



OPPORTUNITY #39

What if this is the end of secondary education as we know it?

SECONDARY NO MORE

Dissolve grade levels and equip youth in secondary education with the confidence, resilience and strong mental health to explore potential futures and make informed decisions through entirely personalised, adaptive and cognitively diverse environments.

MEGATREND

Future Humanity

TRENDS

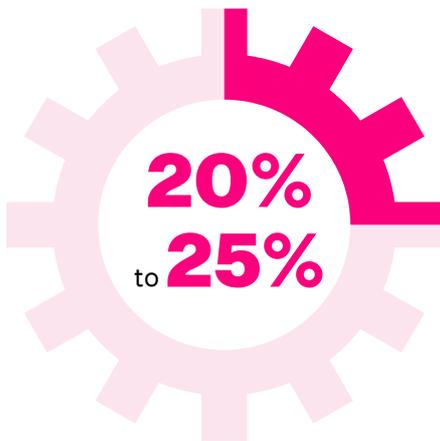
Future of Purpose & Work
HumanXMachine
Mental Health
NeuroscienceTransforming Education

SECTORS AFFECTED

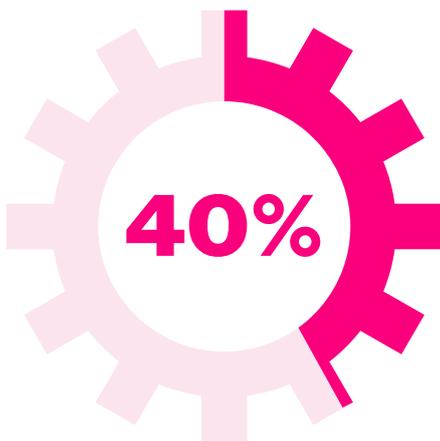
Communication Technologies & Systems
Data Science, AI & Machine Learning
Education
Health & Healthcare
Immersive Technologies

WHY IT MATTERS TODAY

By 2030, automation will put around



of jobs **at risk** in Asian and Nordic countries and around



in some Eastern European countries.

Adolescence is a unique time in people's lives. Particularly during this phase of intense emotional, physical and social change and challenges, mental health issues can reduce adolescents' well-being, with the effects potentially lasting a lifetime.⁶⁵⁶ These issues can be hard to overcome and can put individuals' future prosperity and well-being at risk, so protecting adolescents and safeguarding their mental health is important. In figures that are likely to be underreported, one in seven adolescents (aged 10 to 19 years) could be experiencing mental health issues.⁶⁵⁷ Nearly 5% of individuals aged between 15 and 19 have an anxiety disorder that affects them on a daily basis, and many of them deal with their disorder through risk-taking behaviours, which may lead to addiction or suicide.⁶⁵⁸

While access to education has improved globally since 2000, it still presents challenges. Half of the 244 million children who are out of school are aged between 15 and 17, with sub-Saharan Africa having the highest out-of-school rates (48%).⁶⁵⁹

Even when there is access to education, the question of improving educational outcomes and catering to different abilities and learning preferences has always been of focus.⁶⁶⁰ Enabled by technology as per teachers' needs⁶⁶¹ and sought learning outcomes,⁶⁶² personalised learning provides students with foundational knowledge, opportunities for real-world application, improved capabilities and clarity for plans and skills for the future.⁶⁶³

AI, robotics and automation are expected to contribute up to \$15 trillion to global GDP by 2030, but it is also anticipated that automation will put around 20% to 25% of jobs at risk in Asian and Nordic countries and around 40% in some Eastern European countries.⁶⁶⁴

In the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), unemployment is a particular concern for young people aged 18 to 24.⁶⁶⁵ In 2021, there was 14% unemployment in the MENA region not including the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). Waged and salaried workers made up 66% of the workforce while 34% were self-employed. Including the GCC, the MENA region witnessed a 5% unemployment rate in 2021. Waged and salaried workers made up 95% of the workforce and 5% were self-employed.⁶⁶⁶



THE OPPORTUNITY

With primary school education focused on the basics of reading, writing, mathematics, communications and the critical thinking skills needed to acquire knowledge, secondary school becomes entirely personalised. Focused on the application of acquired cognitive skills, access to deeper knowledge and analysis, and on the discovery and development of talent and interests within a structured and healthy environment focused on positive social–emotional health, secondary schooling is adaptive in breadth, depth and speed to the aspirations and potential in young people.

Authoritative, supportive and structured school environments would deliver better educational outcomes, particularly in terms of adolescents' well-being and their social and emotional health. Student–student and student–teacher relationships would be built on respect, supporting and preparing students both academically and in terms of emotional resilience.⁶⁶⁷

Thanks to advances in both psychological and neurological sciences and their application, grade levels are abolished and intellectual diversity could become a priority, improving individual engagement, collective cooperation and better knowledge capture, learning, concentration and recall.⁶⁶⁸

No longer labelled as 'just students', post-14s would make informed decisions and explore potential future careers. Through ongoing opportunities for practical experience and learning, they would be empowered to prepare for adulthood in the most effective way, paving a path towards their prosperity and well-being in the future.

BENEFITS

Well-adjusted adolescents with better life outcomes in terms of employment, income, social skills and mental health.

RISKS

Inability of schools and teachers to support adolescents and structure school life and assessments in line with the re-engineered pedagogy. New challenges for higher educational institutions responding to new ways of assessment and student preparation for higher education.



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