

The Faces of Work in IT

A HEINEKEN KRAKÓW RESEARCH REPORT

4 practical
insights for
a future-proof
career



4 faces work in IT built for the future

START. FUTURE PROOF

The road to careers built for what comes next.

Why, in today's IT, can growth and stability finally meet in one place—and why should they?

3

FACE 1. A VISION OF THE FUTURE



How to power your own change.

See where the industry pins its biggest fears and hopes—and what that tells us about the careers of tomorrow.

4

FACE 2. THE AI REVOLUTION



How to move from fear to growth.

See what others say about work in the age of AI, and how clear rules of the game help you rise on that wave.

10

FACE 3. GROWTH DIRECTIONS



Where to find new paths.

Discover the fields the industry sees as future-proof—and explore where the opportunities lie.

17

FACE 4. WAYS OF WORKING



How freedom of choice raises the bar.

See how a real say in where and how work gets organized raises the quality of a career.

24

CHECKLISTA

Growth directions in IT—no filters.

Learn how to put the report's insights to work at every next stage of your career.

30



START. FUTURE PROOF

How to build resilience for the future

Future-proof: the state in which you become resilient to market shifts by combining professional stability with a forward-looking specialization and everyday growth.

It's also the phrase that kept coming back to us throughout HEINEKEN Kraków's study of the IT community. Half of the industry fears that within a few years, their skills will no longer keep them employed. 7 in 10 are looking for a stable place to land. Like it or not, thinking about the future is what defines a career in tech. The real question is how you choose to approach it—because in this industry, thinking about tomorrow wears many faces.

Building future resilience is an insurance policy on your career, written against two needs: professional stability and relentless growth. No one today can promise you that nothing will change—but the right employer can hand you the tools to respond faster. Being future-proof in IT means consciously operating in an ecosystem that trades fear of change for a culture of growth, and the pressure to learn for real knowledge earned in everyday work.

At HEINEKEN Kraków, we understand these challenges. We work where IT, finance, logistics and digital commerce meet—right where strong skills and deep knowledge collide with big questions about where the industry's talent is headed. We're building a digital hub in a place where, just a few years ago, many of today's processes were hard to even imagine. It matters deeply to us that so many of the areas where we operate at a European and global level turned out to align with the industry's own visions of the future. And we want to share what we've learned along the way.

This report was created to inspire you to build your own resilience for the future. Meet "The Faces of Work in IT."

700+

voices from the industry on its own future

4

the directions reshaping IT

Fears and plans for the future

Playbooks for the rise of AI

A list of high-growth fields

Work models and styles

30

data points on careers and technology

Checklist

building resilience

Stories

from everyday life at HEINEKEN Kraków

Commentary

from IT practitioners



Visions of the future

FACE 1



If you often think about the future—and the years ahead raise more questions than answers—you're in the majority in IT. See what worries the industry most, and where we're placing our hopes.

And discover how, at HEINEKEN Kraków, we build an environment that pairs strategic thinking with long-horizon, forward-looking projects that create real room to grow.



FACE 1. VISIONS OF THE FUTURE

How to power your own growth and change

Employers who are stable yet challenge you in the best way are worth their weight in gold. In IT, trust is built by taking care of the here and now while offering a real view of tomorrow. The key to building future resilience is choosing work that gives you the chance to... become resilient.

The past few years brought a revolution to IT—one that has profoundly reshaped how we see our careers. Although 77% of us say we're generally satisfied with our current job, a full 61% remain open to new offers. That number reveals something: beneath everyday satisfaction, we're after something more—a foundation that can weather any market turbulence.

A striking 67% of IT professionals admit they're now chasing stability and security above all—even at the cost of prestige. As specialists, we've stopped believing the myth that IT workers are immune to market swings—no matter where we work.

Today, being future-proof often means finding a “safe harbor”—a place that not only gives you a job, but actively keeps you from falling behind technologically. This uncertainty is fueled by very concrete fears—starting with the rise of AI. 42% of people in IT worry that, because of it, their knowledge will be obsolete within five years. Even more of us—46%—feel the stress of having to learn, constantly and without pause. And all of this reshapes our priorities. At the top of the skills the IT community most wants to build today are AI & ML and Cybersecurity—the default “safe islands” that push traditional programming further down the list.

While public posts sometimes mask these fears behind irony, the anonymous voices of specialists reveal a real shift in how we see the world. Until recently, many of us were seen as change-proof—even as the future leaders of that change. But it turned out that growth needs something first: a solid, secure company environment.

Why are stability and growth—so often called opposites—now increasingly linked and sought after together in the IT community? We're living a paradox: to stay safe, you have to step outside your tried-and-true cognitive “bubbles.”

To do that, you need a strong, resilient work ecosystem—one where you know exactly where you stand, yet can still move forward.

The takeaway is simple: the future, long seen as an ally of IT professionals, is now often viewed as a threat. It pays to seek out places where change becomes a source of creative energy and a catalyst for growth.





STABILITY AND GROWTH IN THE INDUSTRY, ACCORDING TO THE IT COMMUNITY

Stability no longer means standing still.
In the IT community:

67%

are seeking stability and security.

61%

would happily change jobs for a compelling offer.

27%

consider their specialization not future-proof enough.

What we're afraid of.
The TOP 5 fears for the near future all circle the same theme—the need for change, and the fear of it:

1. Falling salaries in the industry
2. Your role being replaced by AI
3. Burnout and pressure
4. Instability of your current role
5. Cuts to remote and hybrid work

AI is driving the need to grow:

46%

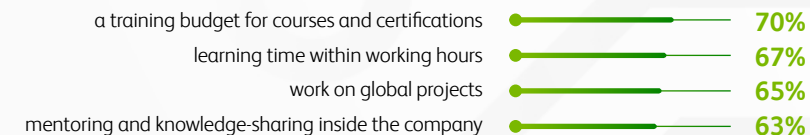
of the industry feel the pressure to keep upskilling.

42%

of the industry fear that the rise of AI will make their current skills less relevant within five years.

Which growth model do we prefer in the industry?

The IT community's expectations around learning come down to one thing: pairing everyday practice with courses. What we rate as important for growth:



The TOP 5 areas where professionals most want to grow:

1. AI & Machine Learning
2. Cybersecurity
3. Programming
4. Data Analytics / Business Intelligence
5. Soft skills and leadership



HOW WE DO IT AT HEINEKEN KRAKÓW

A culture powered by growth.

GROWTH AS PART OF EVERYDAY WORK:

In growing ourselves and our teams, we lead with dialogue and an eye on the future. We build it on 4 behaviors:

SHAPE

means employees actively shaping the company.

DEVELOP

means growing yourself and others in everyday work.

CONNECT

means building relationships and working closely together.

DELIVER

means hitting goals and owning the results.

STABILITY AND GROWTH:

15 years in operation, 2,600 employees, nearly 1,000 in IT:

As HEINEKEN Kraków, we've been running for 15 years and now count 600 people in Digital & Technology. At the same time, in the last 18 months alone, we've hired 250 new specialists in Digital Commerce. Instead of handing projects off to outside vendors, we grow them in-house.

FUTURE-PROOF FIELDS:

We bet on the directions the industry sees as future-proof:

In Digital & Technology in Kraków, we build projects spanning areas such as:

1. Cybersecurity
2. Data Engineering & AI
3. Global e-Commerce
4. Cloud Native & Platform Engineering

GREENFIELD SOLUTIONS:

How we build the company's digital future from the ground up:

In Kraków, we build global-scale projects greenfield—from the ground up—which makes us pivotal to HEINEKEN's digital future:

eazle: HEINEKEN's global B2B platform, used by hundreds of thousands of customers and partners.

AI tools: pricing algorithms and predictive analytics for the organization.

BUILDING SKILLS:

The 70-20-10 model, put to work at HEINEKEN Kraków:

70% of growth is learning by doing:

- > cross-functional projects;
- > learning through new challenges;
- > short-term assignments on other teams.

20% is learning from others:

- > working with mentors;
- > 1:1 sessions;
- > shadowing in other departments.

10% of growth is formal education:

- > professional certifications; e-learning;
- > workshops and webinars.

The "UNFILTERED TALKS" videocast—get to know the Digital & Technology team at HEINEKEN Kraków and its everyday work.



Anna Choińska

Talent & Leadership Manager

We live in a reality where the pace of technological progress, the speed of information, and the sense of being part of a global network naturally intensify the pressure to keep learning and leveling up. At the same time, it's crucial to understand that the skills that truly drive a sense of job security don't come from the number of courses you've finished, but from your ability to adapt to changing conditions.

And adaptation is more than simply reacting to change. It's the ability to actively shape your own growth, create room for innovation, and consciously build new skills in the flow of work.

At HEINEKEN Kraków, this is exactly how we think about growth. Our learning strategy goes far beyond “finish the course and check the box.” Our culture and our reading of the DEVELOP & SHAPE mindset support learning through experimentation—which also means room to make mistakes, draw conclusions, and take on challenges proactively. What's more, we're redefining the very idea of stability. Stability doesn't mean the absence of change—it means a future you can see and understand.

That's why we put such a strong emphasis on individual development plans, which let people take ownership of their growth and consciously choose the direction they want to move in. But the key is this: growth can't be something “on the side”—it has to happen inside the work itself, and here the 70-20-10 model plays an enormous role.

What does that look like in practice? Picture an employee who has to learn a new technology. In the traditional approach, they get a course and complete it after hours—which often leads to a sense of overload and one nagging question: “Why am I really doing this?”

In the 70-20-10 model, it looks different: the employee gets a task that requires the new technology (70%), works with a more experienced colleague who shares knowledge and supports them along the way (20%), and the course becomes a tool for reaching a concrete goal rather than one more obligation (10%).

That's what gives learning meaning. I learn because I can see the point; growth is part of the work, not an “after-hours” task; and pressure turns into the natural process of building skills.



Working with participants in the training room as a trainer, I keep seeing a few key takeaways surface again and again in our conversations:

- take on tasks you don't yet feel fully sure about,
- step into new areas even if it feels uncomfortable at first (that discomfort is exactly the sign that you're growing),
- it's not about perfection—it's about steady progress.

Your job security doesn't come from the number of courses you've completed, but from your ability to adapt to needs and changes as they emerge. You don't have to know everything in advance. What matters is knowing what to learn, and how to learn it, the moment a real need appears—by working in an environment that gives you room to grow and act.

That's how you grow together with the organization, building skills in response to real challenges instead of reacting to hypothetical market demands.



Maciej Szczęsny

Head of Operational Data Services



I believe the future of IT still looks very promising—though it has also become more demanding. It all comes down to the omnipresent rise of artificial intelligence, which many see as a risk and a way to replace people. You can see the echo of that in market dynamics. An industry once defined by high churn and a constant hunger for more is evolving. You can see it in the research, too: right now, two-thirds of IT professionals are looking for stability and security.

On my teams, I see that people want to work with cutting-edge technology—but they also need an environment that gives them room to learn without a constant fear for the future.

At HEINEKEN Kraków, we bring those two worlds together. On one hand, over the past six years we've built a Digital & Technology function in Kraków that now employs more than 1,000 people. On the other, we work to use technology and AI to boost productivity—not to replace people.

What matters most to me is that we build many projects in-house rather than farming them out. That lets our people work on solutions of global scale. And that, in turn, means gaining experience in the areas that truly define the future of the industry today—AI, Data Engineering, Cybersecurity, and Platform Engineering.

My advice for IT professionals? Look for stable, growing environments—but never stop investing in yourself, with a sharp focus on emerging technology. Flexibility and a willingness to learn have become more essential than ever. The train called AI has already left the station—and it's up to you how you'll use the enormous possibilities it brings on board.



The AI Revolution

FACE 2



In the digital economy, you'll meet AI enthusiasts and AI skeptics alike. Whichever one you are, our study lays bare the emotions artificial intelligence stirs up. You'll also learn just how much an open conversation about AI matters to all of us.

See how, at HEINEKEN Kraków, we help our people evolve their knowledge and give them the nudge to build real AI skills.

FACE 2. THE AI REVOLUTION

How to move from fear to growth

In the industry’s conversation about AI, there are no vacations. Sleep on it for a day and you’ll miss a major shift. AI may have become a given, but it’s far less obvious whether companies are truly ready for the revolution underway—and whether they have an answer to it. Instead of generalities, we need companies that put a concrete strategy on the table.

The more we talk about AI, the more these numbers stun us. 4 in 10 people in the IT community admit the rules for using AI at their company are unclear to them. At the same time, 7 in 10 of us want to know our employer’s strategy for developing and rolling out AI. That’s a clear signal: how an organization approaches this technology has become one of the industry’s key markers of a great place to work.

AI can be a source of anxiety—but as our study shows, that anxiety usually isn’t about the technology itself. The problem is uncertainty

about how the employer intends to use it. Many of us feel a “hunger for strategy”—we want to know the plan so we can prepare to deliver on it. As specialists, we’re not afraid of innovation—we’re afraid of the absence of clear “rules of the game.”

Moving from fear to proactive adoption on a team takes an employer willing to provide concrete frameworks, goals, and the tools meant to get it done. According to the study, these are exactly the workplaces the industry is increasingly looking for.

We already have a starting point for living well with AI: 60% of the industry sees AI’s rise as a chance to leave routine, purely operational tasks behind for project- and advisory-focused roles. But that takes strategy and thoughtful rollout—and we know from the market that AI has driven plenty of rushed, ill-considered moves.

Where there’s a strategy, growth goals are far easier to reach. When it comes to AI, most of us want to sharpen our skills in both the engineering and the business sides of the technology. The TOP 5 growth directions are led by: AI Engineering & MLOps (38%), Business AI Consulting (36%), AI Data Governance (34%), GenAI Solution Architects (29%), and IoT & Edge AI (22%).

What does it mean for you? The AI boom is redefining the IT specialist—from “executor” to “architect of value.” AI isn’t just a buzzword; it’s also, too often, rolled out without a plan. It pays to seek out companies where AI has long been part of a deliberate transformation roadmap.





WORKING WITH AI, THROUGH THE EYES OF THE IT COMMUNITY

**AI: partner,
not opponent**

60%

of specialists see AI's rise as a chance to move from purely operational roles into project and advisory ones—with real business impact.

**We need the
right tools:**

66%

of the IT community believe it's the company's duty to provide advanced AI tools.

59%

want more chances to experiment with AI in their everyday work.

**We need
structure**

68%

of the IT community want to know their employer's strategy for developing and rolling out AI.

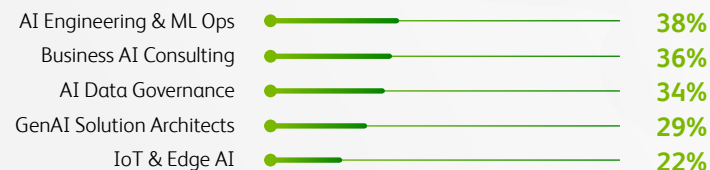
40%

admit the rules for using AI at their company are unclear.

**AI tools. What does
the study say we
want to learn over
the next 12 months?**

1. Prompt engineering, LLM-based technologies
2. Advanced coding assistants
3. AI-dedicated cloud services
4. Low-code automation platforms
5. Predictive analytics and recommendation systems

**Where we want to
grow in AI—TOP 5:**



1 in 3 respondents named access to consultations with outside experts among their TOP 3 most important forms of support for AI adoption.



HOW WE DO IT AT HEINEKEN KRAKÓW

AI as a permanent part of the ecosystem

A PARTNERSHIP WITH MICROSOFT

We're building our "digital backbone" on Microsoft solution architecture. That translates directly into how we grow AI, too:

AI training led by Microsoft experts

Putting Azure AI Services to work

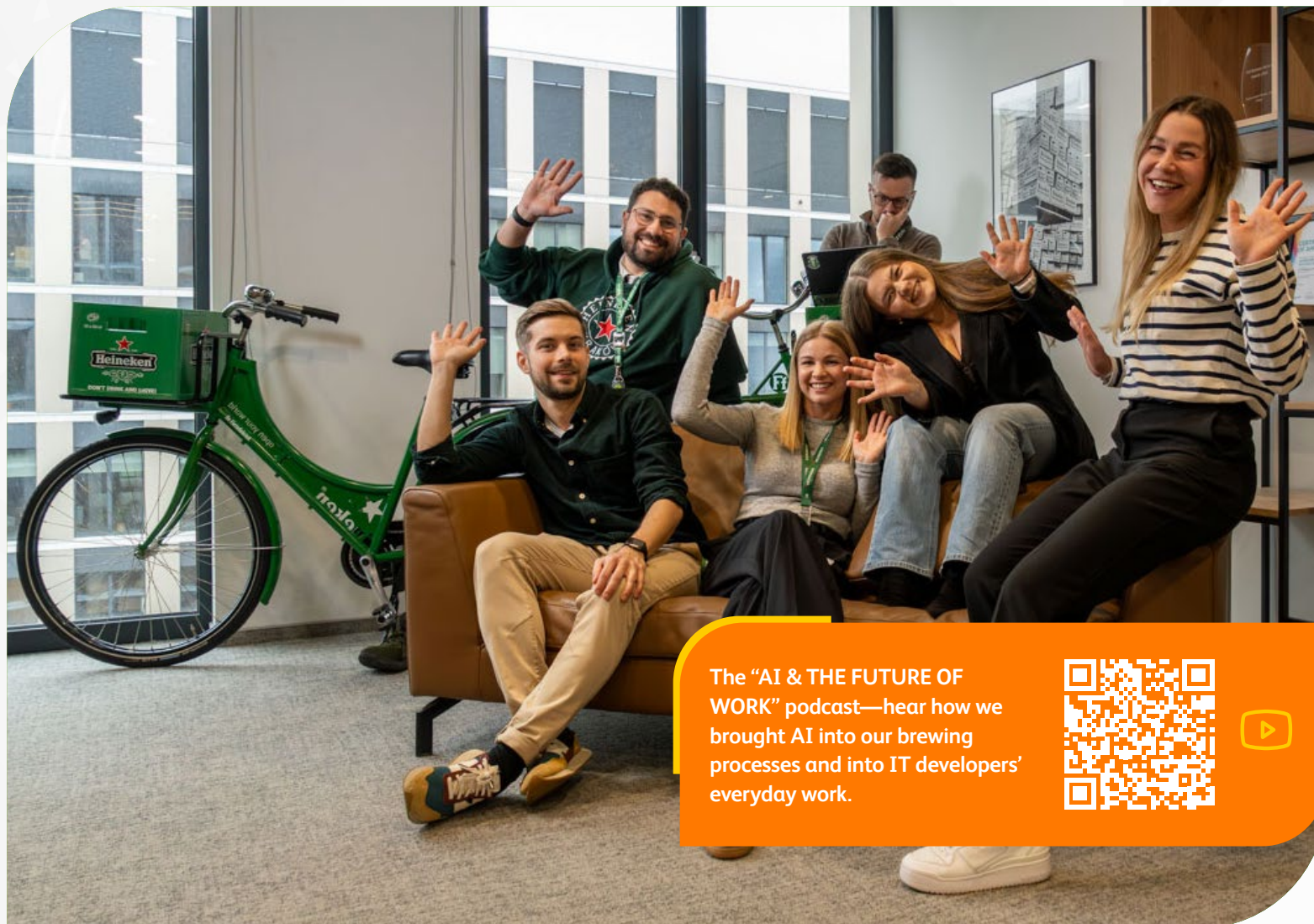
Using Copilot Studio and building agents in natural language.

Access to the Power Platform for our in-house app builders

PREDICTIONS FOR SALES.

THE INTERNATIONAL AIDDA PROJECT:

In Kraków, we maintain and develop AIDDA—a virtual assistant that predicts customers' future behaviors and needs, learning from every interaction they have with the brand. It supports an average of nearly 500,000 customer contacts a day for sales reps across 8 markets. It arms sales teams with concrete arguments and data, tailored to each specific customer.



The "AI & THE FUTURE OF WORK" podcast—hear how we brought AI into our brewing processes and into IT developers' everyday work.





Maria Michalik

Capability Lead



The report's data makes one thing clear: AI is no longer a topic for debate—it's the new standard of work. 68% of IT professionals expect a clear AI strategy from their employer, and 59% want more room to experiment. So it's obvious where the biggest gap is today—between strategy and everyday practice. And that's exactly where the real change happens.

From my perspective, as someone who works on building skills, what matters most is how you translate that need into everyday practice. At HEINEKEN, when we design learning, we build on the 70-20-10 model—putting the emphasis on learning by doing, learning from others, and learning through experience.

AI Days, which we've been running for two years, is a great example for me: people come not just to listen, but above all to test things, watch others, and swap ideas. And it's in moments like these that you can see AI stop being a "topic" and start becoming a real part of the work.

At the same time, 60% of specialists see AI as a chance to grow into more project- and advisory-focused roles. That shows the shift isn't only about tools—it's about the skills of the future: learning, critical thinking, and collaboration.

The market's signal is clear: don't wait for AI to "enter your role"—it's already there. Treat it not just as a work tool, but as a partner in learning.

Today, knowledge is practically in your pocket—the key is to use it consciously: test, ask questions, and verify what you find. Because in practice, the biggest difference isn't what you know today—it's how fast you can learn and adapt.



Bartosz Pietraszak

Commerce Service Delivery Manager



AI is steadily moving from isolated experiments to the foundation of everyday business operations. At the same time, my experience shows that the greatest value comes not from individual tools, but from a coherent approach to data, processes, and AI solutions that can be developed and scaled globally.

A great example is AIDDA—a data-driven solution that uses analytics and machine learning to spot business risks and opportunities, such as potential customer churn, missed orders, declining revenue, or gaps in the product range.

The system turns those signals into a prioritized action and visit plan, backed by concrete business recommendations.

A key element is the route-planning engine, which optimizes visit schedules by balancing business priorities, customer value, and travel time. As a result, sales reps work from a dynamic, data-driven visit plan instead of fixed routes. AIDDA also supports sales managers and planning teams, cutting admin and making decisions easier. Importantly, this solution has already been rolled out across 8 operating companies, driving volume and revenue growth of 1.1% to 4.8% depending on the region.

Projects like these show that the developer's role is starting to evolve. It's less and less about writing code alone, and more and more about understanding data, business processes, and how technology supports decision-making. As AI grows more important, the areas around governance, security, data quality, model transparency, and the ethical use of AI will play an ever-greater role. It's no accident that 60% of specialists see AI as a chance to move into more project- and advisory-focused roles. My advice to them is simple: it pays to build not only technical skills, but also business acumen, fluency with data, and responsible AI design.



Katarzyna Konarowska

Talent Acquisition Manager



Most of the market is asking itself the same questions: Will AI replace the specialists in specific industries? Who will it replace first? Which jobs are most at risk? In my view, the answer is more nuanced. If someone is going to be replaced, it won't be by AI itself. They'll be replaced by people who learn to use AI better, faster, and smarter. And that's the real change we're seeing. As the research shows, 60% of specialists see AI as a chance to move into more project-, strategy-, and advisory-focused roles. And rightly so. This isn't a passing trend—it's the market's natural evolution. Just as ATMs didn't replace people in banking, calculators didn't take work from mathematicians, and computers didn't eliminate accountants or engineers.

Technology doesn't remove specialists. Technology changes the way specialists work. That's exactly why the people learning to work with AI today are building an enormous edge for the future.

We have to be clear-eyed: routine tasks will be automated—but in return, the value of soft skills, experience, analysis, creativity, business understanding, and decision-making will only rise.

At HEINEKEN Kraków, we're building an AI-powered work environment. Thanks to projects like eazle, AIDDA, and Digital BackBone, our people don't just learn an innovative way of working—they create a new reality, putting their knowledge and experience to work. Our Demand Planners, Product Designers, Product Owners, and Solution Architects are already building AI solutions that have a real impact on the world around us.

But AI isn't only about tech roles. Through initiatives like AI Days, our company gives every employee the chance to build new skills—and to put that knowledge to work in practice—for example, in their current job.

That lets us build an organization where innovation is simply part of how the company runs.

And while technology matters more and more at HEINEKEN Kraków, in our recruitment the human always comes first. For my team, the relationship with candidates—understanding their experience, motivations, and aspirations—is essential to a quality process and a great candidate experience.

My advice for IT professionals: don't fear change—seize the opportunity appearing on the horizon. Don't focus only on what you do today, but on what your role could look like two years from now.



Growth Directions

FACE 3



There's no hiding it—the lineup of specializations that open the most career doors in IT has been dramatically reshuffled in recent years. Our study reveals where industry people see their best chances to keep growing—and it's mainly mids and seniors talking.

See how, at HEINEKEN Kraków, we deliver global projects in 3 fields the IT community considers well worth exploring for upskilling and reskilling.

FACE 3. GROWTH DIRECTIONS

Where to find new career paths

AI isn't the only direction offering a stable, well-paid career. The IT community is looking toward several other fields too—and the study proves it. A little in AI's shadow, long-term international projects are advancing, delivered at a world-class level. The ones that matter most are those developed right here, in Poland, despite every market swing.

Amid market uncertainty, many of us are starting to look either for "safe islands" or for areas of dynamic growth. And the industry can pinpoint those directions with precision. We most often see the chance for real resilience—paired with room to grow—in cybersecurity, Big Data & AI, digital commerce, and the cloud. Our study proves that even areas like legacy systems—under the right conditions—can spark the imagination when it comes to a future career.

When we talk about growth directions, it's worth remembering that in our study only 9% of respondents held junior roles in IT, while a full 60% were senior or above. So we're not talking about people just starting out, but about people whose observations usually rest on many years of experience.

As the field promising the greatest resilience to turbulence, cybersecurity took the podium (57%)—with a commanding lead over Big Data & AI. It's no longer just the role of the "cop" reacting to attacks that have already happened. It's a strategic product, where what interests us most is actively hunting for threats and predicting them (47%) and securing digital identity on a global scale (43%).

Cybersecurity in its most future-proof form lives by the secure-by-design principle, where security plays a key role from the very first stage of design. That's how people in this field become key stakeholders for the company, not just executors—which, in turn, ties right back to the growth goals we discussed earlier in the report.





An equally powerful magnet for growth is modern e-commerce, whose importance surged especially after the pandemic and the upheaval in global supply chains. In other words: when online pulled even further ahead of offline in retail. Today, a full 61% of the IT community say they want to work on projects like these in the future.

Here, the industry is moving away from simple online stores toward building complex B2B ecosystems (44%) and composable commerce architecture (26%), built on flexible microservices in the cloud. At HEINEKEN Kraków, we're right in the middle of it all, developing the global eazle platform used by hundreds of thousands of customers and partners.

A remarkable shift is happening in how we view ERP systems and cloud migrations. While the peak fascination with the cloud itself may have passed, legacy-modernization projects—contrary to the stereotypes—can draw as many as 60% of the IT community.

That shift comes from how much these processes have evolved in recent years. Migrating systems to the latest S/4HANA standards, for instance, can be seen as a massive engineering challenge on a truly unique scale.

How should you read these findings in the context of your career? Innovation doesn't hide only where it's talked about loudest. In our view, plenty of fields that shape the everyday lives of millions go unspoken far too often—and the IT community seems to agree. A technological backbone—and real resilience—is built where seemingly familiar, everyday processes are transformed at scale.



Bartosz Przechak

Cyber Security Officer

From my perspective, the “safe island” in cybersecurity today comes mainly from this: thanks to a Secure by Design approach and SIEM and SOAR tools, we’ve stopped working reactively.

Instead of constantly putting out fires, we have greater control over security from the design stage, full visibility into the environment, and automated incident response.

That makes the work more predictable, less operationally draining, and more strategic—and that’s exactly what gives you a real sense of stability in this role.



Artur Stachyra

Head of Digital Commerce Hub

The fact that a full 61% of IT professionals want to work on e-commerce projects doesn’t surprise me at all. It’s one of those areas where you can clearly see the real impact and results of our work. The solutions we build translate directly into the company’s results, the customer experience, and consumers’ everyday buying decisions. That’s exactly why e-commerce is, for many specialists today, one of the most prestigious places to grow in IT.

From my perspective, what matters most is that modern e-commerce can no longer be built in a rigid way. Composable commerce architecture gives us the flexibility we need “for the future”—it

lets us build platforms modularly, respond faster to market needs, ship new features, and adapt to technological change more easily.

At the same time, it’s increasingly clear that in IT, loyalty to a single technology or a single stack is no longer enough. Career paths are becoming more dynamic, and as AI advances, flexibility, business understanding, and soft skills matter more than ever. Technology is becoming more accessible and its use is gradually “democratizing,” so the edge today belongs to those who can pair technical know-how with real impact on the organization—and above all, on the business.

At HEINEKEN, we’re currently transforming our e-commerce area in response to rapid market and technological change. We’re simplifying and unifying our e-commerce platforms, building one coherent global e-commerce ecosystem—eazle. It’s an enormous undertaking, given the number of countries and the hundreds of thousands of customers we work with every day, and the fact that e-commerce systems drive more than 50% of the company’s revenue. And it’s precisely that scale, complexity, and real impact that make it such a fascinating environment for the very best IT professionals.



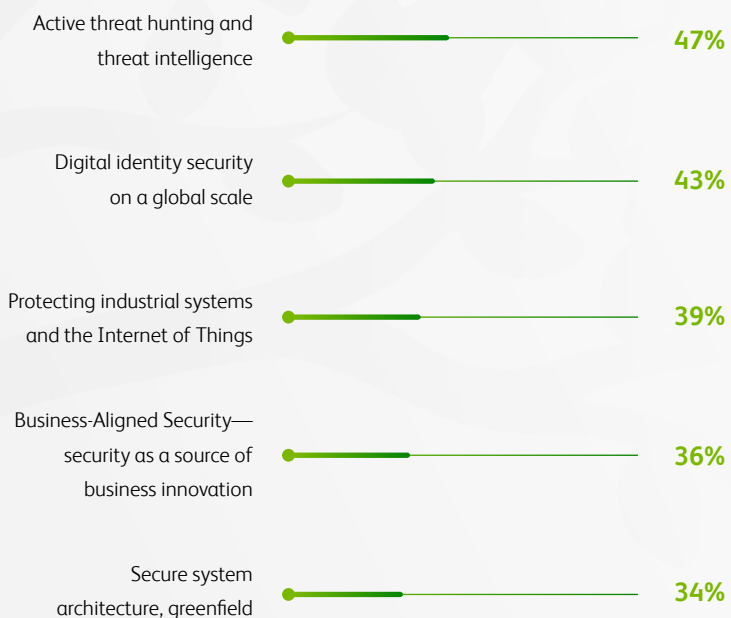
THE IT COMMUNITY ON CYBERSECURITY PROJECTS

57%

of the IT community consider cybersecurity a field that offers stable growth opportunities over the next 5 years.

What interests us most?

TOP 5 growth directions in cybersecurity



CYBERSECURITY AT HEINEKEN KRAKÓW

SECURE BY DESIGN:

In line with the secure-by-design principle, HEINEKEN Kraków uses SIEM and SOAR tools to shift from a reactive to a proactive cybersecurity model.

GLOBAL CYBER DEFENSE OPERATIONS (CDO) CENTER:

The Cyber Defense Operations team handles threat monitoring and incident response for HEINEKEN's infrastructure worldwide—keeping production and sales running across dozens of countries.

ACTIVE THREAT HUNTING AND AUTOMATION:

We use advanced SIEM- and SOAR-class tools to move from a reactive model to fully automated incident response.

IDENTITY MANAGEMENT AT MEGA SCALE:

Identity and Access Management (IAM) projects safeguard the digital identities of thousands of employees and trading partners.

The “CYBERSECURITY AT HEINEKEN” podcast—hear about the key skills in cybersecurity and how HEINEKEN Kraków employees move into this team.





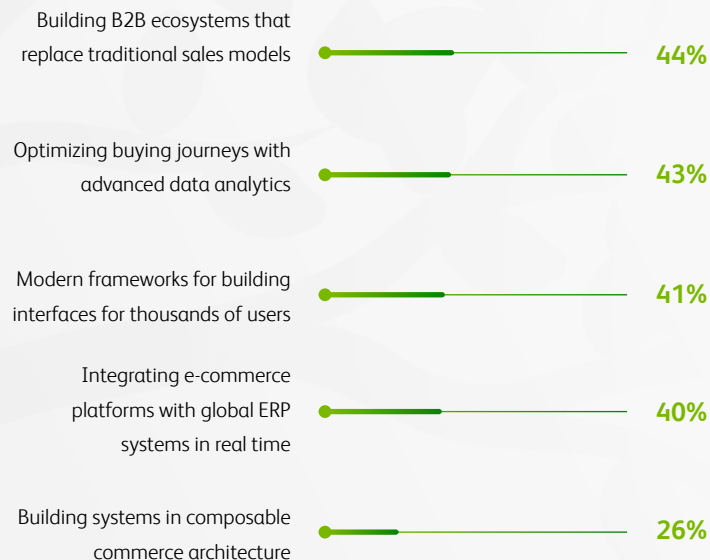
THE IT COMMUNITY ON E-COMMERCE PROJECTS

61%

of the IT community would be interested in working on e-commerce projects in the future.

What interests us most?

TOP 5 growth directions in e-commerce



COMMERCE AT HEINEKEN KRAKÓW

ACROSS THE ENTIRE COMPANY:

The e-commerce channel drives roughly \$14 billion in HEINEKEN revenue a year.

HIRING AND GROWTH:

Commerce is the fastest-growing tech function at HEINEKEN—250 people joined in just 18 months. It's now more than 300 people across four locations: Poland, the Netherlands, India, and Mexico.

COMPOSABLE COMMERCE:

We're moving away from rigid systems toward flexibly building a sales platform out of independent microservices. They connect through APIs and run in the cloud, letting the company respond to market needs in a flash across more than 25 countries.

THE EAZLE PLATFORM:

A global B2B ecosystem is being built in Kraków. Our people work with React Web and React Native.

A STEP-CHANGE IN EFFICIENCY:

Thanks to recent growth and bringing skills back in-house, we've cut critical incidents by 50%—and reduced technical debt on key platforms by as much as 80%.

Learn more about Digital Commerce at HEINEKEN Kraków.



An interview with Artur Stachyra, Head of Commerce DevOps at HEINEKEN Kraków, on the international Digital Commerce team.



Get to know eazle, the B2B platform built in Kraków for HEINEKEN's customers and partners.

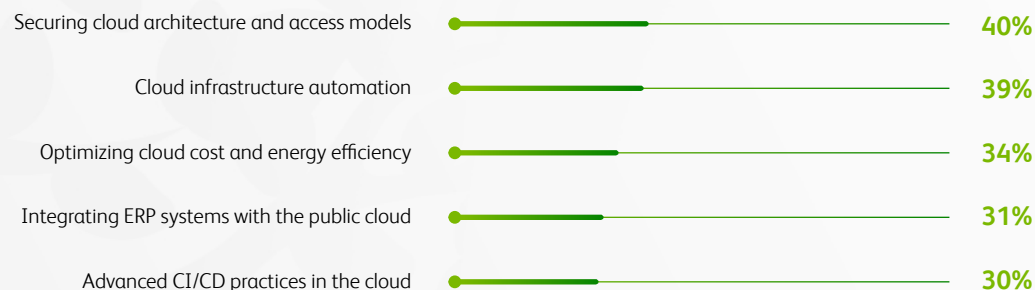


THE IT COMMUNITY ON CLOUD AND ERP/SAP PROJECTS

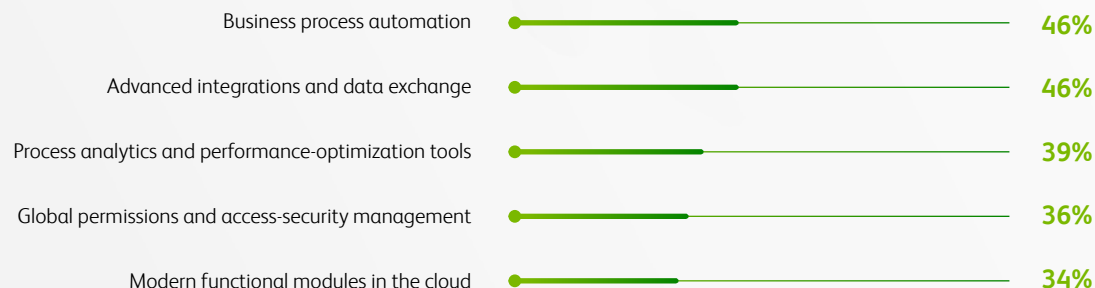
60%

of the IT community would like to work on legacy-modernization projects—migrations to the latest cloud standards.

What interests us most? TOP 5 growth directions in cloud



What interests us most? TOP 5 growth directions in ERP/SAP



CLOUD AND ERP AT HEINEKEN KRAKÓW

MIGRATION—A GLOBAL PROJECT ON A UNIQUE SCALE:

HEINEKEN Kraków played a key role in the migration to the cloud-based S/4HANA and RISE with SAP, tied to the integration of more than 40 digital platforms.

A UNIQUE BLEND OF ERP AND CLOUD EXPERIENCE:

Against the backdrop of recent migrations from on-premise systems to the cloud, HEINEKEN's move to S/4HANA creates a one-of-a-kind place to grow for experts in both legacy systems and more agile cloud solutions.

KRAKÓW AT THE CENTER OF CHANGE:

Specialists based in Kraków are responsible for designing the global process template (Global Template) for finance, logistics, and sales worldwide—as well as for the quality of data migration, all while keeping current systems running smoothly.



Ways of Working

FACE 4



Mandatory “return-to-office” policies shook up the market—sometimes nudging people to change their environment. But as the study shows, the need for flexibility isn’t only about hybrid or remote work. It’s also about the freedom to work in whatever project model suits us best.

See how, at HEINEKEN Kraków, we run a hybrid built on trust, give people a flexible choice of project-management methodologies, and put a premium on open communication.

FACE 4. WAYS OF WORKING

How freedom of choice raises your standard

At work, most of us want a say—in where we work from, in which methodology, in which language, and in the final product. Each of these is an expression of respect for the employee. In the IT community, we want our hours in the office to have a purpose, and our projects to lead to a concrete goal. These things, together with scale, are what add up to workplaces built for the future.

In “return-to-office” debates, the stakes are rarely the location itself. For 8 in 10 of us, the option to work remotely is proof of trust—and a signal that the company treats us as partners. Without it, common ground is hard to find. After all, 2 in 3 people in IT know someone who quit a job precisely because office policy grew too rigid.

The key is a sense of purpose: 2 in 3 of us experience top-down office mandates as a lack of faith in our professionalism. A full 3 in 4 are looking for places where the team decides when physical presence in the office is actually needed—and where it serves something more than tasks that could just as easily be done from home.

But a work model isn't only about where the work gets done. It's also about how projects are delivered. In the IT community, a full 77% of us want to decide for ourselves which framework (like Scrum or Kanban) fits a given project. Plenty of IT experience teaches us that clinging too rigidly to a methodology, no matter the circumstances, is a recipe for friction on the team.

Work model and methodology are one thing—but a sense of purpose in what we do matters just as much. And while the industry never runs short on sharp humor about the role of IT, in the end most of us (60%) want the technology we build to serve goals higher than the employer's profit alone. Keeping in mind the earlier faces of technology in this report, remember that today's changes ultimately come down to two needs: stability and growth. The study shows that amid market turbulence, the IT community is less eager to tie its future to startups or software houses—and more drawn to large, internal corporate tech hubs. These are less exposed to a client's sudden decisions and more often woven into a company's strategic, long-term plans.

How can you apply these industry trends to your own life? The modern standard of work means moving from the role of “hired hand” to that of “partner.” It pays to look for organizations that, instead of managing your time, give you room to manage a product and a real say in where the company is headed. True freedom isn't the absence of an office—it's the presence of trust.



**HOW THE IT COMMUNITY SEES NEW WAYS OF WORKING**

Trust is the foundation of hybrid. In the IT community:

80%

believe that the option to work remotely (fully or mostly) signals an employer's trust.

78%

see flexibility in choosing where to work as proof that the company treats its team as partners.

64%

view top-down return-to-office mandates as a lack of faith in the team's maturity.

Office time has to have a purpose:

Want the team itself to decide when office presence is critical for a project.

76%

Believe the main purpose of office visits should be building relationships, not doing tasks you could do at home.

75%

Respondents know people who changed jobs specifically because of forced returns to the office.

64%

We need influence and transparency:

7/10

of specialists want a real say in shaping the product and in key business decisions.

6/10

want the technology they build to serve goals higher than profit alone (for example, sustainability).

67%

expect companies to publish satisfaction-survey results and act on them with real change.

TOP 5: the traits of an ideal work environment:

1. A clear promotion path tied directly to results
2. Team autonomy in choosing its methodology
3. Support in avoiding burnout
4. A culture of continuous learning and mentoring
5. In-house work for a major brand



Ludmiła Boryło

Chapter Lead, Scrum Master



From my experience working in an Agile environment, it is crystal clear that the greatest value of office work isn't mere desk presence, but the quality of interactions and relationships we build as teams. In a hybrid model, the office should serve as a space for collaboration, knowledge sharing, creative workshops, and strengthening connections—not a place for executing tasks that can be performed just as effectively from home.

This is why I strongly advocate for an approach where teams themselves decide when physical presence is truly needed. This is backed by our report data showing that 3 out of 4 employees look for workplaces where the team sets its own

office attendance rules. It underlines how vital autonomy, trust, and a partnership mindset are in organizing work.

In Agile, we naturally champion this model. In practice, high-performing teams are fully capable of determining when it's worthwhile to meet in the office—such as for planning, retrospectives, or discovery workshops—and when remote work provides greater comfort and deep focus.

Tribes and chapters also play a major role in sustaining knowledge exchange and a sense of belonging within a hybrid organization. Regular chapter meetings, communities of practice, and

joint team-building initiatives foster relationships beyond individual teams and fortify our organizational culture.

I firmly believe that the future of hybrid work lies in placing greater trust in people and empowering them to co-create their way of working. Instead of imposing rigid attendance mandates, we should amplify the moments when meeting in the office brings real value: collaboration, integration, team building, and fostering relationships that ultimately pay dividends in the daily work of Agile teams.



HOW WE DO IT AT HEINEKEN KRAKÓW

Flexibility built into how teams work

A HYBRID BUILT ON TRUST:

We work from the office an average of 5 days a month. Meetings are set by managers together with their teams—for workshops, sprints, retros, or getting together..

A COMMUNITY HUB:

The office should help us collaborate, not do the things we can just as easily handle from home. The office has quiet zones, collaboration zones, and a bar—places to talk “not through a screen.”

A PRODUCT-LED ORGANIZATION:

We’ve moved away from waterfall project management toward agile at scale. We organize around a Tribes & Squads structure.

SQUADS: cross-disciplinary units (developers, testers, a Product Owner, UX). They have wide autonomy over how they work.

TRIBES: They group Squads around specific business areas (for example, Commerce, Order). Developers aren’t “resources” shuffled between projects—they’re experts in their domain.

CHAPTERS: this is where we uphold technical standards. We meet with other developers (for example, Java or Azure Cloud) to share knowledge and keep things consistent—while staying flexible.

OPEN COMMUNICATION:

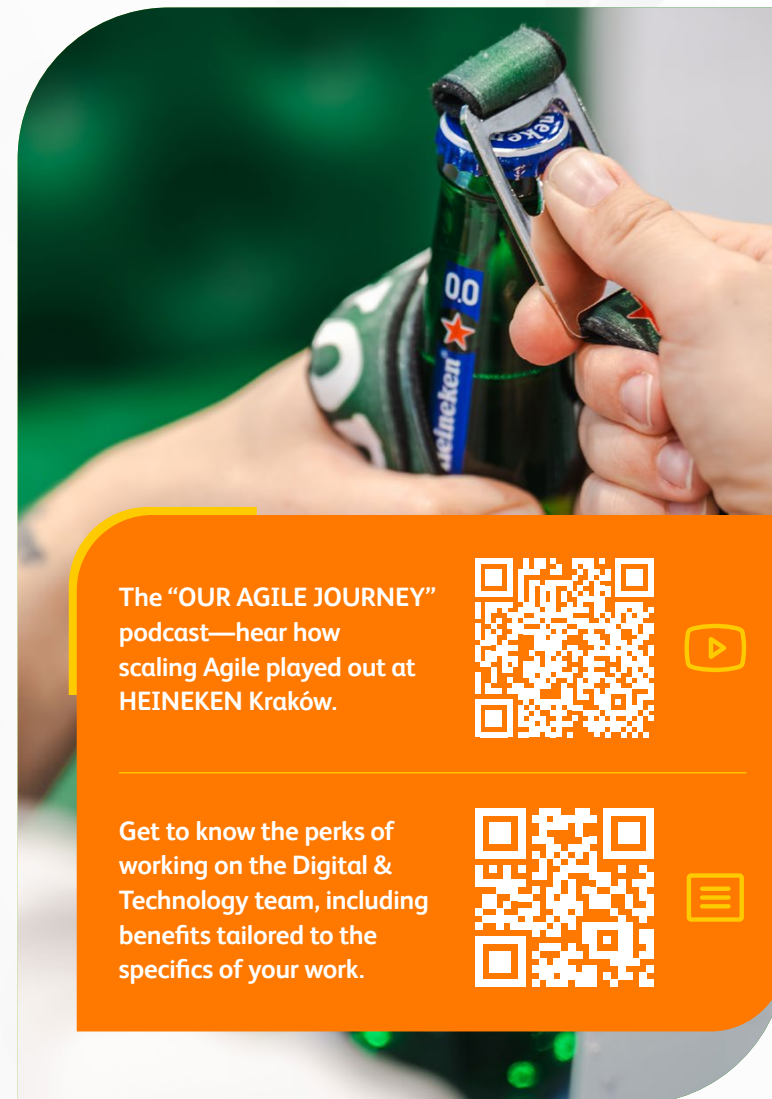
In Kraków, we run “all-in” Q&A sessions and an annual organizational-climate survey that genuinely shapes the decisions we make.

A CULTURE OF RECOGNITION:

In line with the CONNECT principle (from Chapter 1 of the report), we lead with open communication and build relationships through mutual support. To that end, we also use the “Cheers” app, which lets people give each other recognition—not just between management and team members, but across every level of the organization..

BREW A BETTER WORLD—ACTION FOR A GREATER PURPOSE:

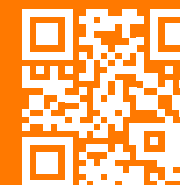
In Kraków, we build many “green solutions”—including route-optimization algorithms and systems (Supply Chain) that cut CO₂ emissions, not just transport costs. And the IoT systems we support in the breweries make it possible to dramatically cut water and energy use in the production process.



The “OUR AGILE JOURNEY” podcast—hear how scaling Agile played out at HEINEKEN Kraków.



Get to know the perks of working on the Digital & Technology team, including benefits tailored to the specifics of your work.





Ewa Szalewska

People Function Manager



From my perspective, the office truly adds value when we use it consciously. When we plan our presence around collaboration, creativity, or fast decision-making, we get what's often missing in fully remote work: a lively exchange of ideas, spontaneous problem-solving, and a natural flow of energy between people. It's also a space where it's easier to build trust and plain human closeness. It's no accident that 75% of IT professionals point to relationship-building as the main purpose of office visits, while 76% want teams to decide when presence truly makes sense.

This approach fits HEINEKEN's culture beautifully—built on the mission to brew the joy of true togetherness. Real “togetherness” doesn't come from an obligation to sit at a desk, but from

thoughtfully creating spaces where people spend time in ways that strengthen them—professionally and socially. Our policy, which allows for hybrid work to a large extent, supports the needs of IT professionals while still making room for personal interaction in the office.

And when it comes to growth in IT, in my view relationships truly make the difference. Networking, learning from one another, supportive conversations, and simply being around people who inspire you help a career more than any online course ever could. So it's worth protecting those moments—they're what help you build a path within an organization.



CHECKLIST

The most important questions about the future of work

In studying the IT community, we uncovered several important clues to shaping a career consciously. This checklist lets you ask yourself the most important questions for planning a career built for the future.

PART 1. YOUR PROFESSIONAL PLANS AND FEARS

- ☐ Are you aware of your employer's growth strategy and how it will affect your work?
- ☐ Do you know how to make sure you'll still hold a strong position in the job market five years from now?
- ☐ Do you have chances to build new skills at work—and are they enough for you right now?
- ☐ Is your current skillset resilient to sudden market shifts in the industry?
- ☐ Does your department currently play an important role in the company's life and count as key to its future?

PART 2. YOUR APPROACH TO AI

- ☐ Has your employer shared its approach to AI and explained how it plans to bring it into the company's life?
- ☐ Are you satisfied with the AI work tools you have access to day to day?
- ☐ Is AI a source of inspiration for you—and a chance to work on more interesting projects?
- ☐ Do you regularly set aside time to test new AI solutions on your own?
- ☐ Do you have access to webinars and meetups where you can exchange knowledge and experience around AI?

PART 3. YOUR PATH AND CAREER MOVES

- ☐ Are you convinced your specialization is future-proof and offers plenty of paths to grow?
- ☐ Do you know which direction you want to grow in over the coming years—and how to find upskilling opportunities?
- ☐ Do you deliver large-scale projects that give you varied chances to grow and sharpen your skills?
- ☐ Is the specialization you work in the subject of lively industry debate—and does it spark positive energy?
- ☐ Does your current job involve real influence over the final product?

PART 4. YOUR WAY AND STYLE OF WORKING

- ☐ Do you work remotely or hybrid—and are you happy with that model at your company?
- ☐ Do you have favorite spots in your current office where you love to collaborate with your team?
- ☐ Do you feel you have influence over the projects you work on, and that your voice counts on the team?
- ☐ Can you pinpoint how your work affects not just the company, but also the world around it?
- ☐ Do you feel safe enough on your team to openly discuss mistakes and learn from them?

Now check your score. Every one of these questions can be an important pointer for your career ahead.

Give yourself one point for each “yes.”

16–20	You're in a great place! Your growth is keeping pace with market trends. Protect what you have—but keep seeking your next source of inspiration.
11–15	Things are good, but a few gaps are showing. Identify the sections where “NO” dominated, and talk to your manager about change. If they're not ready to support you — consider changing employers.
0–10	It's time to be proactive. Your career may need a fresh spark—a new job, modern tools, or a bigger scale to operate at.

Take your next step!
Check out our current openings at
HEINEKEN Kraków.

ABOUT THE STUDY

About the IT community we surveyed

The report “The Faces of Work in IT” is built on the opinions of 729 IT professionals employed in Poland. We ran the survey in March 2026 using the CAWI method on a nationwide research panel. In selecting respondents, we bet on experience, seniority, and hard technological substance.

EXPERIENCE OVER TRENDS

The study drew professionals for whom technology isn't just a passion, but above all critical systems. The largest groups are people aged 35-44 (39%) and 25-34 (35%). These are specialists with formidable intellectual capital: nearly 3 in 4 hold a master's degree (51%) or an engineering/bachelor's degree (25%). Our tech stack—from Java and C++ to advanced SQL and SAP systems—confirms that the voices in this study belong to people architecting solutions critical to global business.



THE LEADERS' PERSPECTIVE, AND STABILITY

The report resonates strongly with the voice of decision-makers—a full 26% of the sample are managers, directors, and C-level leaders. Most respondents are seasoned experts at the Mid/Regular (31%) and Senior (25%) levels. They most often worked inside large organizations (in-house) on their own products (40%).

WORK MODEL

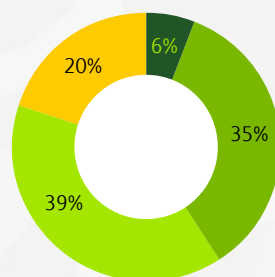
Nearly half of respondents (44%) work in a hybrid model that leans remote, and one in four (25%) work 100% from home. It's this perspective—experts managing technology within modern, flexible structures—that forms the backbone of this report's conclusions.

729

IT professionals employed in Poland

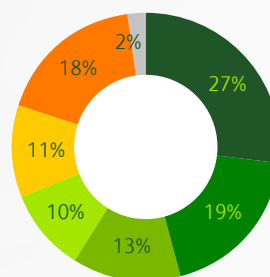
♂ 65%

♀ 35%



AGE

- 18–24
- 25–34
- 35–44
- 45–65



COMPANY SIZE

- up to 50 people
- 51-250
- 251-500
- 501-1000
- 1001-5000
- over 5000
- declined to answer

SENIORITY LEVEL



- Intern / Junior
- Mid / Regular
- Senior
- Lead / Principal / Architect
- Manager / Team Leader
- C-Level / Director / Head

RESPONDENTS' SPECIALIZATIONS: WHAT RESPONDENTS DO

1.	Programming / Software Development	19%
2.	IT Support / Network & Systems Administrators / Helpdesk	19%
3.	IT Management	17%
4.	Cybersecurity / IT Security	9%
5.	Data Science / AI / Machine Learning / Big Data / BI	9%
6.	Project & Product Mgmt / Agile	7%
7.	Testing / QA	7%
8.	ERP Systems / SAP / Business Systems Implementation	6%
9.	DevOps / Cloud / IT Architecture	2%
10.	Other	5%

SECTORS AND AREAS: THE FIELD THEIR WORK RELATES TO

1.	Software House / IT Outsourcing	26%
2.	Cybersecurity / Security	12%
3.	Industry / Manufacturing / Automotive / IoT	12%
4.	E-commerce / Retail / FMCG	10%
5.	Finance / Banking / Fintech	9%
6.	Cloud / Data Center / Hosting	9%
7.	Telecommunications / Media	8%
8.	Public Sector / Education / Healthcare	7%
9.	Other	7%

THE COMPANY'S BUSINESS PROFILE: THE MODEL THE EMPLOYER OPERATES IN:

1.	Product Company / In-house IT Department	40%
2.	Software House	20%
3.	Outsourcing / Body leasing	12%
4.	Freelance / Self-employed	11%
5.	Shared Services Center (SSC / GBS))	8%
6.	Other	8%



ABOUT HEINEKEN KRAKÓW

Build Your Career With Us

Join our team in Digital & technology,
Transport management, Support and other hubs

What happens in

KRAKÓW

goes around the

WORLD

- > Since **2012** on Cracow market
- > Over **2500** employees
- > We speak **17** languages
- > **27** Nationalities in our Kraków team
- > Hybrid ways of working



We transform, we evolve and
develop, just like our people.
Join us and see for yourself!





Follow our social media to learn more!



heinekenkrakow.pl