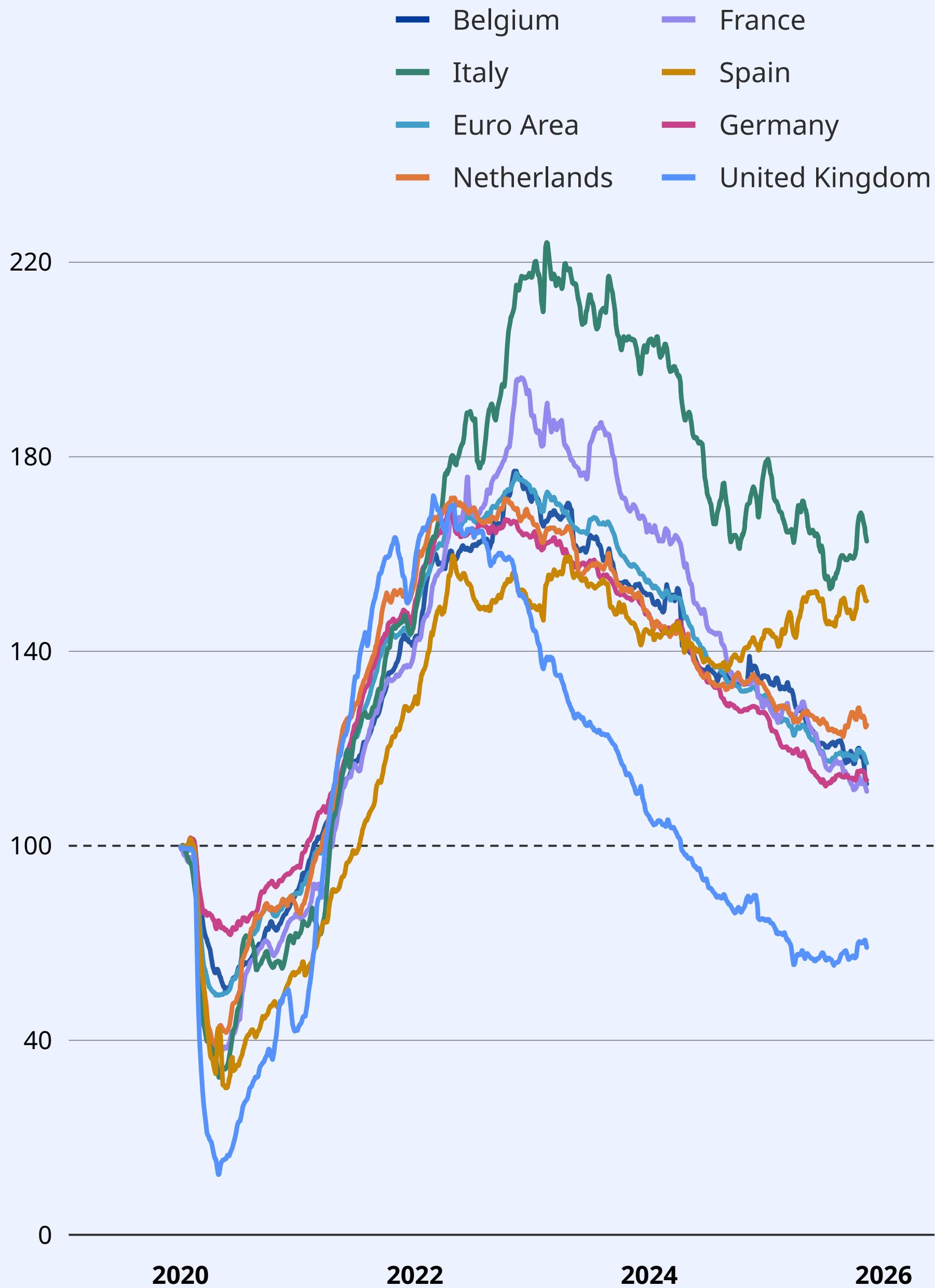
Job postings in US and Canada are close to pre-pandemic levels, but remain elevated in Mexico

Index (100 = February 1, 2020), data through December 12, 2025



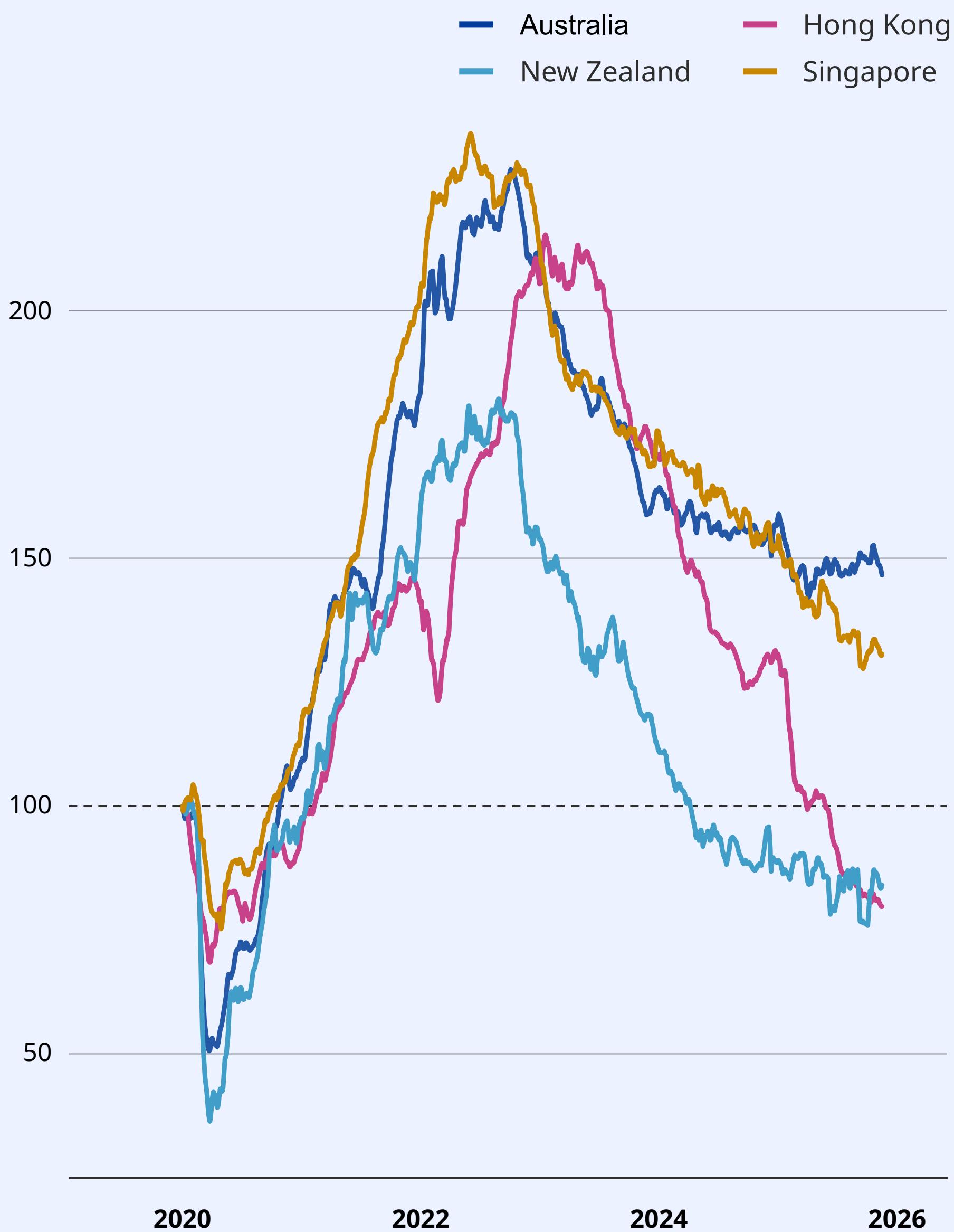
In Europe, hiring demand is highest in Italy and lowest in the UK

Index (100 = February 1, 2020), data through December 12, 2025



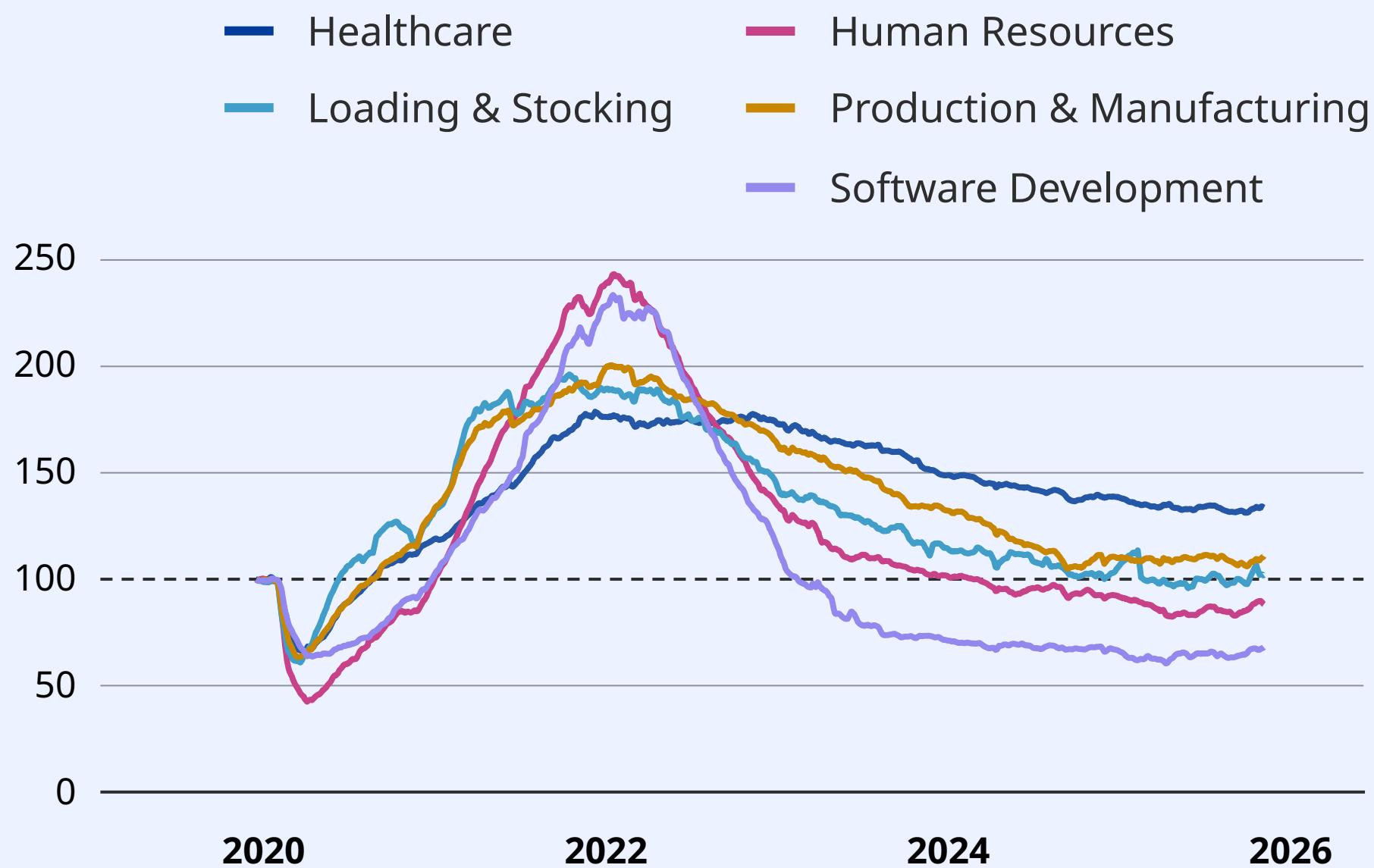
In the Asia/Pacific region, job postings in Australia and Singapore remain higher than pre-pandemic levels

Index (100 = February 1, 2020), data through December 12, 2025



In the US, healthcare-related postings are well above pre-pandemic levels

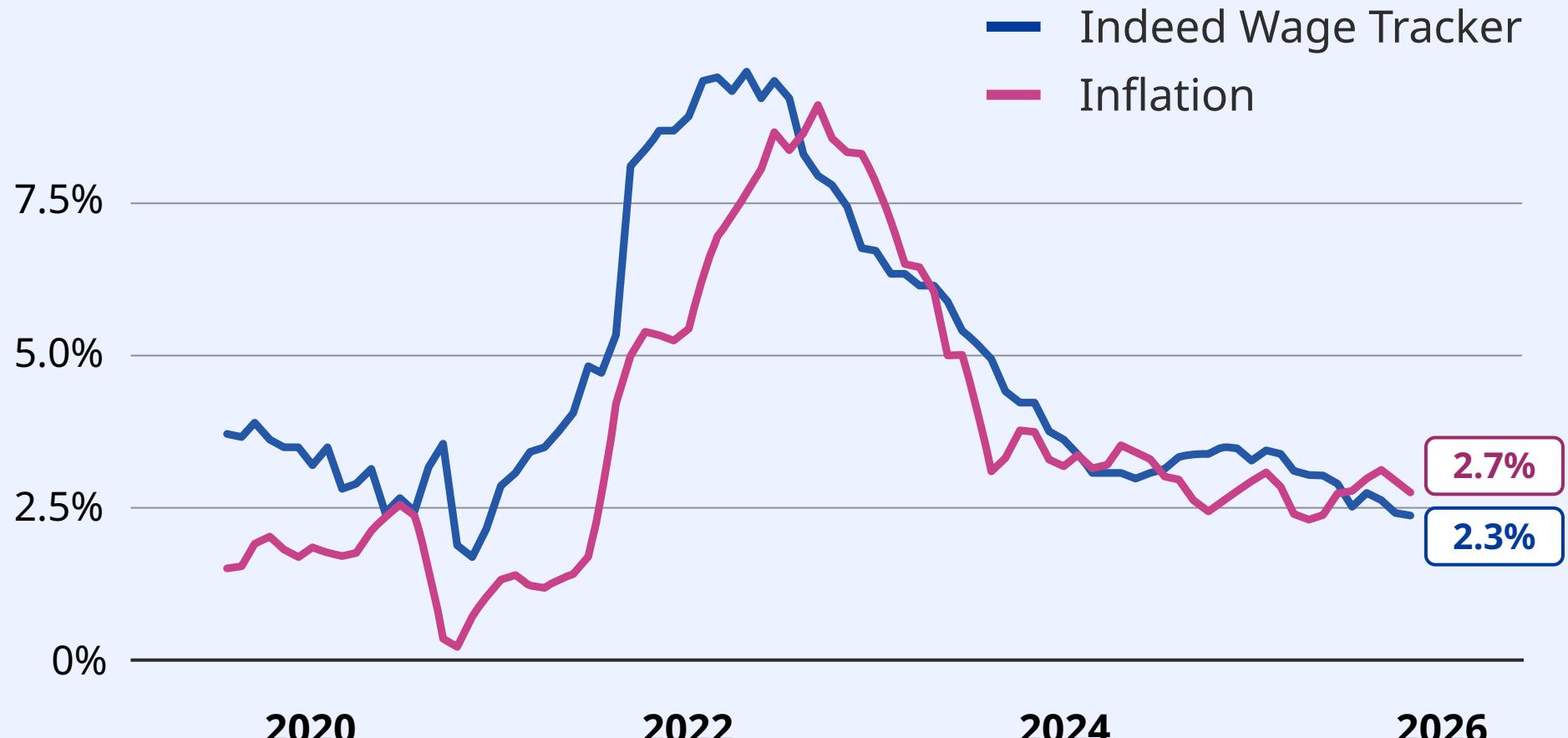
U.S. data, Index (100 = February 1, 2020), through December 12, 2025



Source: Indeed

US inflation is once again growing faster than posted wages

Year-over-year growth



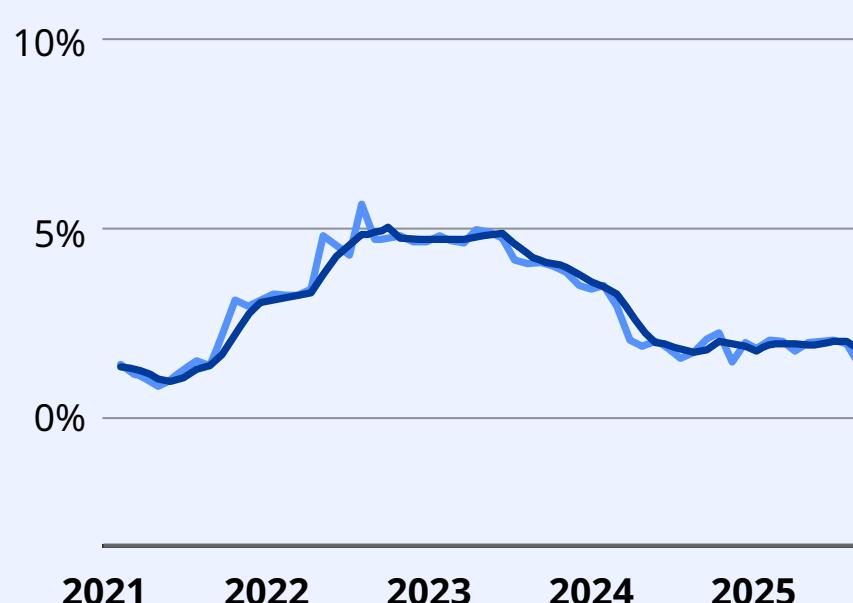
Source: Indeed Wage Tracker, Consumer Price Index
(January 2019 – November 2025)

Posted wage growth is broadly stable across Europe

Year-over-year growth in posted wages, to November 2025

— Wage Growth YoY
— Wage Growth YoY (3 month avg)

France



Germany



Ireland



Netherlands



Spain

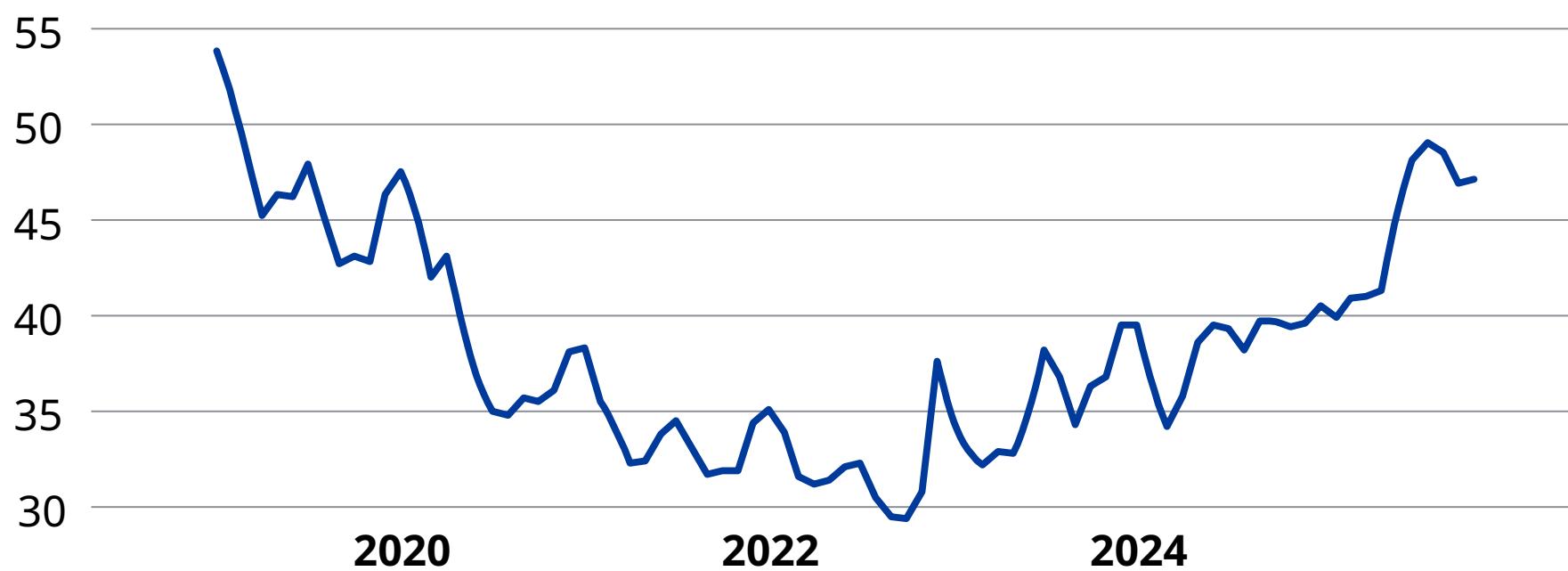


United Kingdom



Time-to-hire has risen as the US labor market has loosened

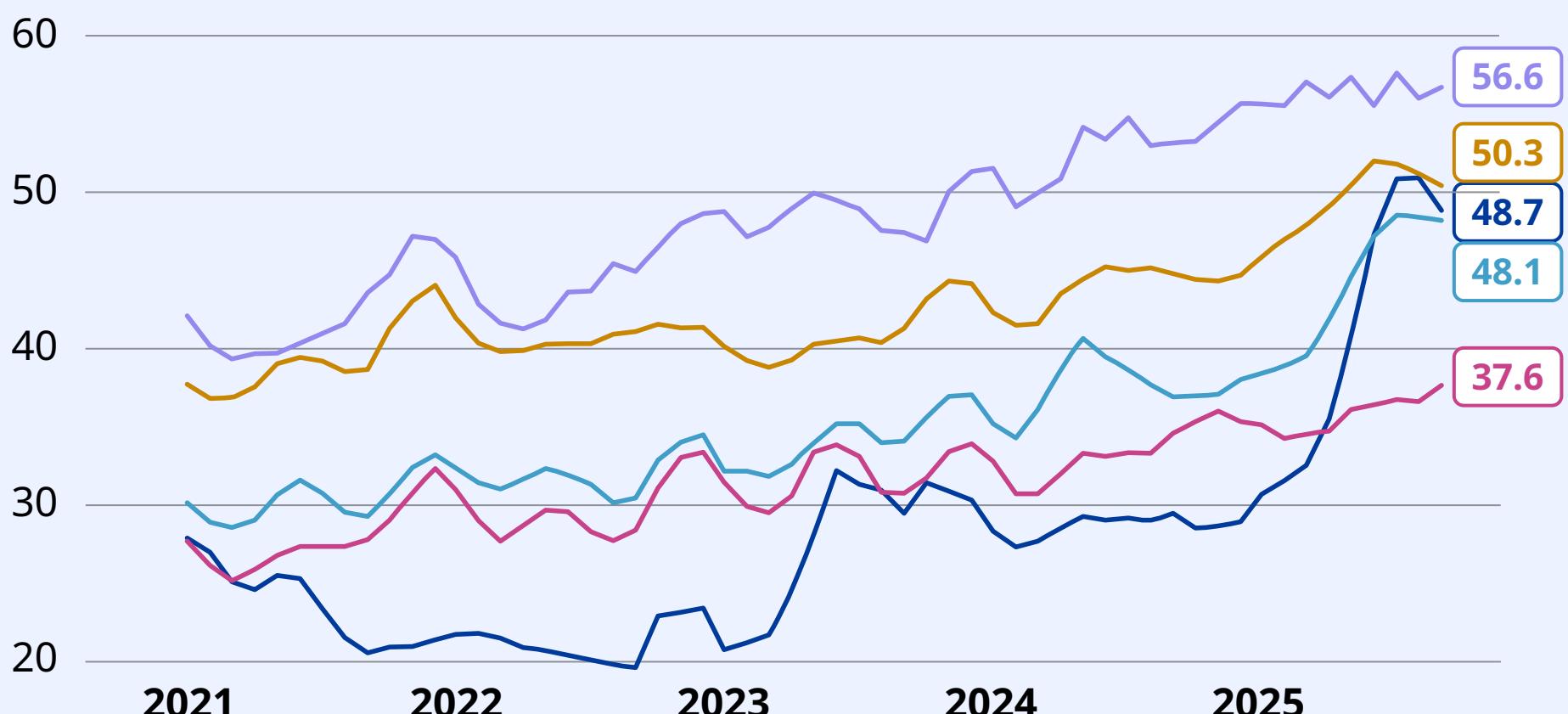
Days between job posting and hire, through November 2025



Source: Indeed

Time to hire is rising across many occupations

3-month moving average, measured in days
(January 2021 – November 2025)



Source: Indeed



Immigration and Future Labor Shortages

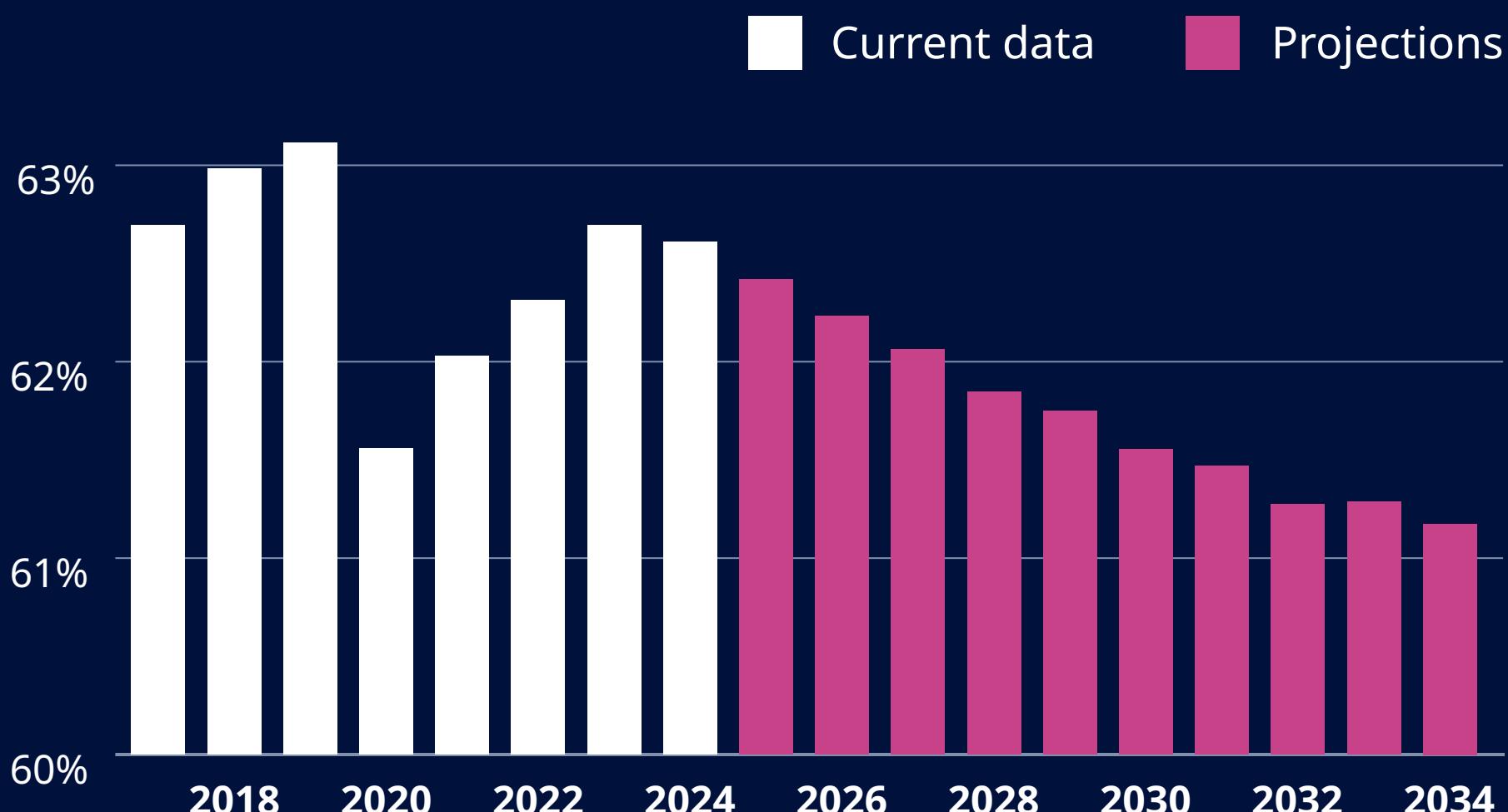
The working populations of many advanced economies are rapidly aging, which will eventually contribute to worker shortages and declining workforce participation. It is unclear where workers will come from to help fill the gaps.

Immigrants have traditionally been a good source of young labor in many advanced economies, but overall job seeker interest in work outside their home countries has fallen as immigration policies have tightened.

The decline in immigration is one factor helping to drive up time to hire. Time to hire has broadly risen faster in industries with a higher share of immigrant workers (i.e., food & beverage roles).

US labor force participation is expected to continue declining

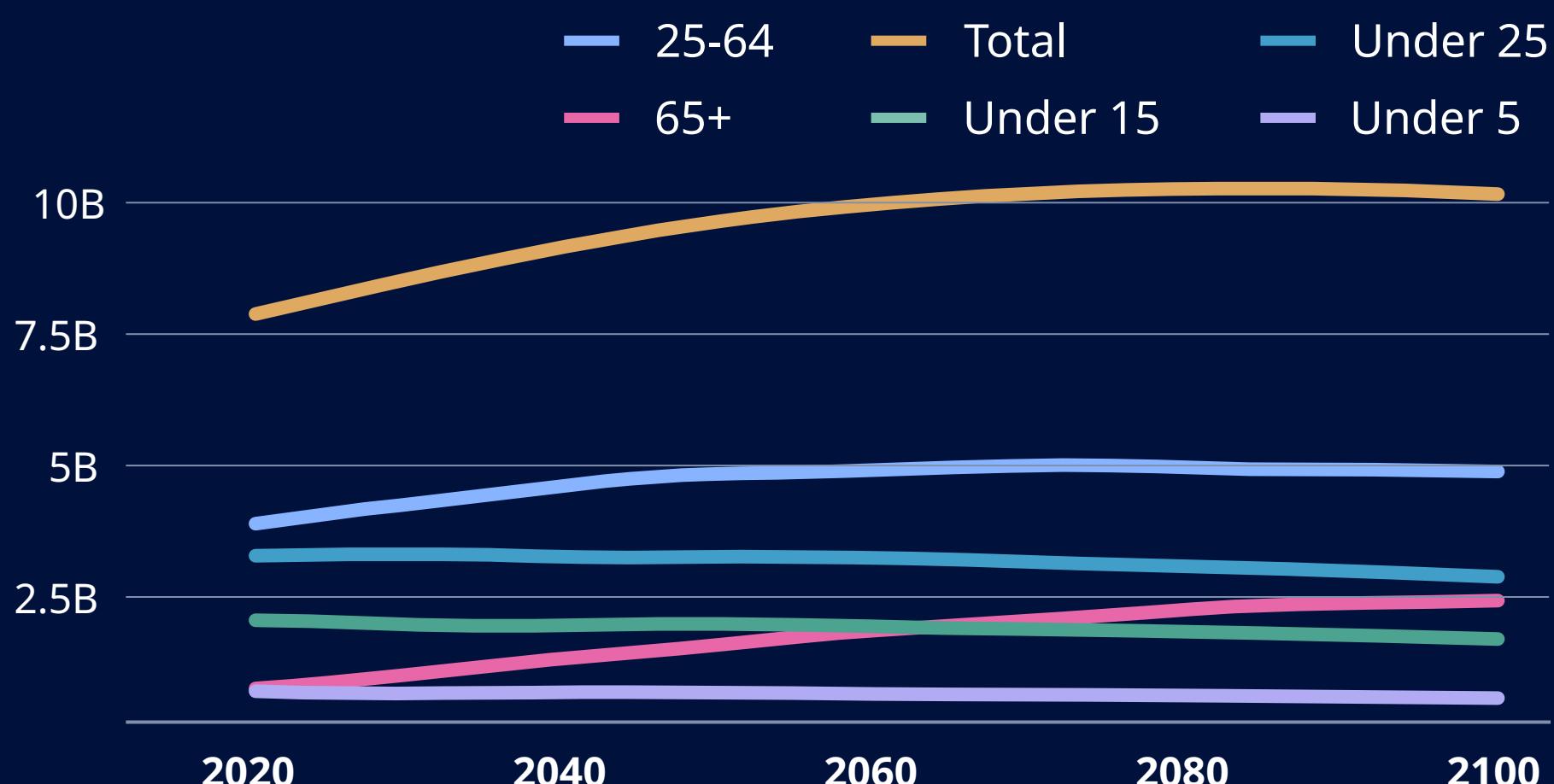
Projected and actual Labor Force Participation Rate, 2017 – 2034, US data



Source: Author's calculations using US Bureau of Labor Statistics data and Congressional Budget Office projections

The number of people aged 65+ is expected to grow worldwide, while younger cohorts shrink

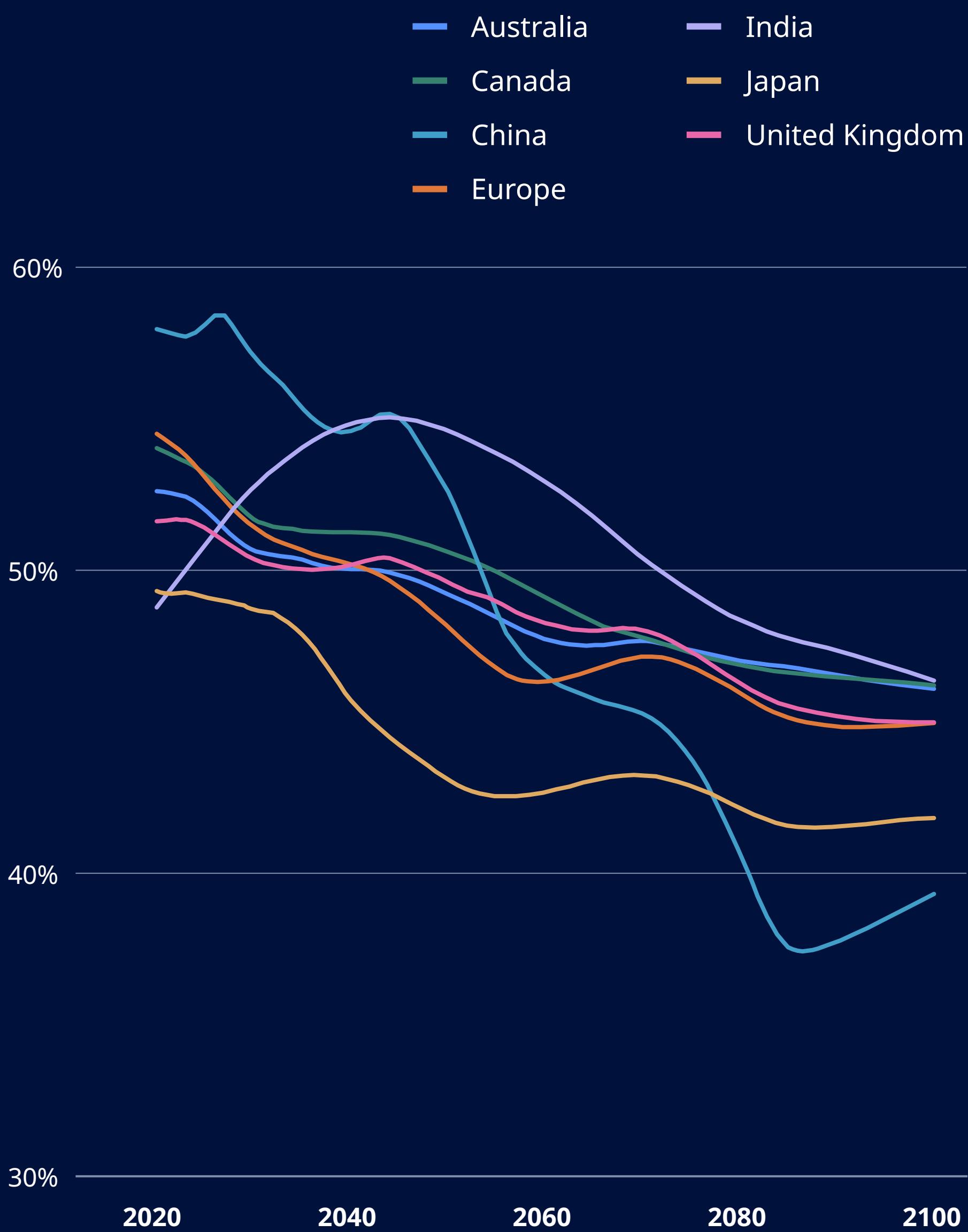
World population by age group



Source: UN, World Population Prospects (2024)

The share of prime-age workers is expected to fall dramatically in many large economies

Percentage of working-age population

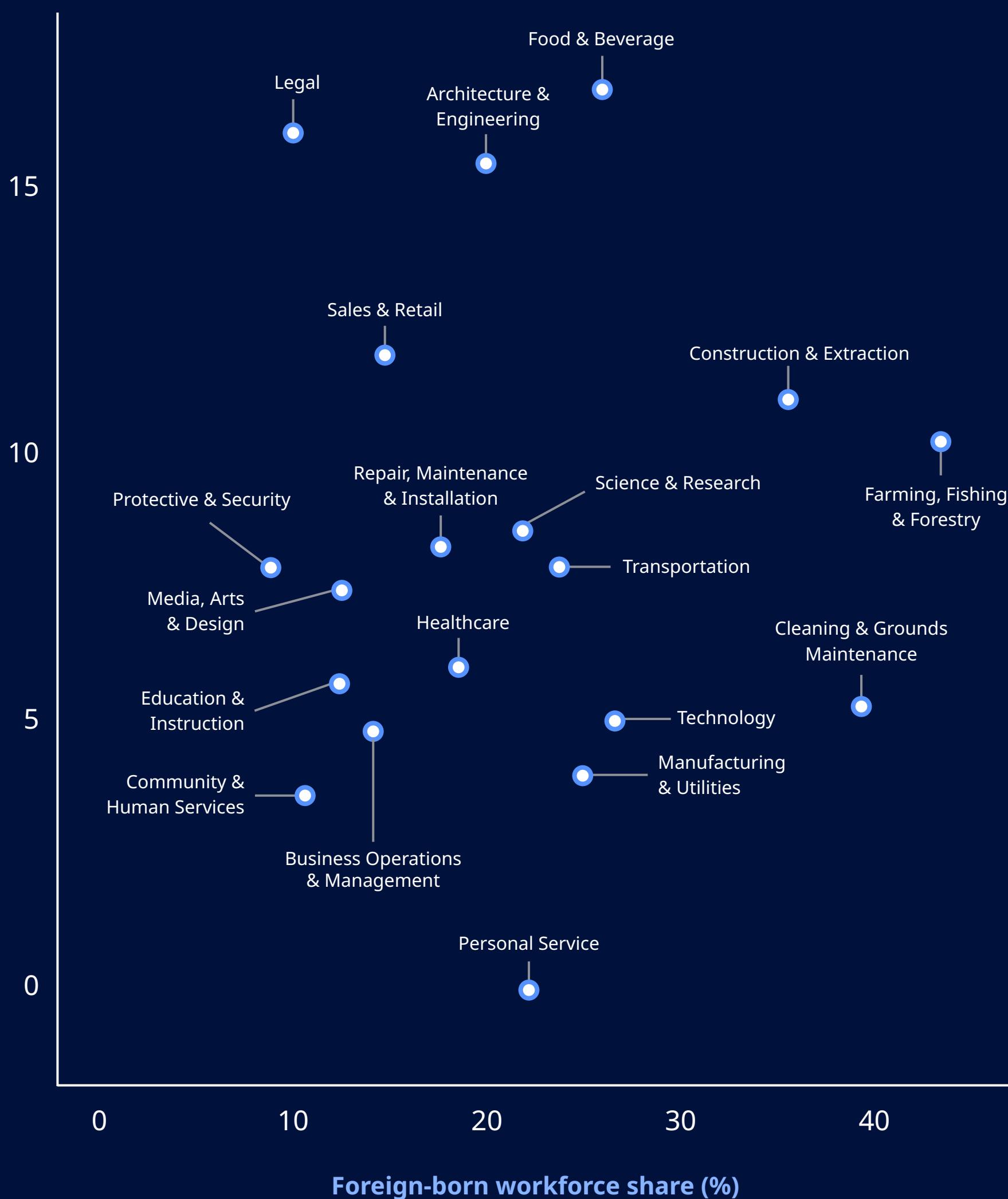


Source: World Population Prospects, United Nations (UN), publisher: UN Population Division; Staff estimates, World Bank (WB)

Time-to-hire is rising slightly faster in sectors that tend to employ a higher-share of foreign-born workers

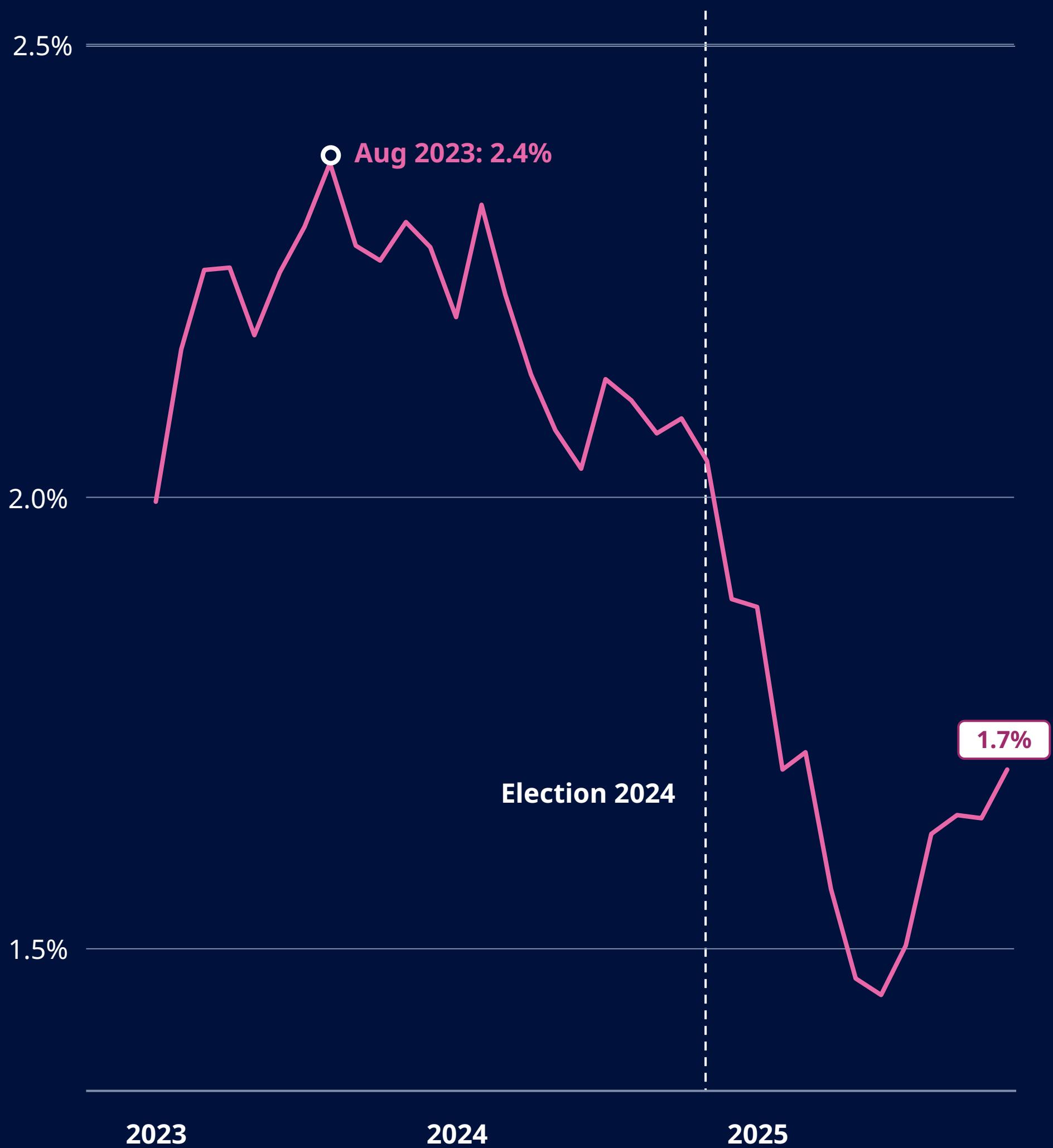
Increase in time to hire (days), November 2024 – November 2025, compared to immigrant workforce share, by industry

**Increase in Time to Hire
(November 2025 vs 2024)**



Foreign job seeker interest in US jobs started declining in mid-2023 but has been rising since May 2025

Share of total clicks on US job postings by job seekers abroad (by month), through November 2025



In the US, since January 2025...

-4.7%

Decrease in the share of job postings on Indeed that offer visa or green card sponsorship

-25%

Decrease in share of searches that contain visa sponsorship-related terms

-4.2%

Decrease in share of immigrants in the workforce

>1M

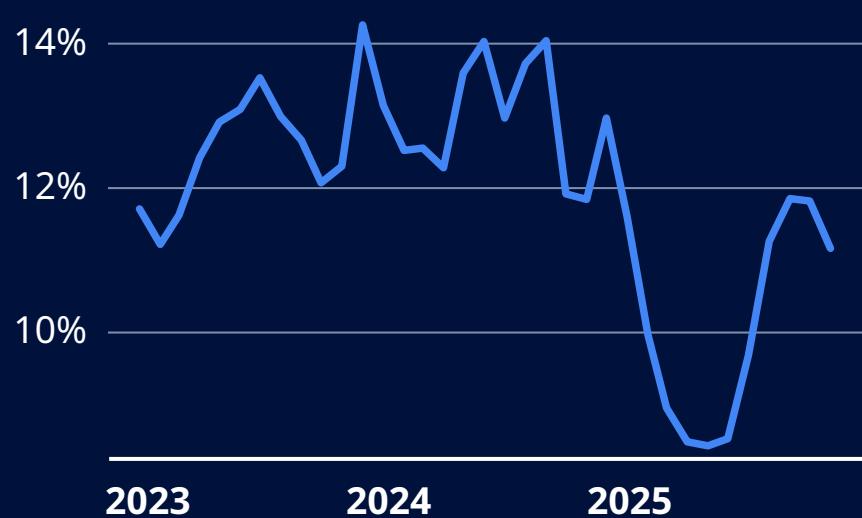
Fewer immigrants in the workforce

Sources: Indeed (share of postings mentioning visa sponsorship & share of searches containing visa keywords); US Bureau of Labor Statistics (share of immigrants in workforce & number of immigrants in workforce). All figures through November 2025.

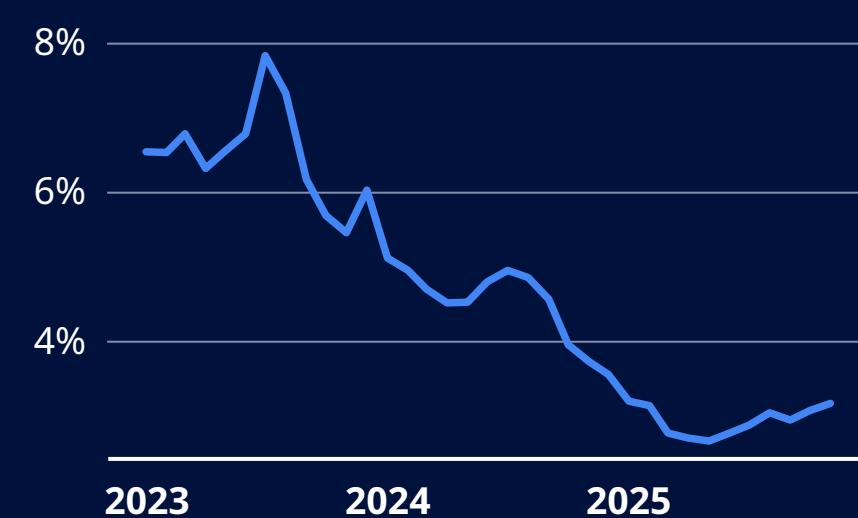
Foreign job seeker interest has been trending upwards across some countries, but remains below recent peaks

Share of total clicks on job postings by job seekers abroad (by month), through November 2025

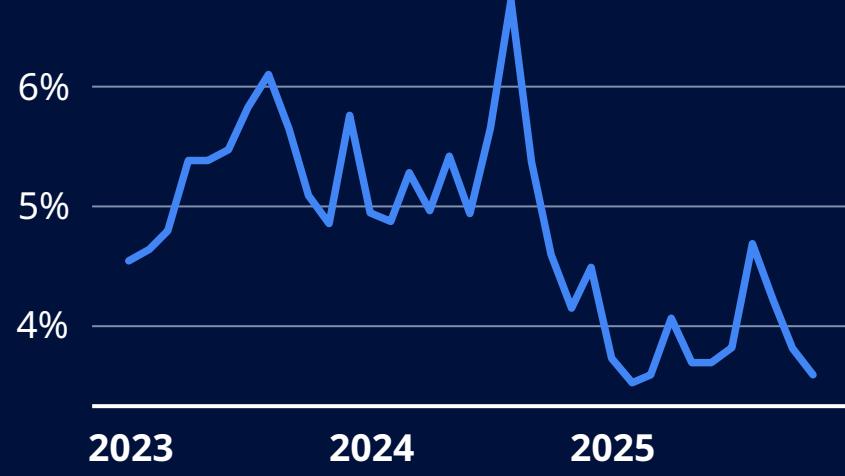
Australia



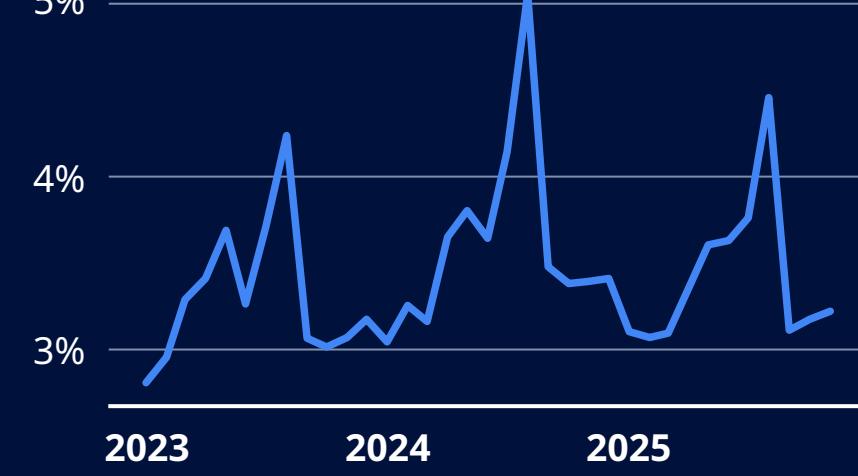
Canada



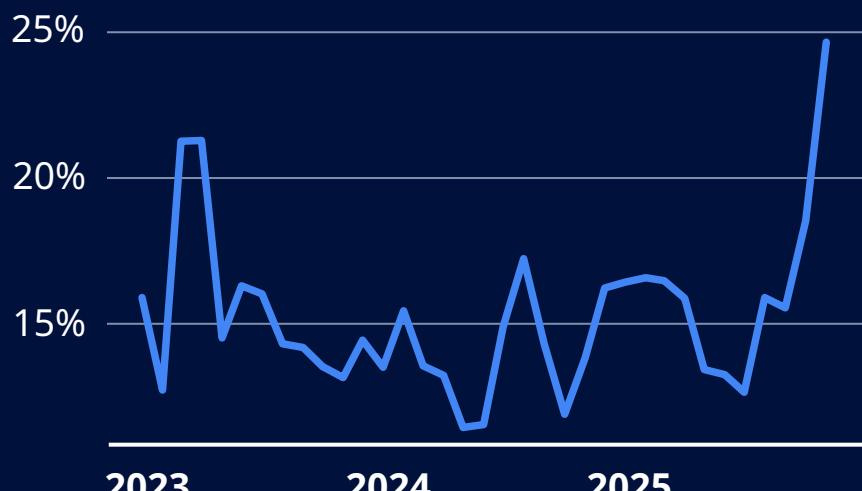
Germany



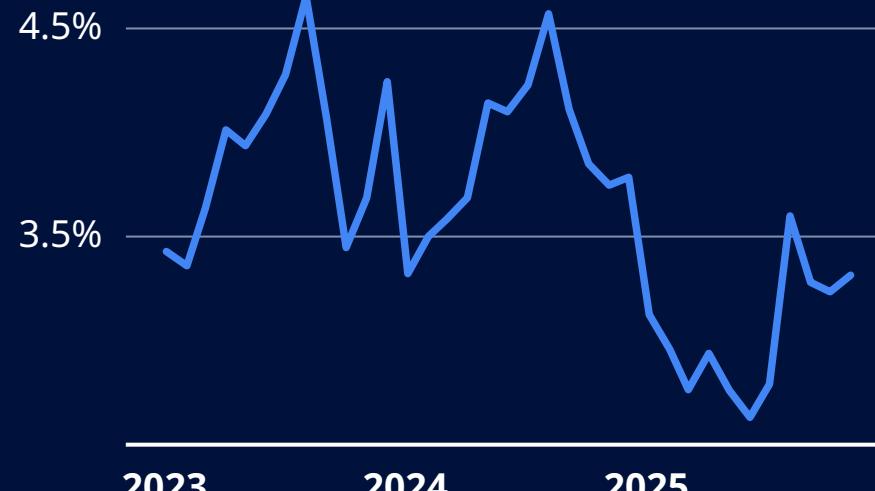
France



Singapore



United Kingdom





The Promise of AI

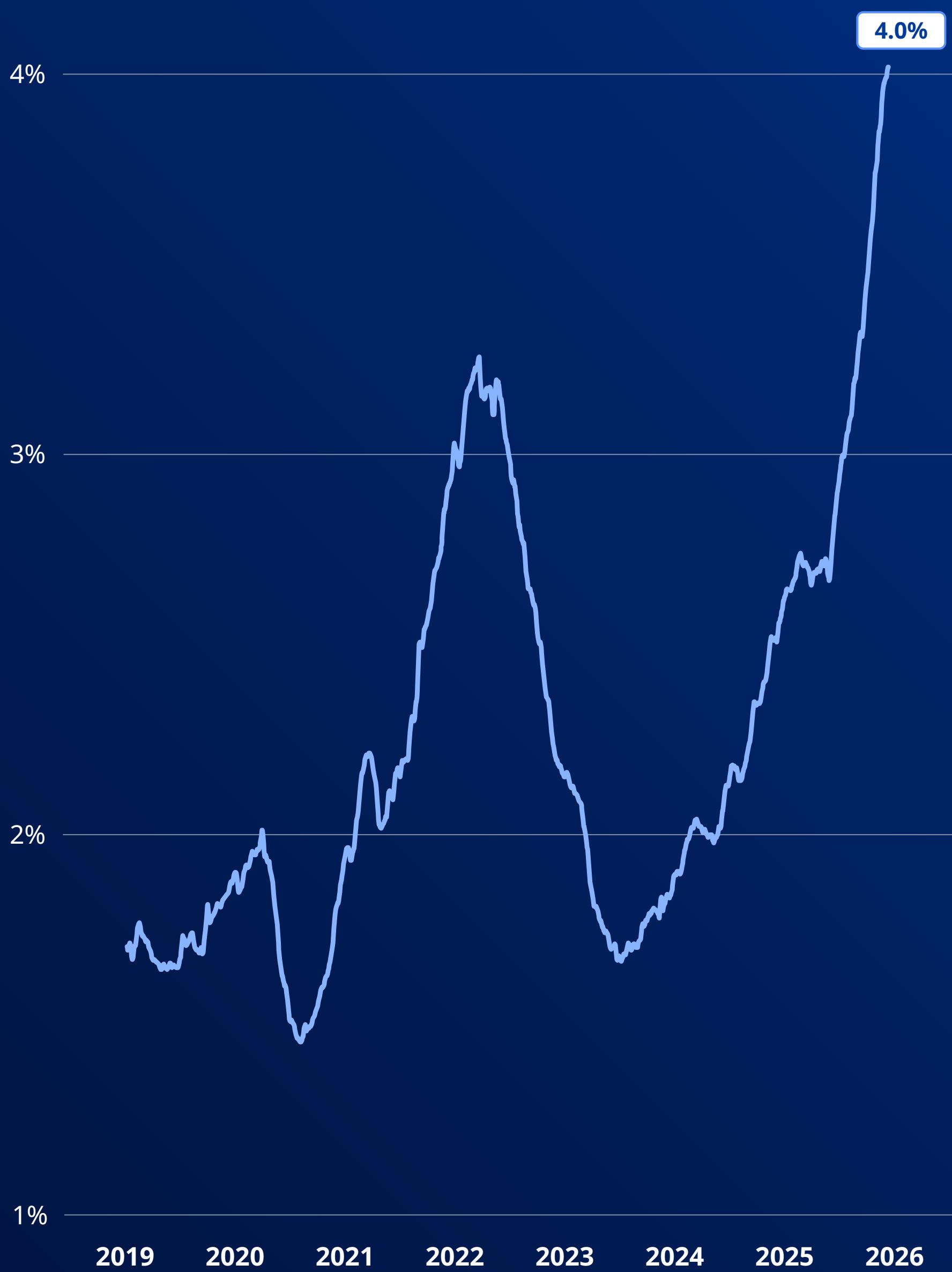
AI is beginning to reshape labor demand — not through job loss, but through job transformation. The future of work isn't about humans or machines — it's about what the two can achieve together.

AI adoption, while growing quickly, remains limited. Any meaningful impacts from AI will depend on whether and how businesses adopt and integrate AI tools.

Growing adoption of AI tools likely did not contribute much to the current slowdown in tech hiring demand, but it may be standing in the way of a full rebound.

AI mentions in US job postings remain low, but are growing quickly

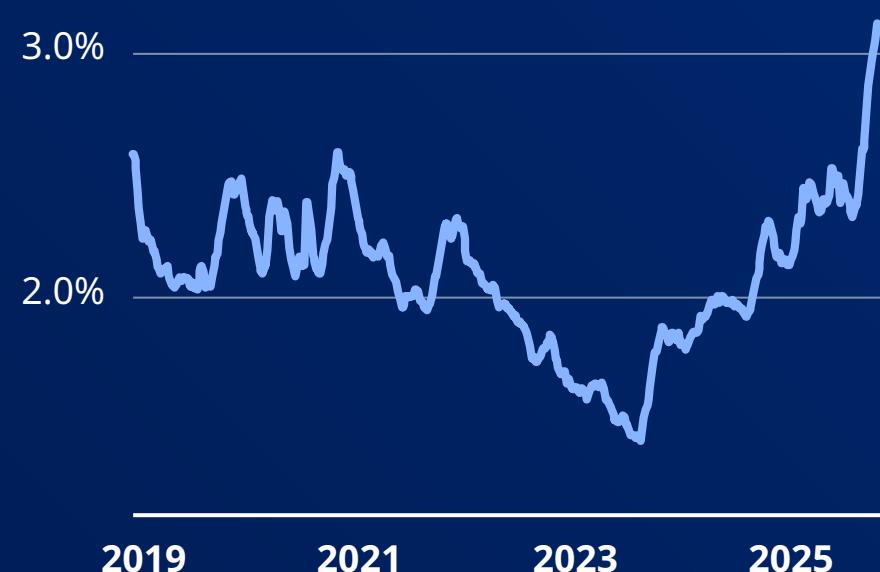
Job postings on Indeed containing AI terms as a share of all US job postings, January 2019 – November 2025



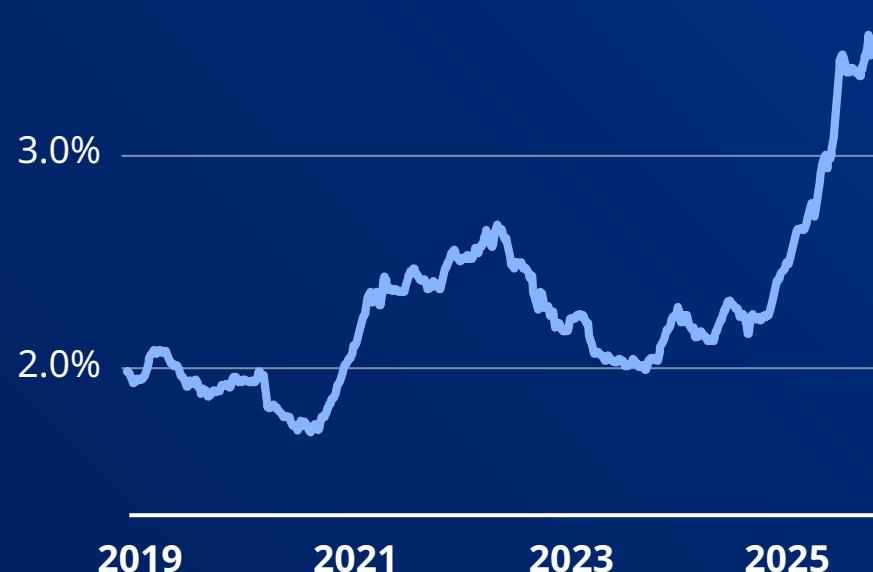
In Europe, AI adoption is high and growing in the UK and Ireland

Share of job postings containing AI terms, 7-day moving average, to November 2025

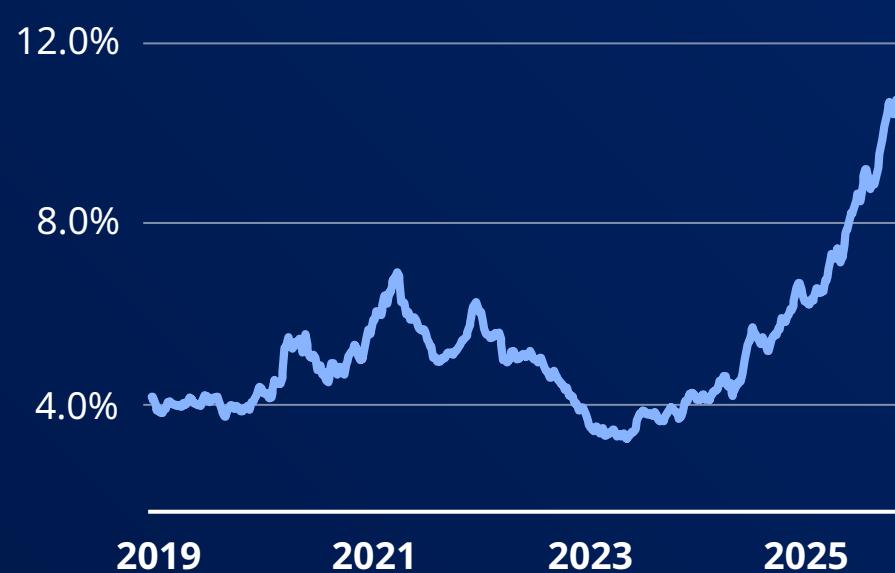
France



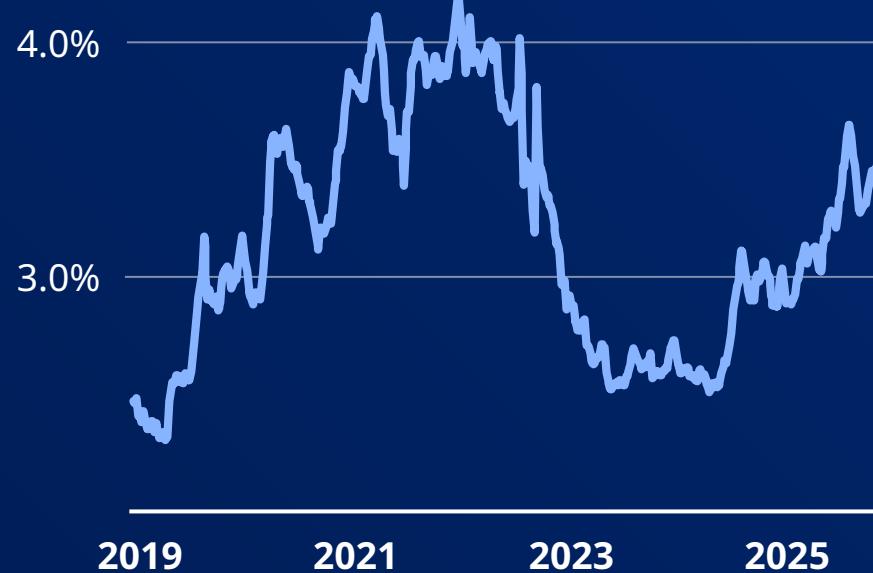
Germany



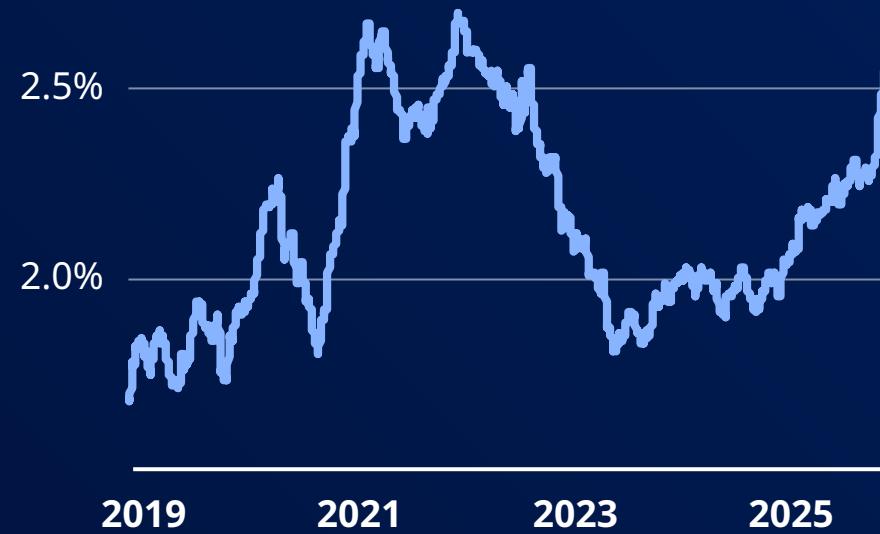
Ireland



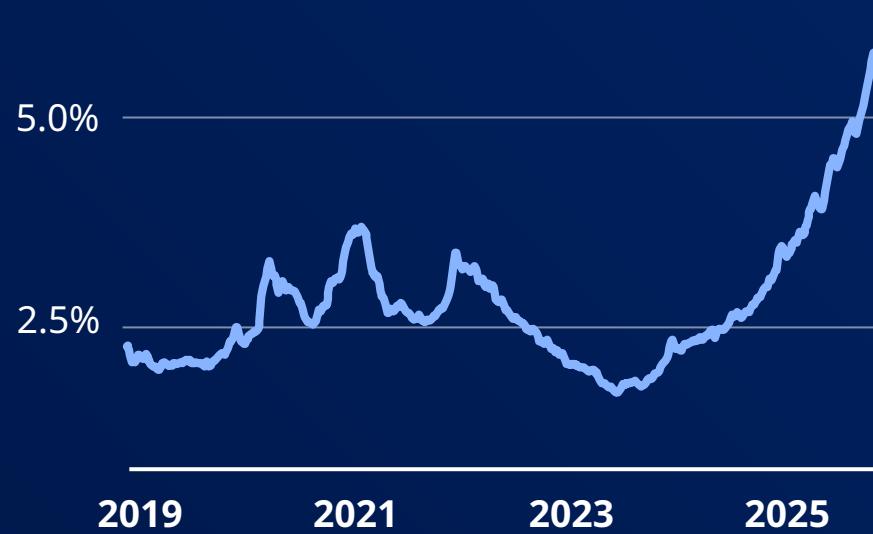
Italy



Netherlands



United Kingdom



Source: Indeed. Cross-country level differences are partly due to differences in sector composition.

Skills that do not require physical execution are most likely to be highly transformed by GenAI

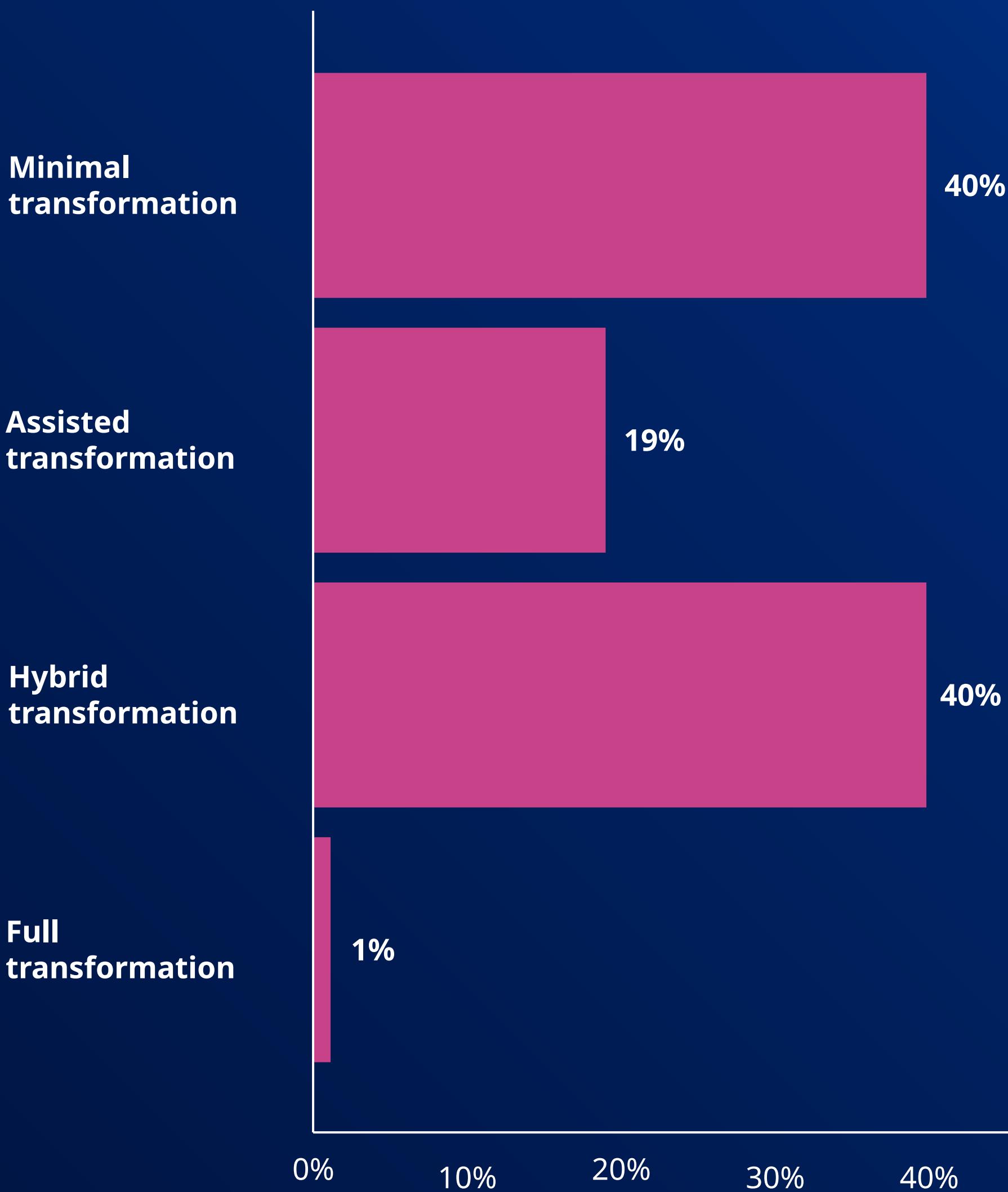
Analyzing ~2,900 Indeed skills by problem-solving ability and physical necessity to reveal varying levels of GenAI influence.

Physical Necessity

		Essential	Highly necessary	Moderately necessary	Slightly necessary	Not necessary
		Assisted transformation	Assisted transformation	Hybrid transformation	Hybrid transformation	Full transformation
Problem-solving ability	Exceptional	1 skill	1 skill	30 skills	1 skill	30 skills
	Good	49 skills	232 skills	134 skills	587 skills	419 skills
Problem-solving ability	Moderate	550 skills	347 skills	33 skills	188 skills	42 skills
	Basic	203 skills	25 skills	2 skills	29 skills	12 skills
Problem-solving ability	Minimal	Minimal transformation	Minimal transformation	Minimal transformation	Minimal transformation	Minimal transformation

Humans will remain in the loop — very few skills can be fully transformed by GenAI

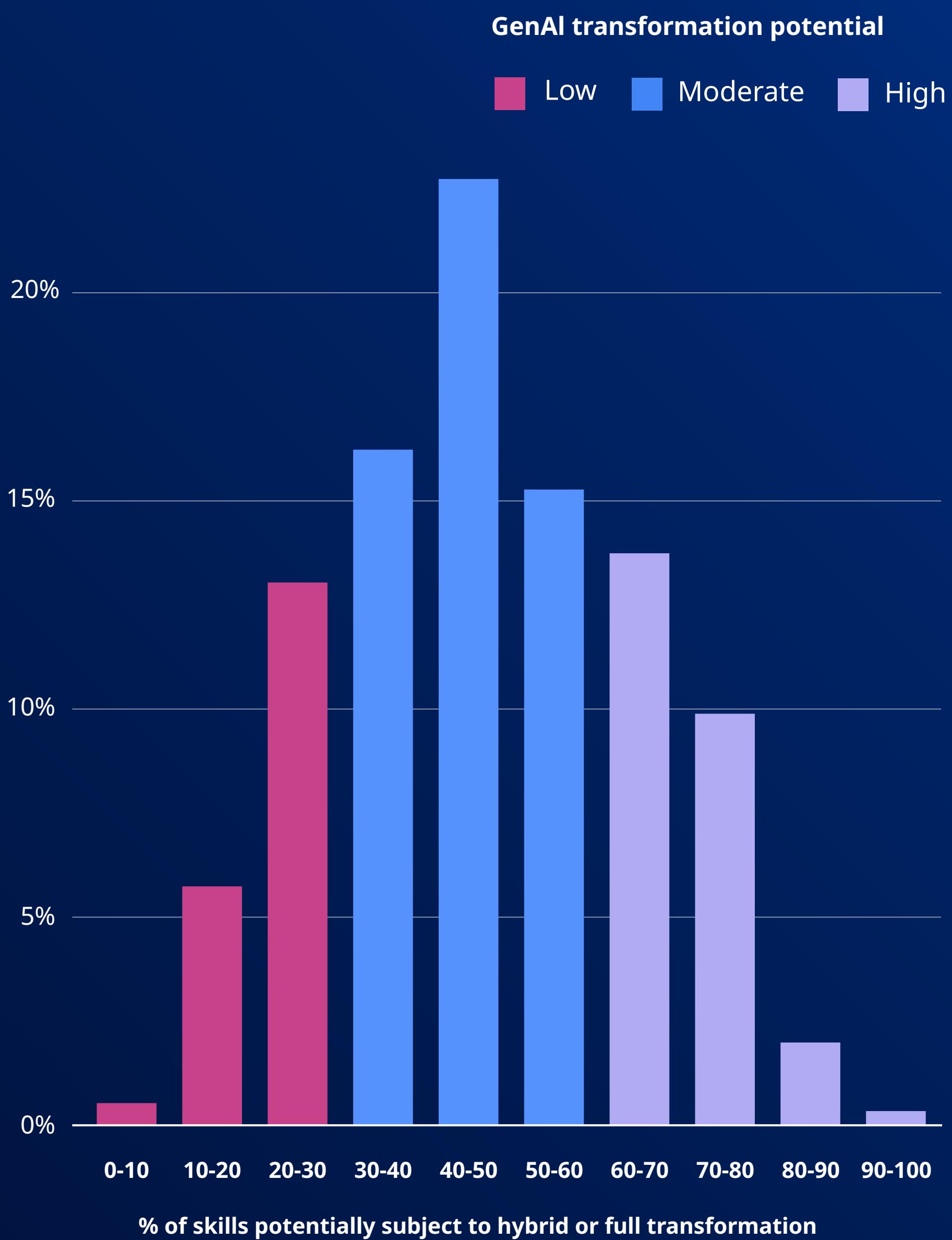
Distribution of ~2,900 skills across GenAI Skill Transformation Index (GSTI) levels. Derived from GPT-4.1 and Claude Sonnet 4 evaluations.



Source: Indeed. Minimal transformation means humans are largely still required to perform the skill; Assisted transformation means AI can perform some elements of a skill, but human intervention is still essential; Hybrid transformation means AI can adequately execute a skill, but some human oversight is still required; Full transformation means AI can perform a skill largely without human involvement. 24

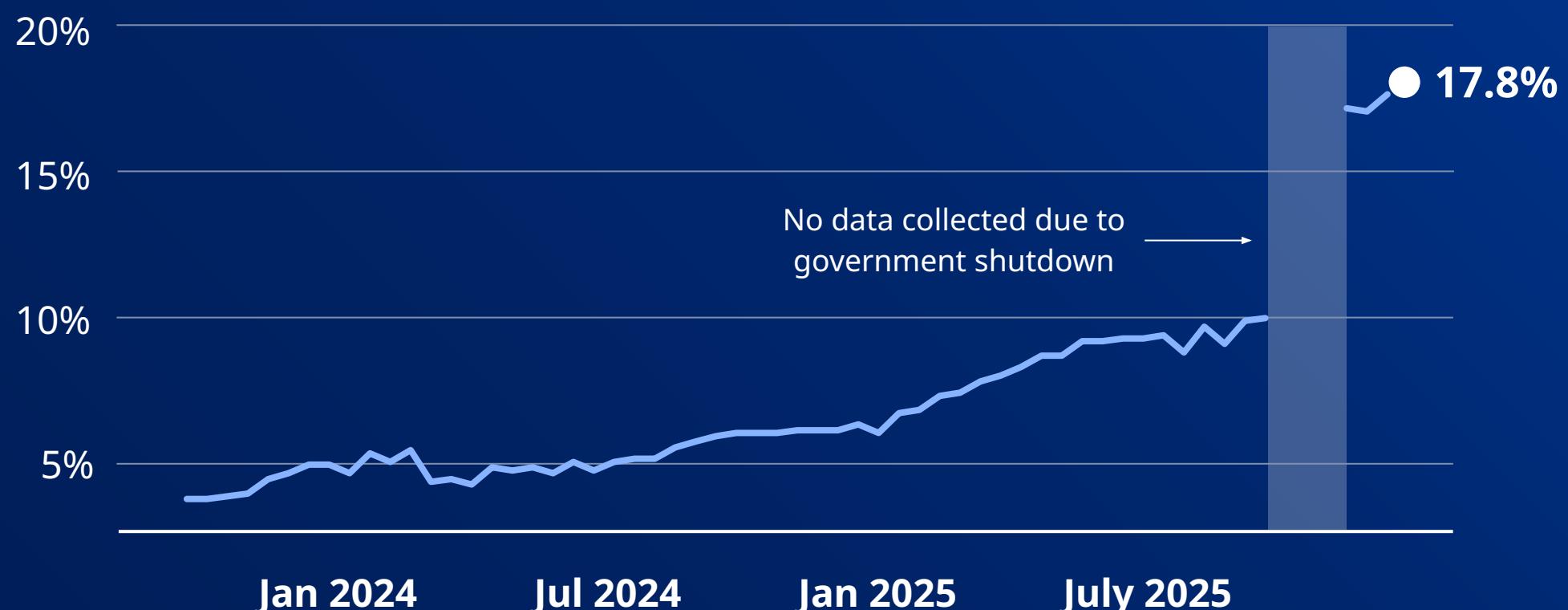
AI will touch all jobs, but only ~25% currently face the highest potential impact

% of total US job postings on Indeed (May 2024 – April 2025)



Many US employers still haven't adopted AI — yet

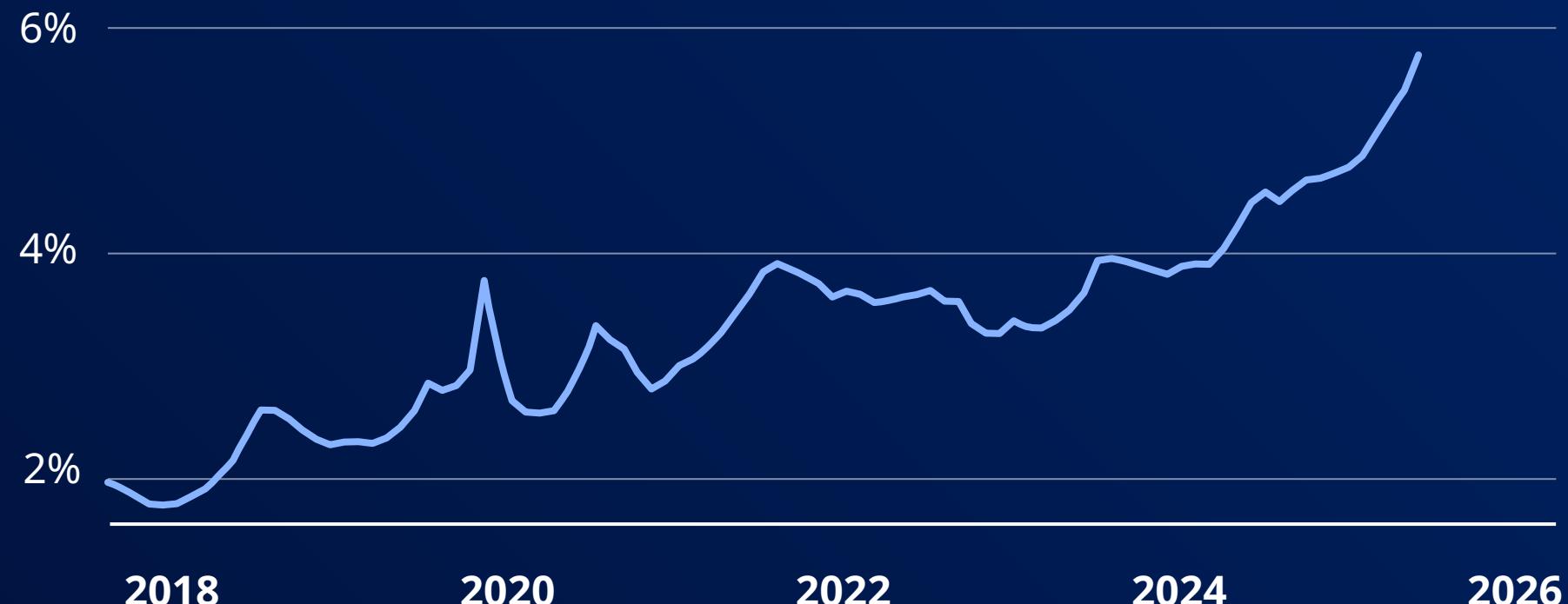
Share of firms answering yes to the question that they have used AI tools in the past two weeks



Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics Trends and Outlooks Survey. Note: The question firms were asked about AI usage changed in early December from asking about AI use in 'producing goods and services' to asking about AI use in 'any business functions.' The later values are not directly comparable to the earlier series.

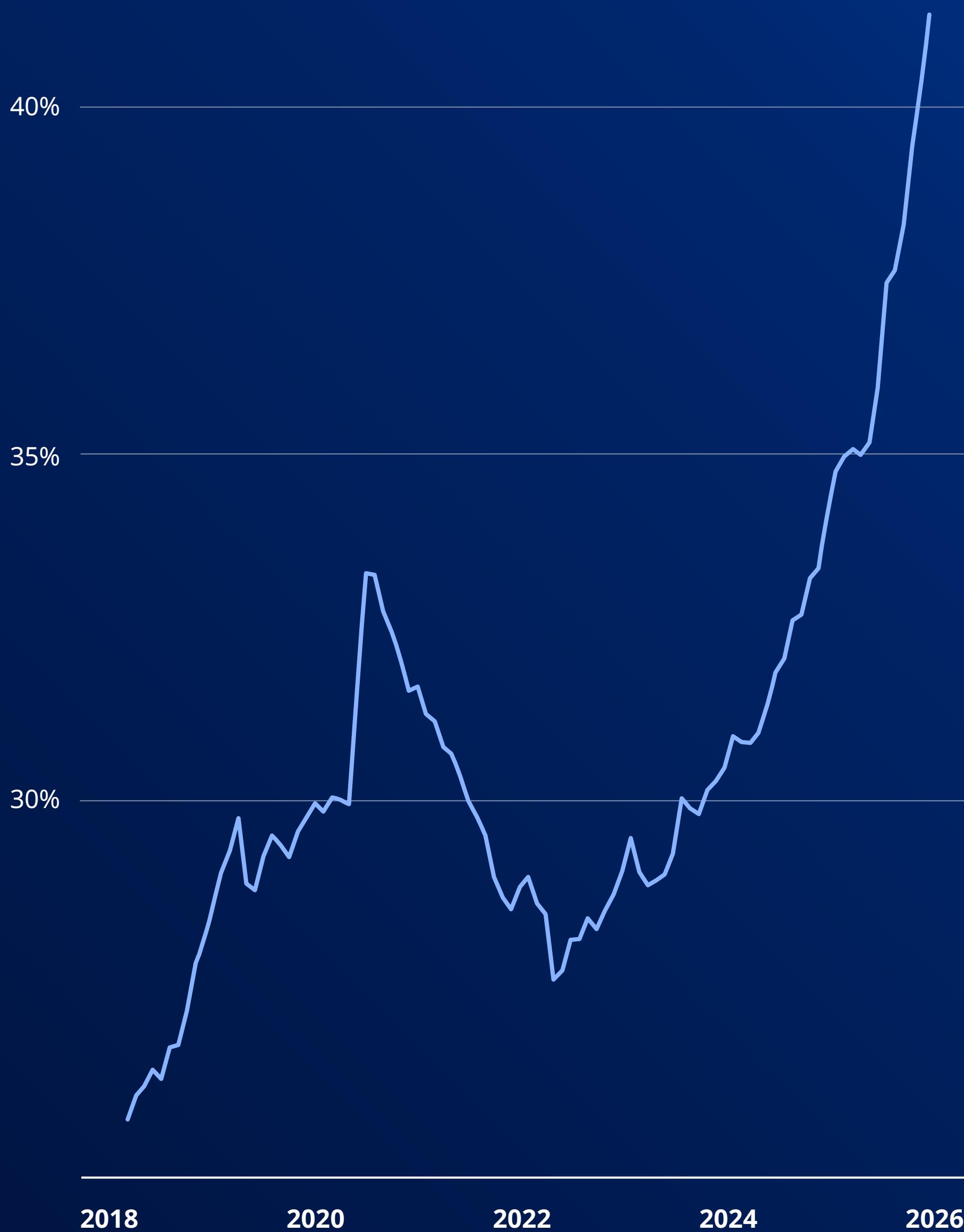
Only 5% of US firms have any open AI-related jobs

3-month moving average of the share of US firms with job postings mentioning AI-related terms in a given month, through November 2025



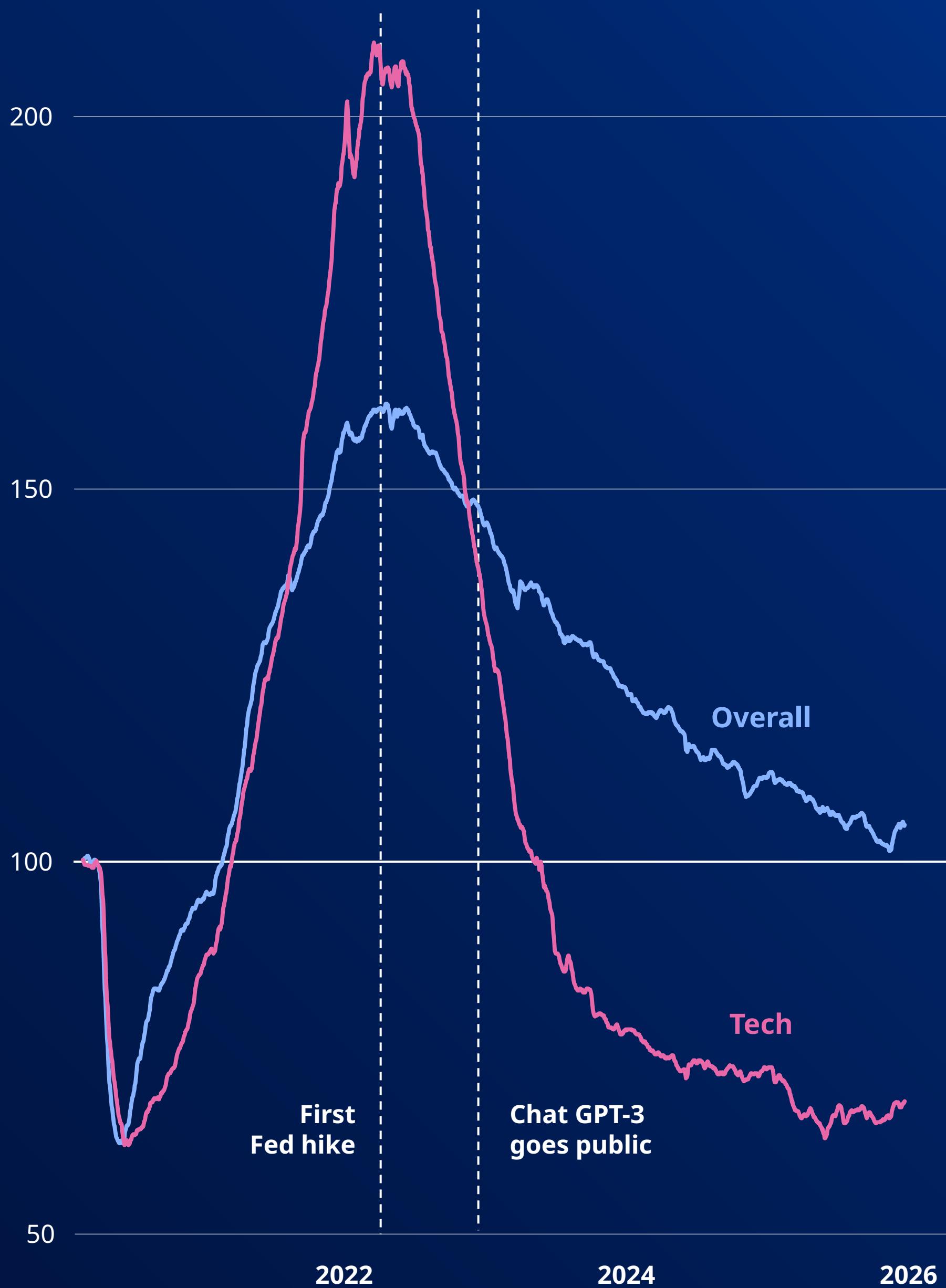
For US AI-adopting firms, a growing share of open jobs are AI-related

Among US firms with at least one AI posting, share of total firm postings that are AI-related (monthly average, data through November 2025)



US tech job postings have gone from boom to bust

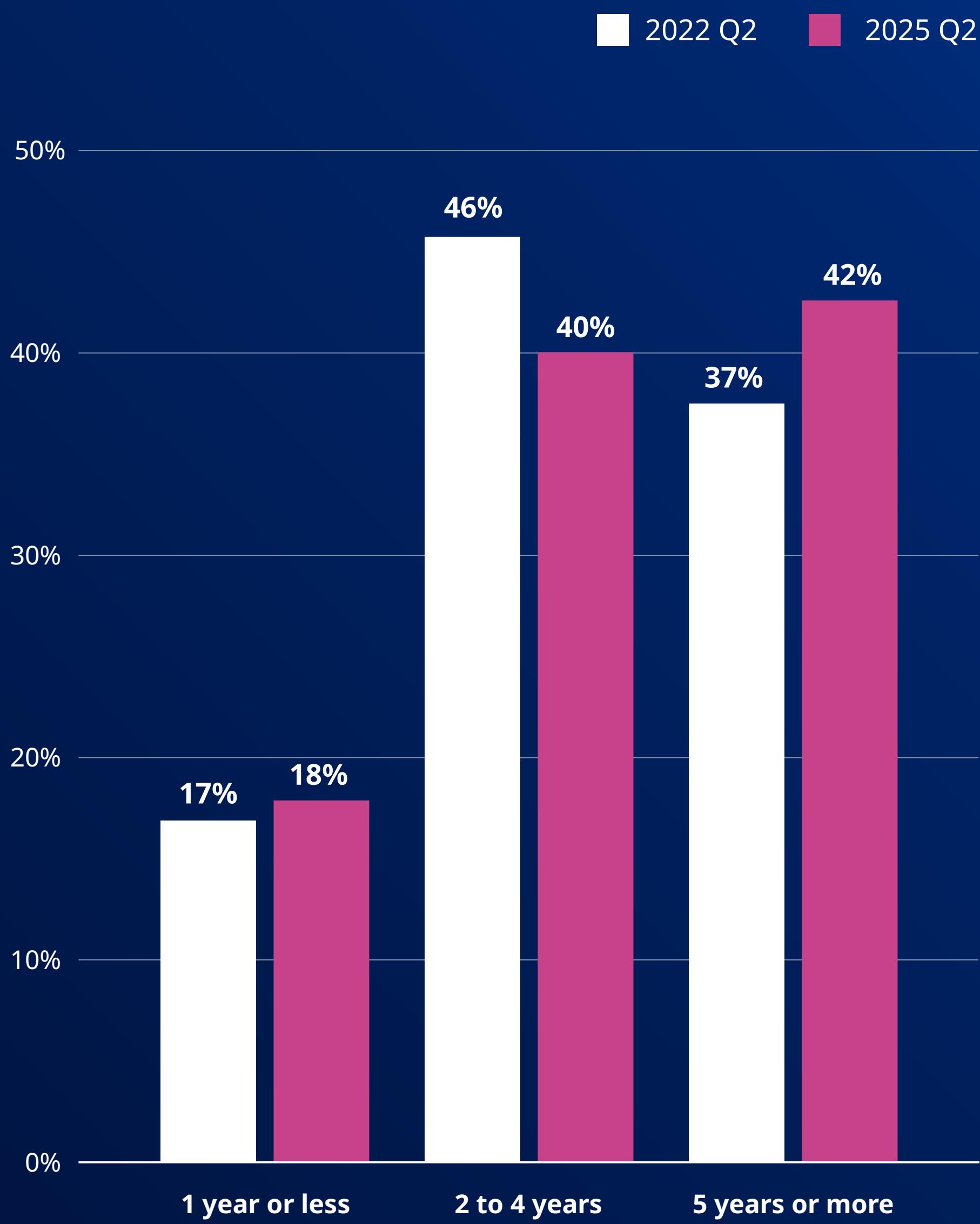
US job posting index (February 2020 = 100)



Source: Indeed, last data point: December 12, 2025, seasonally adjusted
Tech occupations include software development, information design,
IT operations, mathematics

More US tech postings are looking for at least 5 years of experience

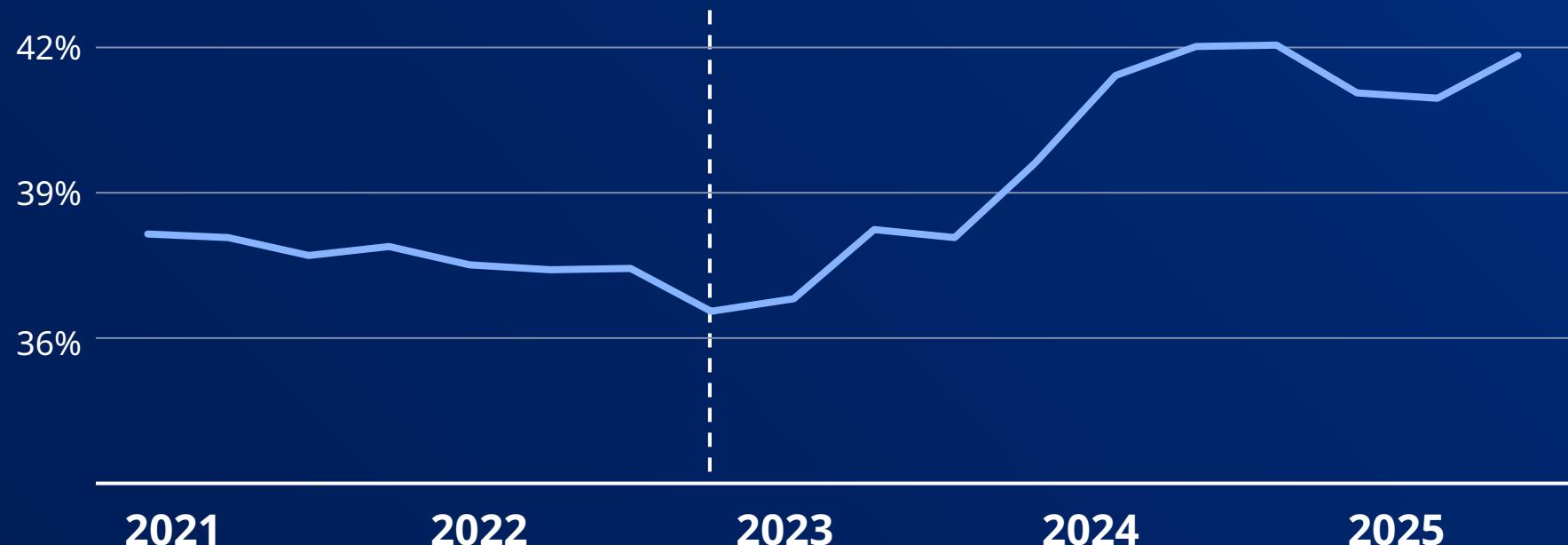
Share of US tech job postings that mention years experience (%, 3-month average)



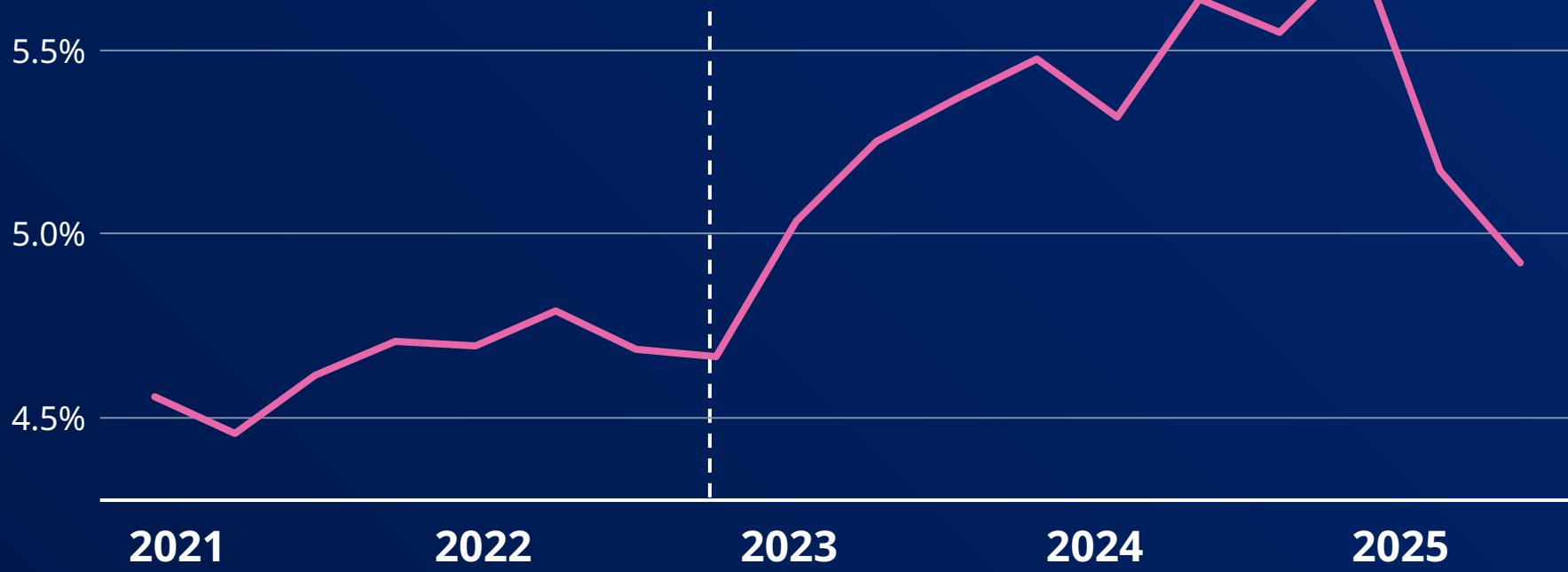
Experience requirements have stiffened for US tech jobs but eased for most others

Share of job postings looking for 5+ years of experience
(%, 3-month average)

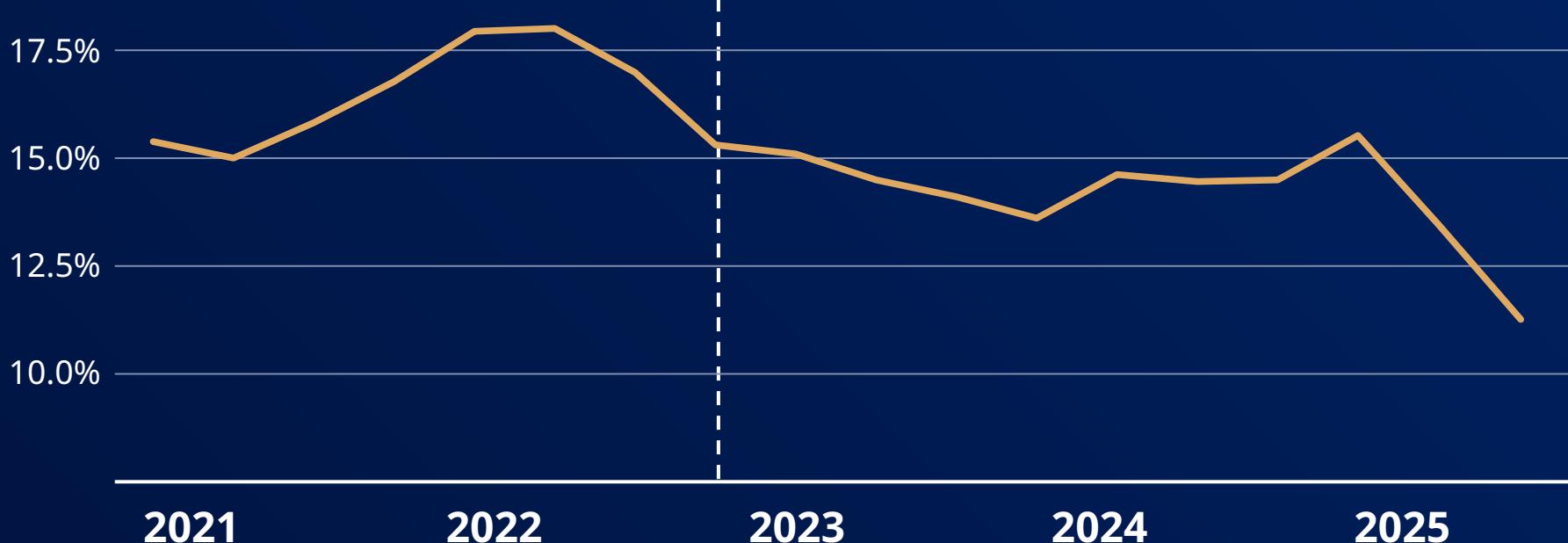
Tech occupations



Healthcare occupations



Other occupations



Source: Indeed, last data point: June 2025, not seasonally adjusted.

Excluding postings that do not mention experience. Dashed line is Q4 2022, when ChatGPT-3 was made public.



Future Outlook

Despite broad geopolitical volatility and economic uncertainty, most indicators suggest that many global labor markets in 2026 will look much like 2025.

In the US, job openings are poised to stabilize, but may not grow much; unemployment may rise, but not alarmingly so; and GDP growth will remain positive, but somewhat anemic.

Globally, workers in Ireland are most optimistic about conditions in their country over the next year, while Japanese and British workers were the most pessimistic.



Economic scenarios for 2026 (US)

Forecasts as of December 2025, GDP from Blue Chip Forecasts, unemployment and job openings Indeed calculations

Scenario	December 2026 2026 YoY GDP	December 2026 Job Openings	December 2026 Unemployment Rate
Consensus	1.9%	7.6M	4.6%
Upside	2.5%	7.9M	4.4%
Downside	1.2%	7.4M	5.0%

Source: Indeed, Wolters Kluwer, Author's calculations. Initial base of estimated 2025Q4 4.6% unemployment rate, 7.7M job openings.

Workers in UK and Japan are less confident than peers in other nations

Share of respondents, by country



Source: Indeed



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HiringLab.org