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KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY 2.0: AI, THE CRISIS OF TRADITIONAL EDUCATION, AND NEW LABOR MARKETS

The Knowledge Economy 2.0 automates cognitive work with AI. Knowledge is no longer scarce, and traditional education (4-5 years) lags behind the competency renewal cycle (2-3 years). AI successfully passes exams, devaluing diplomas. The labor market is shifting toward project-based work, where portfolios and AI skills are valuable. A shift from Education to Learning & Development is necessary.

The aim of the study is to identify key contradictions between the traditional education system and the emerging Knowledge Economy 2.0, caused by the introduction of artificial intelligence, and to identify areas for the transformation of educational models and the labor market in the context of the automation of cognitive work.

A case study from Hamburg illustrates the key contradiction: AI successfully passes final exams at a level indistinguishable from human students. Programs recognizing generated texts only detect the likelihood of AI use but do not provide legally binding evidence. Papers written by bots cannot be annulled, and diplomas remain formally valid. This situation demonstrates a shift in the value of education: if an exam can be passed without actual knowledge (the ability to use AI is sufficient), traditional knowledge assessment becomes meaningless. This undermines trust in formal qualifications and requires a rethinking of assessment formats–from knowledge retrieval to the ability to set tasks, verify, and critically evaluate AI results[1].

Companies are actively implementing AI in marketing, analytics, and development to accelerate work with content and data and improve process efficiency. This has created a demand for specialists with prompt skills–the ability to competently work with neural networks. A new category of professionals has emerged, and AI skills have become universal and in demand across many industries [2,3].

There is a shift from hiring for specific jobs to hiring for specific tasks and projects. Previously, employees were hired for a position with fixed responsibilities; now they are hired for a limited period to solve a specific problem. This is because AI takes over routine work, while humans focus on task management and responsibility for results. As a result, the value of a diploma is diminishing, while a portfolio of completed tasks and AI skills are becoming more important [1,3].

New learning tools are emerging in the modern Learning & Development model. Microdegrees allow for the rapid acquisition of specialized skills and the validation of competencies without a full degree. Corporate universities are integrating learning into work, creating personalized employee development trajectories. AI, like a personal tutor, analyzes knowledge levels, recommends courses and tasks, accelerating retraining and making the process as efficient as possible. Together, these tools make learning continuous, flexible, and precisely tailored to the requirements of the Knowledge Economy 2.0.

Data analysis confirms the key themes of the transition to the Knowledge Economy 2.0 and the transformation of education.

First, the composition of respondents (60% are studying, 28% are combining study and work) shows a blurring of the boundaries between learning and employment. This is consistent with the L&D model, where learning is becoming a continuous and integrated process. Secondly, AI use is widespread: 98.4% use text generators, 43.5% use image generators, and only 3.2% do not use AI. This confirms that AI has already become a basic tool for cognitive work.

Thirdly, the high frequency of use (60% daily, 34% several times a week) indicates the integration of AI into everyday activities and its role as a learning tool and "personal tutor."

Fourthly, perceptions of AI are overwhelmingly positive: 38.7% rate its impact as exclusively positive, 19.4% as mostly positive, with a low proportion of negative ratings. This indicates high user adoption.

Overall, the data reveals a contradiction: despite the widespread adoption of AI and the acceleration of skill renewal, the traditional education model is lagging behind. At the same time, a new labor market is emerging–digital, hybrid, and focused on continuous skill development. The study shows that the Knowledge Economy 2.0 is already being realized in practice: AI has become a widespread tool for learning and work. However, a key contradiction has been identified: the traditional education system, with its long training cycles, is failing to keep pace with the rapid renewal of skills.

A shift toward a model of continuous learning (L&D) integrated into professional activities is underway. At the same time, a new labor market is emerging, focused on soft skills, digital competencies, and work with AI.

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