# OpenAI CEO warns AI could eliminate up to 70% of jobs, urging urgent reskilling and policy action



OpenAI’s CEO, Sam Altman, faced tough questioning from Senator Gary Peters during a recent congressional hearing regarding his controversial assertion that AI could lead to the elimination of up to 70% of jobs. This revelation, which Altman made privately to Peters prior to the hearing, underscores ongoing concerns about the accelerating effects of artificial intelligence on the workforce. Peters accentuated the urgency of preparing for such seismic shifts, expressing that society must anticipate and navigate the potential upheaval that could accompany widespread AI integration.

During the hearing, titled “The Future of AI: Implications for Workers and Society,” Altman acknowledged that while previous technological revolutions resulted in both job losses and new opportunities, the speed at which AI could disrupt the labour market is unprecedented. “Technological revolutions have historically altered jobs and economic landscapes, but this time, the potential speed makes a significant difference,” he commented, highlighting the need for proactive strategies to manage this transformation. He further suggested that early engagement with AI tools would empower workers to adapt and find new roles that could arise from this technological evolution.

The conversation around AI-driven job displacement is timely and pertinent, given recent actions taken by major companies like IBM and Duolingo. IBM, for instance, revealed during discussions that it has automated many human resources tasks, resulting in the elimination of hundreds of back-office positions. Yet, IBM’s CEO, Arvind Krishna, reassured stakeholders that the overall headcount at the company continues to grow, particularly through hiring in more complex roles that demand human judgment. “While leveraging AI has led to efficiencies, it has also opened up new investments in areas requiring deeper expertise,” Krishna noted. This nuanced dynamic illustrates how the integration of AI might not solely lead to job losses but could also facilitate new employment opportunities within sectors that require greater human oversight.

Duolingo, on the other hand, has opted to become an “AI-first” enterprise, indicating its commitment to reimagining operational approaches. CEO Luis von Ahn explained that the company is phasing out many contract workers whose roles can be fulfilled by AI, as part of its strategy to maximise efficiency and refocus employee efforts on creative problem-solving tasks. “This isn’t about replacing our team with AI; it’s about removing bottlenecks to enhance productivity,” he emphasised, signalling a shift in operational philosophy that embraces AI as a partner rather than a competitor.

This shift in operational structure across industries underscores broader projections from the World Economic Forum, which predicts that while AI will eliminate approximately 92 million jobs by 2030, it will also create about 170 million new ones, yielding a net increase of 78 million jobs. This forecast is significantly more optimistic than the WEF's previous predictions, which foresaw a far less favourable job outlook just two years prior. However, realising these gains hinges crucially on effective reskilling and policy frameworks. Without robust initiatives in place, many workers could find themselves adrift, struggling to navigate the implications of a rapidly changing job market.

The discourse surrounding AI’s impact continues to evolve, with figures like Altman advocating for a balanced regulatory environment that harnesses AI’s potential while mitigating associated risks. He cautioned that the technology could produce adverse outcomes if not managed properly, emphasising the importance of an industry-government collaboration to ensure that AI advancements benefit society at large. This conversation raises critical questions about the future of work—who will thrive in an AI-influenced landscape and how society will respond to the changes unfolding before us. As companies adapt to these technological advancements, the pressing need for a comprehensive strategy that incorporates reskilling initiatives, equitable policies, and forward-thinking governance becomes increasingly evident.

As the dialogue progresses, stakeholders from various sectors must remain vigilant and proactive, ensuring that the promise of AI is realised without leaving the workforce behind. In this pivotal moment, the cautionary words of leaders like Altman and the empirical data from economic forecasts will serve as essential guides in the journey toward a more integrated and inclusive future of work.

### Reference Map

1. Paragraphs 1-2: Source [[1]](https://www.pymnts.com/artificial-intelligence-2/2025/senator-grills-openai-ceo-on-view-that-ai-could-eliminate-up-to-70percent-of-jobs/), Source [[2]](https://www.pymnts.com/artificial-intelligence-2/2025/senator-grills-openai-ceo-on-view-that-ai-could-eliminate-up-to-70percent-of-jobs/)
2. Paragraphs 3-4: Source [[1]](https://www.pymnts.com/artificial-intelligence-2/2025/senator-grills-openai-ceo-on-view-that-ai-could-eliminate-up-to-70percent-of-jobs/), Source [[3]](https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/5/17/five-key-takeaways-from-openais-ceo-sam-altmans-senate-hearing), Source [[4]](https://www.cnn.com/2023/05/16/tech/sam-altman-openai-congress/)
3. Paragraphs 5-6: Source [[1]](https://www.pymnts.com/artificial-intelligence-2/2025/senator-grills-openai-ceo-on-view-that-ai-could-eliminate-up-to-70percent-of-jobs/), Source [[2]](https://www.pymnts.com/artificial-intelligence-2/2025/senator-grills-openai-ceo-on-view-that-ai-could-eliminate-up-to-70percent-of-jobs/), Source [[5]](https://www.cbsnews.com/news/sam-altman-senate-chatgpt-ai-could-go-quite-wrong/)
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6. Paragraph 10: Source [[1]](https://www.pymnts.com/artificial-intelligence-2/2025/senator-grills-openai-ceo-on-view-that-ai-could-eliminate-up-to-70percent-of-jobs/), Source [[4]](https://www.cnn.com/2023/05/16/tech/sam-altman-openai-congress/), Source [[3]](https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/5/17/five-key-takeaways-from-openais-ceo-sam-altmans-senate-hearing)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.pymnts.com/artificial-intelligence-2/2025/senator-grills-openai-ceo-on-view-that-ai-could-eliminate-up-to-70percent-of-jobs/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.pymnts.com/artificial-intelligence-2/2025/senator-grills-openai-ceo-on-view-that-ai-could-eliminate-up-to-70percent-of-jobs/> - In a May 2025 congressional hearing, Senator Gary Peters questioned OpenAI CEO Sam Altman about his statement that AI could eliminate up to 70% of jobs. Altman acknowledged the potential for rapid disruption but emphasized that AI could also enhance productivity and create new roles. He advocated for early adoption of AI tools to help workers adapt to new opportunities.
3. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/5/17/five-key-takeaways-from-openais-ceo-sam-altmans-senate-hearing> - During a 2023 Senate hearing, OpenAI CEO Sam Altman discussed AI's impact on jobs, acknowledging potential job displacement but expressing optimism about future job quality. He highlighted the need for industry-government collaboration to mitigate disruptions and emphasized AI's role in enhancing human capabilities.
4. <https://www.cnn.com/2023/05/16/tech/sam-altman-openai-congress/> - In May 2023, OpenAI CEO Sam Altman testified before Congress, advocating for AI regulation. He proposed a licensing regime for companies developing powerful AI systems and discussed the potential for AI to eliminate some jobs while creating new ones.
5. <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/sam-altman-senate-chatgpt-ai-could-go-quite-wrong/> - OpenAI CEO Sam Altman expressed concerns about AI's potential negative impacts during a Senate hearing, emphasizing the need for regulation to prevent adverse outcomes. He acknowledged that AI could go 'quite wrong' if not properly managed.
6. <https://www.rappler.com/technology/features/key-quotes-openai-ceo-sam-altman-congress-hearing-may-2023/> - In May 2023, OpenAI CEO Sam Altman testified before Congress, stating that AI is good at tasks but not jobs. He acknowledged potential job displacement and called for government action to address the impact.
7. <https://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2025/03/generative-ai-agents/682050/?utm_source=apple_news> - Major AI firms, including OpenAI, have released products designed to complete tasks autonomously, prompting discussions about potential job displacement. Sam Altman has advocated for new economic models like universal basic income to address these concerns.