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## Research Article

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# The AI Transition: Assessing Vulnerability and Structural Reform in Albania's Labor Market

**Bora Bimbari**

University of Tirana, Albania

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## Abstract

Artificial intelligence (AI) is increasingly reshaping patterns of work in Albania, both through visible forms of automation and more subtle transformations in productivity and skill requirements. While certain occupations are experiencing displacement as tasks become automated, others are benefiting from efficiency gains enabled by AI-driven technologies. This study examines these parallel dynamics using empirical evidence drawn from official labor market statistics, business surveys, and selected case studies.

The findings indicate that overall employment levels in Albania have not declined sharply; rather, structural shifts are occurring within specific occupational groups. Routine service and administrative roles appear particularly vulnerable, while employers are raising expectations for digital literacy, basic data competencies, and advanced communication skills. These changes are unevenly distributed across the workforce, disproportionately affecting younger workers and individuals with lower levels of formal education.

The primary aim of this paper is to provide policymakers with an evidence-based assessment of Albania's labor market transition in response to AI adoption. The analysis underscores the need for increased investment in education, targeted upskilling initiatives, and flexible retraining programs to mitigate inequality and support workforce adaptation. As technological change accelerates, the key policy challenge lies in ensuring that economic advancement is accompanied by inclusive labor market outcomes.

**Keywords:** AI transition, Vulnerability, Reform, Albania, Labor Market.

## 1. Introduction

Artificial Intelligence (AI), particularly the recent expansion of generative AI tools, is reshaping labor markets in ways that do not fully conform to traditional economic adjustment patterns. Albania, like other transition economies, occupies a particularly sensitive position: it must navigate the potential displacement of certain forms of labor while simultaneously leveraging AI-driven productivity gains, all without

undermining broader economic objectives or its ongoing process of alignment with the European Union. This study seeks to examine that balance by analyzing empirical developments rather than speculative projections. To this end, it integrates official labor market statistics, business survey data, and selected case studies, most notably the large-scale call center layoffs associated with automation in 2025.

The primary objective of this paper is to provide policymakers with a realistic and evidence-based assessment of a labor market transition that is already underway, albeit often in less visible ways. While aggregate employment levels in Albania remain relatively stable, the underlying structure of employment is undergoing rapid transformation. The analysis indicates that the effects of AI adoption are unevenly distributed across the workforce. Younger workers, individuals employed in routine service occupations, and those with limited formal education appear to be disproportionately exposed to emerging vulnerabilities. Rather than causing immediate and widespread job losses, AI tends to intensify pre-existing structural weaknesses within the labor market.

The findings highlight an urgent need for increased investment in education, upskilling, and flexible retraining pathways that enable workers to transition toward occupations requiring digital competencies, analytical capabilities, and advanced human-centered skills. Without such measures, Albania risks exacerbating skills mismatches and social inequality at a time when adaptability is becoming a critical determinant of both economic resilience and social inclusion (World Economic Forum [WEF], 2025; UNICEF, 2024).

## **2. Methodology and Contextual Baseline**

### *2.1. The Macroeconomic Setting: Growth, Resilience, and Structural Fragility (2024–2025)*

This study draws on a mixed set of data sources, each capturing different dimensions of ongoing change in Albania's labor market. No single dataset fully reflects the nature of the current transition; therefore, multiple forms of evidence are examined in parallel. Official statistics from INSTAT and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) covering the first half of 2025 provide an essential macro-level baseline, but they are insufficient on their own. While these indicators reveal broad trends, they remain abstract and do not fully explain how structural changes manifest at the level of work tasks and employment relations.

To address this gap, the analysis incorporates sector-specific developments, including the call-center layoffs associated with AI-driven automation in 2025. These cases are neither isolated nor hypothetical but represent concrete manifestations of technological adjustment. Business surveys conducted by PwC and ICPAR (2025) add an additional layer of evidence, offering insights into how firms perceive productivity gains, workforce pressures, and growing uncertainty regarding skill requirements. Taken together, these sources allow the analysis to focus on task-level exposure rather than relying solely on occupational classifications, which often obscure the mechanisms through which AI affects labor demand (Brynjolfsson et al., 2023).

Albania enters this phase of technological adjustment from a macroeconomic position that appears relatively strong. Over the past two years, economic performance has exceeded earlier expectations. Fiscal policy remained broadly stable, while tourism expanded more rapidly than anticipated and contributed a growing share of overall economic output. As a result, total GDP surpassed pre-pandemic levels (IMF, 2025; World Bank, 2025). Economic growth reached 3.9% in 2024, with projections remaining positive—though lower—at approximately 3.2% in 2025 and 3.1% in 2026 (IMF, 2025; World Bank, 2025). At first glance, these figures suggest a favorable macroeconomic environment.

Early labor market indicators for 2025 appear consistent with this overall picture. Employment among individuals aged 15–64 increased to 69.5% in the first quarter, representing a 1.2 percentage point rise compared with the same period in the previous year. Unemployment continued its downward trend, reaching 8.54% in the second quarter of 2025 (INSTAT, 2025). Considered in isolation, these data point to resilience rather than disruption.

However, disaggregated indicators reveal a more uneven reality. Gender disparities persist, with unemployment among women standing at 9.8% in the second quarter of 2025, compared with 7.5% among men. Youth unemployment remains substantially higher, reaching 15.1% for individuals aged 15–29 (INSTAT, 2025). Particularly striking is the share of young people who are neither employed nor engaged in education or training (NEET), which stands at approximately 25% of this age group (UNICEF, 2024). This cohort represents a significant segment of the workforce and is also the group most likely to experience early exposure to automation and AI-driven task substitution.

Overall, the evidence points to a contrast that may be obscured by headline indicators alone. While macroeconomic conditions remain stable—and in some respects favorable—structural vulnerabilities persist beneath the surface. One of the most significant is the mismatch between labor market needs and the education and training system. Public investment in education stood at just 2.1% of GDP in 2023, well below the regional average of 4.6% (UNICEF, 2024). This shortfall constrains the speed and effectiveness with which workers can adapt to changing job content. In this sense, the current period of macroeconomic stability offers a window of opportunity for reform—one that may narrow rapidly if these structural constraints remain unaddressed.

Table 1: Key Albanian Labor Market and Economic Indicators (2024-2025)

Indicator	Latest Value/ Projection	Context / Implication	Source
Employment Rate (15–64, Q1 2025)	69.5% (+1.2 p.p. YoY)	Overall labor market expansion and resilience.	(INSTAT, 2025)

General Unemployment Rate (Q2 2025)	8.54%	Decreasing, but masks specific demographic stresses.	(INSTAT, 2025)
Youth Unemployment Rate (15–29, Q2 2025)	15.1%	Significant structural challenge; workforce segment most vulnerable to automation.	(INSTAT, 2025)
Annual GDP Growth (2024)	~3.9%	Strong growth driven primarily by services and construction.	(World Bank, 2025; IMF, 2025)
Public Education Spending (% GDP, 2023)	2.1%	Well below regional average (4.6%), constraining skills adaptation efforts.	(UNICEF, 2024)

### 3. Findings and Detailed Data Analysis

#### 3.1. The Shock of Substitution: Analysis of AI-Driven Displacement

Understanding the employment effects of artificial intelligence (AI) depends less on selecting a precise definition and more on identifying the appropriate level of analysis. Much of the existing debate distinguishes between automation that directly replaces workers and digital tools that reshape how work is performed. While this distinction is analytically useful, it can be misleading if applied too rigidly. In the Albanian context, occupational titles often encompass a heterogeneous mix of activities, some highly routine and others less so. For this reason, the present analysis does not treat occupations as uniform units of exposure. Instead, it focuses on specific work tasks and examines whether they can plausibly be performed by machine-learning systems in real-world settings (Brynjolfsson et al., 2023).

The most direct instance of task substitution emerged abruptly in 2025. Within the Business Process Outsourcing sector, Vodafone Italia dismissed approximately 450 call-center employees in Albania following the deployment of an AI-based customer service system (CNA, 2025). According to company statements, the new system was capable of performing tasks previously distributed across roughly 750 employees, completing them within minutes and without reported operational errors (CNA, 2025). Although such figures are difficult to verify independently and should therefore be interpreted with caution, the decision itself is significant. It marked a departure from gradual, incremental automation and signaled a more abrupt form of AI-driven displacement within Albania's routine service economy.

Importantly, exposure to automation is not confined to outsourced service work. Comparable changes are increasingly visible within segments of the white-collar workforce, particularly in roles centered on repetitive procedures and structured data. In financial supervision and regulatory activities, automation has progressed beyond pilot phases and into routine operational use. Tasks related to anti-money

laundering and combating the financing of terrorism, consumer protection, credit risk assessment, and stress testing are now frequently supported by algorithmic systems rather than being conducted solely through manual review (World Bank, 2024). Over time, this shift points toward supervisory models that rely less on manual verification and more on system oversight, altering required skill profiles rather than simply reducing employment levels (World Bank, 2024).

Routine administrative and knowledge-based services exhibit similar patterns. Within international accountability mechanisms and parts of the public sector, AI-supported chatbots are increasingly used for standardized tasks such as registering complaints, issuing acknowledgments, or responding to basic inquiries. These tools are often combined with automated translation technologies, enabling routine interactions to be handled with minimal human involvement, particularly where responses follow predefined formats (World Bank Independent Accountability Mechanisms [IAMs], 2024).

Comparable pressures are also emerging in the media sector. AI applications are increasingly employed for data processing and the production of standardized content. As a result, journalists whose work is primarily template-driven or routine appear more exposed to technological substitution than those engaged in investigative, analytical, or interpretive journalism, where contextual judgment remains central (Rais, 2025).

Taken together, these examples point toward a consistent pattern across sectors, even if the immediate outcomes differ. AI exerts its strongest effects where work is highly structured, rule-based, and dependent on standardized information. This does not necessarily translate into immediate job losses. What is already observable, however, is a gradual transformation in the content of work itself, with some roles evolving more rapidly than others and with impacts that vary significantly across skill levels.

Table 2: Observed AI Impact: Displacement vs. Productivity in Key Albanian Sectors (2025)

Sector	Impact Type	Observed Evidence	Quantitative Data	Source
Telecom / Customer Service	Displacement	Replacement of human agents by integrated AI chatbots.	Layoff of ~450 employees; AI performs work equivalent to 750 employees in minutes.	(CNA, 2025)
Financial Services	Augmentation/ Automation	Processing un-structured data (AML/CFT, risk analysis).	41.4% of institutions report 10-30% time/cost reduction from automation.	(World Bank, 2024; ICPAR, 2025)

Business Management (Cross-Sector)	Efficiency Gain	Improved time management and operational processes using Generative AI.	60% of CEOs reported increased personal efficiency.	(PwC, 2024)
Public Administration	Governance Enhancement	Oversight of tender processes to ensure anti-corruption.	Appointment of AI Minister 'Diella' and use of virtual public servant.	(BISI, 2025; ISS, 2025)

### 3.2. Business Dynamics: Adoption Rates and Managerial Urgency

The pace of AI adoption across the private sector has been rapid, with reported benefits concentrated primarily at the managerial level. Survey evidence from Albania and Kosovo indicates that 60% of chief executive officers (CEOs) reported improvements in their personal efficiency following the introduction of AI tools, while 46% observed efficiency gains among their staff (PwC, 2024). When attention is narrowed specifically to generative AI, responses become even more pronounced: approximately six in ten CEOs stated that these tools enabled more effective time management (PwC, 2024).

At the firm level, AI adoption is no longer marginal. An estimated 60.7% of Albanian businesses report having already integrated some form of AI into their operations, most commonly in customer service, marketing, and data analytics functions (Richtmann, 2025). The speed of adoption appears to be driven by more than curiosity or experimentation with new technologies. For many managers, AI is increasingly framed not as one strategic option among others, but as a necessary condition for business continuity. Survey data from Albania and Kosovo reflect this perception, with 63% of CEOs indicating that, in the absence of substantial operational changes over the next decade, their companies would struggle to remain viable (PwC, 2024).

There is also evidence that recent investments in AI are yielding tangible short-term benefits. Firms tend to emphasize practical operational outcomes, including improved decision-making, more streamlined workflows, and enhanced customer service (Richtmann, 2025). These effects appear particularly pronounced in the financial sector. Approximately 63.8% of professionals view AI-based solutions as more cost-effective than traditional approaches, while 41.4% of institutions with automated processes report cost and time savings ranging between 10% and 30% (ICPAR, 2025).

Despite these gains, AI adoption is rarely straightforward. Firms frequently cite the high initial costs of implementation, but constraints related to internal skill shortages and persistent concerns regarding data security and privacy are also recurrent themes. These challenges appear consistently across both firm-level surveys and executive assessments, suggesting that rapid AI uptake is unfolding alongside unresolved organizational, regulatory, and governance issues (PwC, 2024; Richtmann, 2025).

### 3.3. *The New Demand Structure: Augmentation and Complementary Skills*

The same forces that are displacing certain categories of work are simultaneously generating demand in other directions. Employment growth is increasing in roles related to information technology system maintenance, data analysis, AI development, and advanced cybersecurity—areas in which technical expertise remains essential despite ongoing automation (Nexford, 2025). While these occupations are important, they do not capture the full scope of labor market adjustment. Over the longer term, more durable employment growth is likely to occur in positions where AI functions primarily as a complementary tool rather than a substitute. In such cases, technology reshapes work processes without eliminating the human role.

This dynamic has direct implications for approaches to upskilling and reskilling. Training policies can no longer focus exclusively on narrowly defined technical professions. As AI tools diffuse across sectors, digital and AI literacy are becoming relevant beyond traditionally technology-intensive industries. In Albania, sectors such as tourism and agriculture—both central to the country's development trajectory—are increasingly encountering AI-driven applications in routine work contexts (UNDP, 2024). This shift moves policy attention away from the exclusive production of specialists and toward enabling workers across diverse fields to integrate new technologies into existing skill sets.

As routine and repetitive tasks are progressively automated, the economic value of human labor is increasingly concentrated in skills that are difficult to codify or standardize. Although these competencies are not novel, their relevance is becoming more pronounced. Critical thinking, creativity, digital literacy, complex communication, collaboration, and emotional intelligence are consistently identified as domains in which human input remains decisive (Nexford, 2025; World Economic Forum [WEF], 2025). The *Future of Jobs Report 2025* similarly emphasizes analytical thinking, creativity, and the capacity for continuous learning as core priorities in an evolving labor market (WEF, 2025).

There are emerging indications that expectations surrounding work and skills formation are shifting, though often in implicit ways. Adaptability is increasingly assumed rather than treated as a distinctive advantage. Skill development is becoming a continuous process, with workers adjusting and moving across functional and disciplinary boundaries as task requirements evolve, rather than following fixed occupational trajectories (Nexford, 2025). Concurrently, expectations of education and training systems are expanding, with greater emphasis placed on supporting lifelong learning rather than delivering qualifications at a single point in time.

### 3.4. *Policy Architecture: Governance, Education, and Structural Reform*

In recent years, Albania has adopted a notably unconventional approach to artificial intelligence governance. In September 2025, the Albanian government appointed an AI system known as *Diella*, developed through the e-Albania platform, as Minister of Artificial Intelligence (BISI, 2025; Institute for Security Studies [ISS], 2025). Among

the responsibilities assigned to this system was oversight of public procurement, an area long associated with concerns regarding transparency and corruption.

Official statements framed this initiative as an effort to introduce automated oversight and rule-based decision-making mechanisms aimed at reducing discretion and mitigating governance risks (BISI, 2025; ISS, 2025). More broadly, the appointment reflects an increasing willingness to position AI as a component of institutional reform and as an instrument for accelerating alignment with European Union regulatory standards and Single Market integration (ISS, 2025). At the same time, this ambition contrasts sharply with Albania's current level of technological readiness, which ranked the country 163rd globally in a 2025 international assessment (CEOWorld, 2025). This discrepancy highlights the tension between symbolic innovation in governance and the material conditions required to sustain it.

While experimentation in AI-based governance has progressed rapidly, constraints in other policy domains remain persistent. Education represents a particularly significant pressure point. Public expenditure on education stood at 2.1% of GDP in 2023, substantially below the regional average of 4.6% and the EU average of 4.7% (UNICEF, 2024). The consequences of underinvestment are visible both in ongoing debates over educational quality and in practical challenges related to skills shortages (UNICEF, 2024). Although digital competencies and innovation are emphasized in the National Education Strategy 2021–2026 (UNESCO, 2024), implementation has been uneven. In 2024, 52% of surveyed teachers reported insufficient knowledge or skills to integrate AI-based tools into their teaching practices (OECD Teaching and Learning International Survey [TALIS], 2024). This finding underscores a persistent gap between strategic objectives and institutional capacity at the classroom level.

Vocational education and lifelong learning systems face similar pressures. As labor market conditions evolve rapidly, static curricula become increasingly difficult to maintain. This has generated growing interest in more adaptive policy tools, including the use of "skills intelligence" to monitor emerging shifts in occupational demand (UNDP, 2024). In practice, such approaches point toward the need for stronger coordination between education providers and employers, rather than fragmented or unilateral interventions. Public–private partnerships are increasingly discussed in this context. These may take the form of joint training centers, applied AI laboratories, or structured internship programs that offer direct exposure to workplace environments (UNDP, 2024). While such initiatives are not a comprehensive solution, they may help align training provision more closely with evolving labor market needs and partially bridge the gap between technological ambition and human capital development.

### *3.5. AI in the Health Sector: Policy Gaps and Augmentation*

While Albania has made rapid advances in digital governance, the integration of artificial intelligence into the health sector remains significantly underdeveloped, particularly with regard to safety, accountability, and regulatory oversight (World Health Organization [WHO], 2025). A recent WHO assessment indicates that Albania has made minimal progress toward establishing a comprehensive and secure AI

governance framework for healthcare, with substantial policy gaps across multiple domains (WHO, 2025). At present, the only documented regulatory mechanism concerns the certification of AI systems. Critical areas—such as procurement standards, development guidelines, independent auditing, and formal procedures for addressing patient complaints related to AI-related harm—remain largely absent (WHO, 2025). This regulatory vacuum raises the risk of AI deployment without adequate transparency, safety safeguards, or accountability mechanisms.

From a theoretical and international perspective, AI holds considerable potential to improve healthcare outcomes by enhancing diagnostic accuracy, supporting medical imaging analysis, optimizing treatment planning, and enabling remote patient monitoring (AI4MED Research Group, 2025; Perolla et al., 2023). In Albania, the adoption trajectory is accelerating, as illustrated by initiatives such as the partnership with Israel’s Sheba Medical Center to develop AI-enabled healthcare systems (AI4MED Research Group, 2025). These developments suggest the likely emergence of augmented professional roles—such as “e-nurses” or “e-doctors”—not as replacements for healthcare workers, but as tools designed to reduce routine workloads and support clinical decision-making (AI4MED Research Group, 2025).

The effective and safe augmentation of medical roles, however, depends on addressing significant capacity constraints. Albania currently lacks specialized professional profiles in health-related data science and artificial intelligence, and there are no structured training programs in AI competencies for healthcare personnel, either at the pre-employment or in-service levels (WHO, 2025). Without such foundational capacities, the benefits of AI adoption risk being unevenly realized and potentially harmful. To harness AI’s transformative potential while safeguarding patient rights and safety, Albania must urgently prioritize the development of a comprehensive regulatory framework, establish clear auditing and accountability standards, and invest in the systematic development of professional capacities within the health system (WHO, 2025).

### *3.6. AI in Education: Augmenting Learning and the AI Literacy Imperative*

Artificial intelligence is rapidly becoming embedded in Albania’s educational landscape. Recent data indicate that 53% of young people report using AI tools as part of their daily routines, primarily to assist with assignments, brainstorming, and structuring written work (UNICEF, 2025). This widespread uptake confirms AI’s immediate role as an augmentative technology rather than a substitute for learning. When used effectively, AI enables teachers to personalize instruction, integrate digital tools more strategically, and make abstract subjects more accessible to students (UNESCO, 2024; UNICEF, 2025). Consistent with this trend, educators have expressed strong interest in receiving more advanced training in AI in order to manage its classroom implications more effectively (UNESCO, 2024).

At the same time, this transition requires a redefinition of skills that extends beyond basic digital literacy. The central challenge is the development of AI literacy, understood as the capacity to engage critically with AI systems, recognize their

limitations, apply them ethically, and avoid passive dependence on automated outputs (UNICEF, 2025). Emerging hypotheses and early empirical studies raise concerns that extensive AI use may encourage surface-level efficiency at the expense of deeper cognitive engagement, potentially producing learners who work faster but think more superficially (UNICEF, 2025). This risk is reinforced by survey findings showing that 23% of students believe they can receive full academic credit for work generated by AI, underscoring the urgency of embedding ethical AI-use modules within school curricula (UNICEF, 2025).

Educational reform must therefore focus on ensuring that AI functions as a cognitive assistant rather than a cognitive replacement. The objective is not to limit technological use, but to align AI efficiency with the development of students' analytical reasoning, creativity, and independent judgment. Without such safeguards, the expansion of AI in education risks undermining the very learning outcomes it is intended to enhance (UNICEF, 2025).

#### **4. Conclusion, Suggestions, and Recommendations**

##### *4.1. Conclusion*

The effects of artificial intelligence on the Albanian labor market are no longer abstract or speculative. Developments in the Business Process Outsourcing sector provide early and concrete evidence of how automation can translate into task substitution and, in some cases, direct job displacement. At the same time, these developments do not indicate an overall collapse in employment. Rather, they point to a deeper and uneven restructuring process that is unfolding across sectors and occupational groups.

What distinguishes Albania's experience is the pronounced gap between ambition and capacity. Political initiatives and private-sector signals suggest that AI adoption is advancing at a relatively rapid pace. Yet long-standing structural constraints persist, most notably limited investment in human capital and low overall technological readiness. This tension shapes how AI-driven change is absorbed in practice, determining whether technological adoption translates into productivity gains, workforce upgrading, or heightened vulnerability.

In the short term, macroeconomic stability and moderate employment growth provide a narrow window for adjustment, even as that window appears to be closing. The principal risk does not lie in large-scale unemployment, which has not materialized thus far. Instead, it lies in the interaction between technological restructuring and pre-existing labor market weaknesses. Young people and women, who are disproportionately represented in routine service occupations, appear particularly exposed to displacement pressures. Without targeted policy responses, ongoing labor market transformation risks deepening social and economic inequalities rather than distributing the benefits of technological progress more broadly.

#### 4.2. *Suggestions and Recommendations*

- **Fiscal and Investment Prioritization** - The government should commit to a structural, year-on-year increase in public expenditure on education, with the explicit objective of converging toward the regional average of 4.6% of GDP (UNICEF, 2024). This expansion must be strategically targeted at improving educational quality rather than merely increasing coverage, with particular emphasis on digital competencies, STEM disciplines, and foundational literacy (IMF, 2025; UNESCO, 2024). In parallel, targeted fiscal incentives are required to reduce the high upfront investment costs faced by Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs), which remain a significant barrier to AI adoption and productivity-enhancing innovation (Richtmann, 2025; OECD, 2024).
- **Proactive Labor Market Forecasting and Retraining** - The national employment agency should develop a granular, task-based vulnerability index tailored specifically to Albania's occupational structure (Brynjolfsson et al., 2023). Such an index would allow policymakers to identify displacement risks before they materialize, enabling the proactive allocation of retraining resources toward high-exposure sectors. Retraining initiatives should prioritize transition pathways into data-adjacent roles and occupations that emphasize human-centered, non-automatable skills, rather than narrowly technical specializations alone (Nexford, 2025).
- **Cultivating Adaptability through Lifelong Learning** - Public policy must reposition lifelong learning from a supplementary activity to a core pillar of labor market participation in the AI era. Publicly funded programs should focus on fostering adaptability, self-directed learning, and career mobility, recognizing that workers are increasingly required to reskill and transition across roles multiple times over their working lives (Nexford, 2025). This shift implies moving beyond static qualifications toward continuous skills development frameworks.
- **Strengthening Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs)** - Collaboration between education providers, technology firms, and industry associations should be institutionalized through formal Public-Private Partnerships (UNDP, 2024). Such arrangements can help ensure that graduates from vocational education and training (VET) programs acquire not only general digital literacy but also AI-complementary skills that are immediately relevant to labor market demand, reducing the lag between training provision and employment needs.
- **Sector-Specific AI Governance** - Given the rapid and largely unregulated expansion of AI in sensitive domains, the government must urgently develop sector-specific legal and ethical frameworks, particularly in healthcare (WHO, 2025). These frameworks should address procurement standards, auditing requirements, accountability mechanisms, and patient protection. Regulatory development must be accompanied by targeted capacity-building initiatives for medical professionals to ensure the safe and effective integration of AI into clinical practice (WHO, 2025).
- **AI Literacy and Curriculum Reform** - Within the education system, a mandatory

module on AI literacy and ethical use should be integrated into the national curriculum without delay. This reform is essential to ensure that students engage with AI as a tool for enhancing learning and critical thinking, rather than as a substitute for cognitive effort (UNICEF, 2025). Embedding ethical awareness alongside technical familiarity will be central to preparing students for responsible participation in an AI-mediated economy.

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