



How artificial intelligence contributes to competitiveness and workforce planning

# **AI & Workforce planning**

## **Business Case #3**

### **Company: Airbus**

# Company profile

# AIRBUS

Airbus is a major European aerospace corporation and one of the two largest manufacturers of commercial aircraft in the world (alongside Boeing). Airbus is known for pioneering technologies such as fly-by-wire (computer-based flight controls) in the A320 and is actively developing future aircraft that are more fuel-efficient and capable of using alternative fuel sources. The company emphasises safety, efficiency, and sustainability in its operations and new designs.

Year of foundation: 1970  
Size: 157.000 employees across 180 locations worldwide  
Sector: Aerospace

## Interviewee



**Karine Lecouturier**  
VP HR Digital Transformation

Karine Lecouturier is a highly accomplished leader with 25 years of experience driving transformation across Human Resources, Finance, and IT within the aerospace industry. Currently serving as VP HR Transformation and Digital at Airbus, she leads a team of approximately 150 members globally to modernise HR through digitalisation and AI adoption.



## What are your AI use cases?

We have discussed artificial intelligence in the past years, but a clear need only emerged last year when internal mobility within commercial aircraft operations faced significant challenges. The **internal reallocation of resources became necessary** due to a slowdown in external hiring, requiring us to place personnel where the operational need was greatest. The question became: how can we balance areas of growth with those requiring downsizing by redeploying and upskilling employees into open positions? As a result, we initiated efforts to support internal mobility, emphasising employee development, career opportunities, and retention.

The AI solution **helps HR to identify potential open positions** that match mobility interests and capabilities of our employees and improve job mobility, especially for employees impacted by workforce adaptation projects, by proposing vacancies outside of their current function and current job and supporting company transformation when needed.

However, the tool is also useful for **retaining employees** who think about leaving the company. As an example, we have our teams in one of the European countries where the job market is very dynamic, where the attrition is quite high. Many employees are looking for opportunities externally after they upskill with us because they are looking for that next step in their career. So, the teams there indicated that they needed a tool to be able to match those people with open positions and be able to provide them with the opportunity to continue their career inside Airbus rather than going on the external market.

The AI tool learns from recruiter and HR Business Partner feedback on candidate suitability, acknowledging that human bias influences its recommendations. Importantly, the tool **serves as a decision-support mechanism rather than making autonomous decisions**. The final decision on selection is always a human decision, and employees have to undergo the normal recruitment and selection process.

## How did you introduce AI into the workplace?

Initially, we established a dedicated digital HR team for AI and appointed “AI ambassadors” to propose and test ideas. These ambassador roles complement existing responsibilities rather than constituting new positions, except within the digital team, where, of course, we have people who are there to test and to help us digitalise all the ideas that we would like to experiment with.

Regarding the **mobility tool**, the AI solution **evolved iteratively**, starting from a concept and growing through close collaboration between the business and the digital teams. Having a close collaboration and working closely together was key. This partnership ensured the system met business needs. Development was completed internally within four to five months, followed by phased deployment across our core countries - France, Germany, the UK, and Spain. It was intense work from the digital teams to put in place all the requirements that were described by the business.

Another important milestone was the agreement reached with our social partners. Negotiations with the latter were essential.

Addressing concerns related to the **security and data protection** of individual employee information is always sensitive. Therefore, we are developing a comprehensive dossier to address security and data protection requirements. To ensure compliance with privacy regulations, particularly in Germany, the system refrains from individual-level data analysis, focusing instead on anonymised datasets. All these measures are being implemented to ensure our protection and to restrict the sharing of contact information solely to the necessary public details to be able to contact the employee, thereby safeguarding confidential information.

## Has AI affected the valuation of skills in your company?

Not yet. Current AI usage is **limited and considered a temporary solution** while we develop an integrated system for skills management, training, and career development. Moreover, **adoption remains inconsistent**. Our main challenge today is the adoption by all the HR employees and showing the benefits of using it. We are currently at a point where we have recognised the necessity of upskilling the entire HR population on all aspects of AI. This is due to the realisation that, while some staff members are more digitally savvy, the majority will not naturally adopt these technologies. Ideally, we would like to see higher usage rates so that we can maximise the benefits.

We are actively working to overcome identified barriers by enhancing our change management and training initiatives. This will involve either evolving the tool itself or improving communication processes, among other actions. A key priority is **upskilling our HR teams in AI**, which is supported by practical demonstrations of the tool's benefits, such as specific use cases that showcase time savings and added value.

## What benefits have you derived from using AI?

While AI and human decisions tend to yield similar outcomes, the tool **significantly accelerates matching processes** and, from time to time, identifies candidates who might otherwise be overlooked.

Occasionally, we are surprised by the proposals we receive for candidates, yet there is always an underlying reason that is explained by the tool. These proposals sometimes include candidates we might not have considered initially. Now, however, we can evaluate their suitability, as the employee in question may possess relevant past experience or have information on their profile that aligns with the open position. These **insights help retain talent, support career growth, and strengthen our leadership pipelines**.

Although **AI does not replace human judgment**, it provides valuable connections between competencies and experience, enabling better-informed recommendations and helping us bring the best candidates in the market and retain the best people that we have in the company. Therefore, we can see a clear benefit to using AI.

## Concluding remarks

Regarding the use of this tool in human resources, a critical factor is the necessity for early engagement and collaboration with our employees' representatives. Initially, engaging with social partners was not prioritised, and we subsequently realised the difficulty in gaining their acceptance and endorsement of the tool's value. While the implementation of any new tool presents challenges, the introduction of AI, being a novel concept, created additional complexity.

The objective is now to expand the use of AI into other areas. For instance, we are currently testing how AI can assist in forecasting headcount for future Operational Plans (OP). This forecasting will leverage existing data on the current headcount situation, anticipated workforce evolution, business drivers, and other relevant factors. While the AI tool will not provide a definitive "headcount for next year," it will gather all the necessary information for decision-making. These elements are currently derived solely through individual analyses and judgment. Ultimately, the goal is to have AI support certain decisions by analysing historical data and past actions.



# Contact us

---

 Website

[www.eei-institute.eu/publications/project/ai-work/](http://www.eei-institute.eu/publications/project/ai-work/)

 E-mail

[info@eei-institute.eu](mailto:info@eei-institute.eu)

Author: Gustav Bösehans (ifaa)

Published by: EEI, 2026

Ai@Work Consortium:

Coordinated by:

**Ceemet** European Tech & Industry Employers

Co-partners:

**iw ifaa EEI** European Employers' Institute



Co-funded by  
the European Union