

Slow Italian, Fast Learning

Ep.422: New report calls for a nationwide strategy on AI in the workplace

Italian	English
<p>Ad Adelaide ha avuto luogo un forum che vedeva la partecipazione del governo, delle associazioni dei datori di lavoro e dei sindacati sul tema dell'intelligenza artificiale sul posto di lavoro.</p> <p>La ministra del Lavoro Amanda Rishworth ha dichiarato durante il forum che il governo Albanese non ha ignorato la diffusione di questa tecnologia.</p> <p>"In our second term, our government has been very focused on what has been happening around AI. And the opportunities that AI does present. But also our focus through - a lot of our work has been how we spread the benefits of AI, but also how keeping Australians safe. We're also building trust and confidence in how these technologies are used."</p> <p>La diffusione dell'intelligenza artificiale sul posto di lavoro è stata rapida.</p> <p>I dati forniti dalla Business School della University of Melbourne indicano che quasi tre dipendenti su cinque (58%) utilizzano intenzionalmente l'IA sul posto di lavoro con regolarità, mentre un terzo la utilizza settimanalmente o quotidianamente.</p> <p>Il ministro ha affermato che il governo ha un piano per l'IA in Australia e che il suo successo dipende dalla collaborazione tra i vari livelli di governo, le imprese e la comunità.</p> <p>"We are actively putting the right foundations in place to build confidence in how AI is adopted and applied in Australia. But trust really sit at the heart of this work: trust that AI will be used safely and fairly."</p>	<p>In Adelaide, a forum took place with the government, employer groups and unions on artificial intelligence in the workplace.</p> <p>Employment Minister Amanda Rishworth has told the forum that the Albanese government has not ignored the spread of the technology.</p> <p>"In our second term, our government has been very focused on what has been happening around AI. And the opportunities that AI does present. But also our focus through - a lot of our work has been how we spread the benefits of AI, but also how keeping Australians safe. We're also building trust and confidence in how these technologies are used."</p> <p>The spread of artificial intelligence at work has been rapid.</p> <p>Figures from the University of Melbourne's Business School suggest nearly three in five employees (58%) intentionally use AI at work on a regular basis, with a third using it weekly or daily.</p> <p>The Minister says the government has a plan for AI in Australia - and its success depends on cooperation between multiple layers of government, business and community.</p> <p>"We are actively putting the right foundations in place to build confidence in how AI is adopted and applied in Australia. But trust really sit at the heart of this work: trust that AI will be used safely and fairly."</p>



Ma alcuni – come il dottor Dominic Meagher Marr del John Curtin Research Centre – sono preoccupati.

"Social media's algorithms affect the way we talk, the way we communicate, the ideas we're exposed to and the way it pushes people into bubbles. The incentive is to have more extreme discourse. And that was a huge problem. AI has potentially those same incentives but on a much bigger scale. Instead of having groups of social networks that you're communicating with, you're getting your ideas not in the public domain at all necessarily but directly from an AI tool that knows you intimately and only you can see what it's saying. Most of the time, unless you're using Grok. And so you're getting a custom, bespoke version of the world that potentially plays into some of your - let's say, less well-balanced perceptions of the world... and can encourage more extreme discourse and reinforce some negative ideas if you haven't set it up properly."

Il dottor Meagher è coautore di un nuovo rapporto sull'intelligenza artificiale, sostenuto dalla SDA, il più grande sindacato australiano del settore della vendita al dettaglio e del Fast Food.

Il rapporto sostiene che l'Australia non disporrebbe di una strategia nazionale per regolamentare la diffusione dell'intelligenza artificiale nei luoghi di lavoro.

"AI is one of these enormous consequential technologies. There's going to be impacts on everything - but particularly the way work works."

Tra le principali preoccupazioni dei sindacati vi è il timore che l'intelligenza artificiale possa intensificare la sorveglianza dei lavoratori, aumentare i carichi di lavoro

But some - like Dr Dominic Meagher Marr from the John Curtin Research Centre - are worried.

"Social media's algorithms affect the way we talk, the way we communicate, the ideas we're exposed to and the way it pushes people into bubbles. The incentive is to have more extreme discourse. And that was a huge problem. AI has potentially those same incentives but on a much bigger scale. Instead of having groups of social networks that you're communicating with, you're getting your ideas not in the public domain at all necessarily but directly from an AI tool that knows you intimately and only you can see what it's saying. Most of the time, unless you're using Grok. And so you're getting a custom, bespoke version of the world that potentially plays into some of your - let's say, less well-balanced perceptions of the world... and can encourage more extreme discourse and reinforce some negative ideas if you haven't set it up properly."

Dr Meagher is the co-author of a new report on AI - backed by the SDA, Australia's largest retail and fast-food union.

The report argues Australia lacks a national strategy to regulate the spread of AI in workplaces.

"AI is one of these enormous consequential technologies. There's going to be impacts on everything - but particularly the way work works."

Some of the key concerns for unions are that that AI could intensify worker surveillance, unsafe workloads, and job insecurity.



insostenibili e aggravare la precarietà lavorativa.

Lo studio della Melbourne Business School ha rilevato che il 26% dei dipendenti ha segnalato un aumento dei carichi di lavoro e dello stress, nonché un incremento delle attività ripetitive (39%).

Per il dottor Meagher ciò significa che saranno necessarie misure di salvaguardia.

"They've got the right idea in terms of understanding that this new technology is coming along and we want to make sure that it works for Australia. They've acknowledged that. But how do they do it? What I would really like to see from the Australian government is that doubling down on the institutions that we have, and the regulatory frameworks that we have, and updating them for this new technology and the challenges it poses, is really the guiding light."

È già stata condotta un'analisi delle carenze di manodopera per valutare gli effetti dell'intelligenza artificiale sui posti di lavoro.

Per la Ministra alcune ricerche suggeriscono che l'IA abbia rallentato la crescita in alcuni settori lavorativi - come quello dei cosiddetti *keyboards operators*, chi inserisce dati in dei file - mentre, nell'economia in generale, la composizione dei posti di lavoro non è cambiata più rapidamente del previsto o di quanto sarebbe considerato normale.

La Rishworth ha dichiarato di intravedere il potenziale per un miglioramento della produttività a livello nazionale grazie all'uso dell'IA.

Tuttavia comprende anche le preoccupazioni.

"We know that many Australians are anxious about AI and its impacts. If workers

The Melbourne Business School study found 26 percent of employees have reported increased workloads and stress, an increase in repetitive tasks (39 percent)..

Dr Meagher says that means safeguards will be required.

"They've got the right idea in terms of understanding that this new technology is coming along and we want to make sure that it works for Australia. They've acknowledged that. But how do they do it? What I would really like to see from the Australian government is that doubling down on the institutions that we have, and the regulatory frameworks that we have, and updating them for this new technology and the challenges it poses, is really the guiding light."

A workforce gap analysis has already been conducted into the effects of AI on jobs.

The minister says some research suggests AI has slowed growth in some jobs - like keyboard operators - while in the wider economy, the mix of jobs has not changed faster than expected or would be considered usual.

Amanda Rishworth says she can see the potential for an improvement in productivity nationwide with the use of AI.

But she says she also understands the concerns.

"We know that many Australians are anxious about AI and its impacts. If workers are treated dispoably by their employer - if AI is used in a way that can cause harm - then this anxiety can harden into distrust. And this has been seen in the recent Redbridge



are treated disposably by their employer - if AI is used in a way that can cause harm - then this anxiety can harden into distrust. And this has been seen in the recent Redbridge polling published in the AFR where 73 percent of workers believed AI will be negative for their job security."

Per il dottor Meagher la posta in gioco è alta.

"Certainly a lot could go wrong and a lot could go fantastically. But one of the things we have to do - especially in how AI affects work - is make that sure we bring people together and use it in a way that makes sense for people.... We're doing it in a way that brings people along, makes people as effective as they can be, lifts people up as much as they possibly can, and makes workplaces a place that you really want to be."

polling published in the AFR where 73 percent of workers believed AI will be negative for their job security."

For Dr Meagher, there is a lot at stake.

"Certainly a lot could go wrong and a lot could go fantastically. But one of the things we have to do - especially in how AI affects work - is make that sure we bring people together and use it in a way that makes sense for people.... We're doing it in a way that brings people along, makes people as effective as they can be, lifts people up as much as they possibly can, and makes workplaces a place that you really want to be."

Report by Deborah Groarke for SBS News.

Find more episodes of Slow Italian, Fast Learning using your favourite podcast app or at sbs.com.au/language/italian/podcast/slow-italiano-fast-learning

Listen to SBS Italian every day from 8am - 10am on radio, TV or at sbs.com.au/italian

Follow us on Facebook at facebook.com/sbsitalian/