AI Leap Education Programme Teacher Survey Report

English translation of Estonian report

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1. Introduction

The AI Leap programme is a large-scale initiative in the Estonian education system. Its purpose is to support meaningful learning and help the education system adapt to the age of artificial intelligence. The programme has several strands. One of them is the teacher programme, which supports the development of teachers' AI literacy and helps educators rethink learning and teaching in the age of AI. A teacher survey was conducted during the 2025/2026 school year to develop and monitor the programme.

Wave I (November–December 2025) included up to 1,117 respondents, with the number varying by question. Wave II (April–May 2026) included almost 880 respondents. In autumn, respondents represented 151 schools, and in spring 154 schools. Both waves included respondents from the same 138 schools. Comparing the two waves makes it possible to assess changes in the prevalence of collaborative learning, AI use and attitudes, and the reach of the programme itself.

The questionnaire was sent to all Grade 10 and 11 teachers registered for the AI Leap programme who had also received ChatGPT Plus licences at the beginning of the school year.

1.1. Respondent background

BACKGROUND VARIABLE	AUTUMN 2025	SPRING 2026
Age, N	1,117	884
Age (mean)	47.9	48.5
Age, min–max	19–80	20–80
Teaching experience (mean)	19.5	20.3
Teaching experience, min–max	0–52	0.5–52
Workload: below 0.5	86 (7.7%)	101 (11.3%)
Workload: 0.5–0.74	90 (8.0%)	86 (9.7%)
Workload: 0.75–0.99	99 (8.8%)	80 (9.0%)
Workload: 1.0	475 (42.4%)	378 (42.5%)
Workload: above 1.0	370 (33.0%)	245 (27.5%)
Teaching qualification: yes	841 (75.1%)	624 (79.5%)
Teaching qualification: no	184 (16.4%)	107 (13.6%)
Teaching qualification: currently obtaining	95 (8.5%)	54 (6.9%)

Distribution of respondents by subject

SUBJECT	AUTUMN 2025	SPRING 2026
Primary classroom teacher	55 (4.9%)	40 (5.1%)
Estonian	143 (12.8%)	117 (14.9%)
Mathematics	158 (14.1%)	102 (13.0%)
History	72 (6.4%)	62 (7.9%)
English	151 (13.5%)	128 (16.3%)
Russian	47 (4.2%)	34 (4.3%)
Literature	89 (7.9%)	77 (9.8%)
Natural science	49 (4.4%)	29 (3.7%)
Biology	68 (6.1%)	51 (6.5%)
Physics	65 (5.8%)	44 (5.6%)
Chemistry	69 (6.2%)	34 (4.3%)
Geography	57 (5.1%)	39 (5.0%)
Physical education / movement education	33 (2.9%)	25 (3.2%)
Music	31 (2.8%)	25 (3.2%)
Art	36 (3.2%)	26 (3.3%)
Civics	66 (5.9%)	52 (6.6%)

SUBJECT	AUTUMN 2025	SPRING 2026
Crafts and technology	17 (1.5%)	3 (0.4%)
Personal and social education	56 (5.0%)	37 (4.7%)
Psychology	19 (1.7%)	14 (1.8%)

Spring-wave respondents who were not teachers

POSITION	NUMBER
Leadership / academic organisation: school heads, principals, heads of studies, academic and development managers	52
Educational technology / IT: educational technologists, IT managers and specialists, information managers	18
Extracurricular, project, community or career work	14
Support and counselling specialists, school psychologist, social pedagogue	7
Administration / finance / secretariat / specialists	5
Library / learning centre	2
Learning design	1

1.2. Key findings

- AI use reached almost all teachers participating in the programme during its first year. By spring, 95% were using AI in their work, many on a daily basis or several times per week.
- Collaborative learning increased significantly. The share of schools with collaborative learning formats increased from nearly 60% to almost 70%, and the share of AI-focused learning circles (*professional learning communities, PLCs*) among schools with existing PLCs increased even more.
- The learning circles focus on both developing teachers' AI literacy (such as learning about and testing different applications of AI) and rethinking teaching and learning in the age of AI.
- Participation in a learning circle pays off. Participants' motivation remained consistently high and above that of non-participants. They regarded participation as more valuable and less costly in terms of time, stress and effort.
- Leadership support is strong and growing. School leaders' interest in teachers learning together increased significantly from autumn to spring. Support for AI use was among the strongest indicators of leadership support, suggesting that leaders recognise AI's potential to assist teachers.
- AI saves time. Teachers estimated average savings of almost two hours per week; many reported as much as five hours.
- Teaching practice has begun to change, but unevenly. More teachers set tasks requiring AI, reflected on AI in their subject and made assignments more AI-resilient, while changes to assessment systems and feedback lagged behind. By spring, participants in the learning circles showed an increase in their responses to statements concerning substantive aspects of teaching, while the responses of teachers who had not participated declined. This applied both to changes in assessment and feedback practices and to reconsidering students' skills in the age of AI.
- There is major concern about students' thinking skills. Most teachers worry that students are delegating their thinking to AI and that although they produce strong work, they are doing so without being able to explain their reasoning. Supporting students' AI literacy and redesigning teaching can reduce this risk.
- Teachers' knowledge of data protection is strongest, while their ability to critically evaluate AI-generated output is weakest. Teachers are most confident about knowing when not to share sensitive information, but least confident about assessing the reliability of AI output, indicating a clear need for training.
- Programme videos and examples shared by colleagues are considered most useful. Teachers want more concrete, short, subject- and lesson-specific resources that are immediately usable and come from teachers rather than mainly theoretical guidance.
- Lack of time is the main barrier. Both quantitative results and open responses show that teachers' time is limited; the programme and schools need to create better conditions for participation.
- Teachers are experimenting with AI in increasingly creative and personalised ways, including subject-specific assistants and tutors, AI-supported debates and role play, feedback, and age-appropriate differentiation. Frequent mentions of agents and assistants point to deeper, more pedagogically considered use.

2. Forms of collaborative learning

2.1. Prevalence of collaborative learning in schools

A core activity of the teacher programme was supporting schools in developing professional learning communities so that teachers can collaboratively develop AI literacy – (including AI-related skills and knowledge) while rethinking learning and teaching in the age of AI. It was therefore important to monitor the extent to which schools established forms of collaborative learning, referred to below as *learning circles.*

	AUTUMN 2025	SPRING 2026
The school has a collaborative learning format	60% (**614**/1,029)	67% (**565**/842)
Of these, an AI-focused learning circle exists	71% (433/**614**)	83% (471/**565**)
Respondents whose school has a circle and who participate in an AI circle	54% (329/**614**)	69% (388/**565**)
Participants in a learning circle on another topic	31% (193/**614**)	32% (179/**565**)

The presence of collaborative learning formats increased by around 7% from autumn to spring, indicating the programme's growing influence in schools. Particularly notable was the rise in AI-focused learning circles among schools with collaborative learning formats, from 71% to 83%. In programme schools, AI-focused circles therefore gained a firmer foothold in the second half of the school year.

In autumn, 78% of respondents – and as much as 87% in spring – said the AI learning circle had been added to existing circles rather than replacing them. This shows that many schools considered AI important enough to establish a separate teacher learning circle within the programme.

In spring, of the respondents participating in AI learning circles, 364 people (93% of participants) said they studied AI-related topics such as prompting and creating assistants. A further 220 people (56%) also discussed learning and teaching topics such as motivation, learning skills and assessment in the AI era.

2.2. Teachers' motivation to participate

The support programme aims to create conditions in schools that support teachers' collaborative learning and the renewal of teaching practices. School-based learning circles, facilitation and technological support provide a structured environment for shared learning, experimentation and reflection. Collaborative learning and professional learning communities provide a framework for collective teacher learning and support sustainable school development.

We monitored how teachers assessed their motivation to participate. The expectancy-value-cost framework developed by Eccles and Wigfield was used: motivation emerges from the interaction of expectations of success, perceived value and perceived cost. The respondents indicated whether they already participated in a learning circle; non-participants received equivalent statements in the conditional form.

	PARTICIPANTS		NON-PARTICIPANTS	
STATEMENT	AUTUMN M (SD)	SPRING M (SD)	AUTUMN M (SD)	SPRING M (SD)
I enjoy collaborative learning activities	3.94 (0.94)	3.91 (0.98)	3.45 (1.09)	3.45 (1.09)
I have the necessary conditions (time, energy) to participate successfully	3.34 (1.09)	3.38 (1.13)	2.68 (1.18)	2.80 (1.22)
Learning with colleagues requires too much effort	2.43 (1.12)	2.35 (1.12)	2.74 (1.13)	2.93 (1.10)
Collaborative learning helps me manage work tasks better	3.43 (1.04)	3.52 (0.99)	3.13 (1.08)	3.15 (1.12)
I can handle tasks and responsibilities	4.03 (0.89)	4.05 (0.84)	3.53 (1.02)	3.59 (0.95)
I have to give up too many important activities to participate	2.49 (1.20)	2.40 (1.16)	3.02 (1.21)	3.07 (1.23)
It is important to me to participate in activities that offer new knowledge	4.01 (0.97)	3.99 (0.99)	3.71 (1.09)	3.65 (1.09)
I am confident that I can acquire new knowledge with colleagues	4.10 (0.88)	4.13 (0.88)	3.83 (0.97)	3.81 (0.91)
Learning with colleagues causes too much stress	1.91 (1.04)	1.83 (0.96)	2.25 (1.11)	2.33 (1.11)
Learning with colleagues improves work quality and efficiency	3.75 (0.98)	3.76 (0.96)	3.38 (1.01)	3.41 (0.95)

	PARTICIPANTS		NON-PARTICIPANTS	
STATEMENT	AUTUMN M (SD)	SPRING M (SD)	AUTUMN M (SD)	SPRING M (SD)
I do not have enough time or energy to participate because of my other commitments	2.72 (1.24)	2.73 (1.24)	3.20 (1.18)	3.40 (1.24)
Participating in collaborative learning is an enjoyable experience for me	3.87 (0.94)	3.92 (0.96)	3.52 (0.99)	3.42 (1.01)

Among the participants in the learning circles, motivation remained consistently high from autumn to spring (see Appendix 1). Confidence in acquiring new knowledge with colleagues, ability to manage collaborative learning tasks and the importance of gaining new knowledge received the highest ratings; stress and excessive effort were rated low. Changes were very small and not statistically significant (all $p > 0.05$; paired comparisons $n = 241$).

Teachers who did not participate in the learning circles (non-participants) rated the different aspects of motivation similarly in autumn and spring, and generally lower (see Appendix 2); there were no significant differences between waves. They differed significantly from their colleagues who participated in the learning circles on every statement: they assigned less value to participation and a lower likelihood of successful learning, while perceiving higher costs. Future work should focus more on engaging and supporting these teachers, reducing perceived barriers and making the benefits of participation more visible.

3. School support for teachers' collaborative learning

Leadership support and a collegial climate are important preconditions for teacher collaboration and professional development. We examined perceived support from school leadership for teachers learning together. The analysis included 226 respondents whose autumn and spring responses could be matched, allowing an assessment of whether changes were statistically significant. Responses used a five-point scale (1 = disagree, 5 = agree), and all means were relatively high. The final item also had a large standard deviation, showing substantial differences in teachers' views and possibly between schools. The only statistically significant change concerned the first statement: by spring, leadership interest in teachers learning together had increased.

STATEMENT	AUTUMN 2025 M (SD)	SPRING 2026 M (SD)	p
School leadership takes an interest in teachers' collaborative learning	4.33 (1.07)	4.56 (0.85)	.006
School leadership has created conditions that support teachers' collaborative learning	4.33 (1.07)	4.20 (1.05)	.113
The collegial atmosphere at our school encourages professional collaboration and learning	4.28 (0.97)	4.16 (0.91)	.085
The learning circle facilitator has been provided with good conditions that enable them to lead the learning circle successfully	4.38 (1.46)	4.32 (1.50)	.567

** The p-value indicates a statistically significant difference between the two measurement points.*

4. Use of AI in teaching and learning

4.1. Growth in the extent of AI use

By the time of the spring survey, 95% of respondents (794 of 828) confirmed that they had used AI in their work as a teacher during the school year. This remarkable level shows that AI had become an almost universal tool among participating teachers.

In autumn 2025 ($n = 1,117$), 15% had not used AI in the previous month, 24% were using it a few times per week and 17% were using it daily. As such, as early as autumn, 85% used AI at least monthly and 41% at least a few times per week.

4.2. Models used (spring 2026)

MODEL	USERS
ChatGPT	708
Gemini	355
Copilot	183
Claude	90

MODEL	USERS
Grok	23
Mistral	4

ChatGPT was clearly the most widely used platform. The programme-provided ChatGPT licence was used by 73% of respondents in autumn and 87% in spring. Of those users, 97% regarded ChatGPT as easy or fairly easy to use. Gemini and Copilot were important supplementary tools.

4.3. Time savings

Estimated weekly time saved in spring 2026 (n = 723) averaged 1.8 hours (median 2.0 hours, SD = 1.2). Although 84 respondents estimated no savings, the overall pattern is clear: AI saved substantial time in everyday work for most teachers. The most frequent estimate was two hours (151 teachers), followed by one hour (122), three hours (110), and five hours (79).

4.4. AI use in teachers' work and in teaching

One component of AI literacy is pedagogical justification: teachers must always assess whether AI use is educationally appropriate. The study therefore examined teachers' specific practical AI activities.

ACTIVITY	AUTUMN 2025 (n = 818)	SPRING 2026 (n ≈ 672)
Assigned tasks/exercises in which students could use AI	59% (486)	73% (489)
Created AI-based learning tasks/exercises for students	71% (583)	67% (447)
Reflected on AI use in my subject	54% (442)	68% (455)
Made students' independent tasks/exercises AI-resilient	22% (180)	32% (214)

More teachers had assigned tasks requiring AI, reflected on AI use within their subject and made assignments more AI-resilient by spring. Detailed changes can be found in Appendix 5.

We also asked whether teachers had begun using AI to simplify their work or had changed their work because of AI, for example homework and feedback practices.

STATEMENT	AUTUMN M (SD)	SPRING M (SD)	AUTUMN AGREED n (%)	SPRING AGREED n (%)
Used AI to simplify/enrich my work	4.99 (1.07)	4.78 (1.12)	747 (91%)	621 (90%)
Rethought the skills students need in the age of AI	4.04 (1.22)	3.90 (1.18)	604 (74%)	497 (72%)
Changed homework because of AI	4.02 (1.48)	4.03 (1.44)	537 (66%)	495 (71%)
Directed students to use AI applications	3.89 (1.42)	3.89 (1.36)	525 (64%)	473 (68%)
Changed feedback methods	3.33 (1.42)	3.35 (1.34)	353 (43%)	330 (48%)
Changed the assessment system	2.84 (1.33)	2.93 (1.36)	233 (29%)	213 (31%)

Teachers had found a role for AI in simplifying their work, but the biggest broader changes in teaching concerned homework and directing students to use AI applications. Only a third had changed their assessment system, making this a clear area for further support. Appendices 3 and 4 show that spring ratings on substantive teaching items rose among learning-circle participants but declined significantly among non-participants. This demonstrates the importance of learning-circle support when redesigning learning processes.

In spring 2026, teachers compared student engagement in AI-supported lessons with traditional lessons: the results were much worse 3%; worse 12%; the same 61%; better 23%; and much better 1%. Around a fifth of respondents believed engagement had improved, while most (61%) thought it was unchanged.

How AI has been integrated into teaching practice

STATEMENT	% RATING 4 OR 5
I have meaningfully integrated AI into my subject	26%
I use AI to create several versions of the same task with different levels of support	37%
I use AI to create authentic real-life case studies or professional scenarios	37%
I assign tasks where students use AI as a creative partner, first generating and then developing ideas	30%
I use AI to create error-seeded texts or solutions that students must find, correct and explain	21%

STATEMENT	% RATING 4 OR 5
I use AI to translate or adapt complex subject terminology for students with another first language	25%

More than a third had used AI to differentiate tasks or create subject-related scenarios (see Appendix 6), while just under a third had assigned tasks where students generate and develop ideas with AI, and a fifth had used AI to create flawed texts for students to identify and correct.

Efficiency and individual support

Because AI is often discussed as a way of streamlining teachers' work, the study mapped this area. Many teachers had not yet discovered all possible uses. The largest share (32%) agreed that AI enables a more individual approach or higher-quality support for students working with more difficult content. A fifth of respondents used AI to gain a class-level overview and identify shared concerns or misconceptions.

STATEMENT	% RATING 4 OR 5
AI helps reveal learning patterns or misconceptions that might previously have gone unnoticed	18%
AI enables me to apply a more individual approach	32%
I am more effective in supporting students with special educational needs	23%
AI helps me provide high-quality support for students engaging with more complex content	32%
I use AI-generated summaries of student work to identify shared concerns or misconceptions in the class	19%

Students' AI habits and teachers' concerns

Students' AI habits have prompted concern that learners may delegate learning to AI, impairing the development of their knowledge and thinking. The results confirm that this concern is widespread: 80% worry that students are letting AI do the thinking for them instead of mastering material themselves. Nearly three quarters agree that students produce high-quality work with AI but cannot later explain how they arrived at the answer. Teachers are also sceptical as to whether students routinely verify AI output against reliable sources. Supporting students' AI literacy is therefore essential.

STATEMENT	% RATING 4 OR 5
AI helps engage students who are usually less active	24%
I worry that students are delegating essential thinking to AI instead of mastering the material	80%
Students sometimes produce high-quality work with AI but cannot explain the reasoning	73%
I have observed greater confidence among students when they are dealing with unfamiliar topics	20%
Students routinely check AI output against reliable sources	12%
Students are learning to use AI as a discussion partner to challenge their ideas	21%
Students are more aware that AI output may contain hidden cultural or data-based bias	24%
I worry that students feel less ownership or pride in significant work created with AI assistance	32%
Students can better articulate when AI supports learning and when it merely helps them complete their work	19%

Teachers play the central role in fostering students' AI literacy and in rethinking learning. On a seven-point scale, nearly three quarters had considered the skills students should develop in the AI era and around 65% were moving from controlling AI use towards guiding critical use. There remains room for growth in feedback and personalised support.

STATEMENT	% RATING 5–7
I have considered which skills students should develop in the AI era	72%
I have moved from controlling AI use to guiding students in its critical use	65%
I changed how I give feedback this school year as a result of AI	41%
I shifted my role from primary source of knowledge to critical mediator of AI output	44%
I prioritise assessing how students verify AI output rather than only final-answer correctness	38%
I use AI to provide personalised support to students with special needs to an extent not previously possible	34%
I have integrated more real-life professional contexts or career-based simulations into my subject with AI	32%

5. Attitudes and knowledge regarding AI use

The following statements concern teachers' knowledge of and readiness to use AI in their work. Teachers rated their agreement from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). In autumn, a total of 949 people responded; in spring, between 769 and 822. Ratings were highest for school leadership support and AI's potential to save time. Ratings of relevant knowledge and the ability to provide an individual approach were more modest, but both increased significantly from autumn.

STATEMENT	AUTUMN M (SD)	SPRING M (SD)	MISSING	PAIRED n	p
I have relevant/sufficient knowledge to use AI in my work	3.62 (0.99)	3.83 (0.85)	0.7%	344	< .001
School leadership supports AI use in teachers' work	4.14 (0.84)	4.25 (0.75)	4.5%	329	.021
AI enables a more individual approach to students	3.35 (1.09)	3.59 (0.96)	7.1%	324	< .001
AI helps save time on ongoing administrative tasks	3.92 (1.15)	4.00 (1.05)	2.8%	337	.091

The 'missing' % is the share of teachers who could not answer. A p-value of 0.05 or below indicates a statistically significant change.

A key aim of the teacher programme is to support AI literacy, including skills, knowledge and attitudes. At the end of the school year, teachers assessed further statements related to AI literacy.

STATEMENT	SPRING 2026 n	M (SD)
I feel confident assessing the reliability of AI-generated answers and output before using them	813	3.61 (1.03)
I know when not to enter personally identifiable or sensitive information into AI tools	804	4.45 (0.74)
I have enough basic knowledge of AI limitations that I can use it responsibly	811	3.98 (0.89)
I can assess whether AI tools suit my work goals	812	4.17 (0.77)
I can identify possible bias or distortion in AI output and respond appropriately	807	4.05 (0.79)

Teachers felt most confident about when not to enter sensitive information into AI tools (M = 4.45) and rated their ability to assess the suitability of tools for their goals highly (M = 4.17). Evaluating the reliability of answers and output remains an area for development and should be addressed in programme support.

6. Teachers' relationship with technology and AI

Alongside skills and knowledge, attitudes form part of AI literacy. They influence whether and how teachers use AI and technology, and how they support colleagues and students. The results show relatively few true AI and technology enthusiasts who advise friends and colleagues, and few who have configured AI to reclaim personal time. More than a third nevertheless felt technology makes life easier, almost 40% said AI saved time on administrative tasks, and nearly a third believed technology could improve education.

STATEMENT	N	M	SD	% RATING 4 OR 5
Technology makes education better/easier	737	3.59	0.86	29%
AI helps me save time on ongoing administrative tasks	733	3.84	1.02	39%
I am always the first person among my friends/colleagues to know about new technology	728	2.80	1.05	14%
AI has enabled me to regain personal time	735	2.94	1.07	17%
Technology makes life easier	749	3.72	0.85	35%
Thanks to AI, I feel more in control of my daily workload	729	3.11	1.07	21%
Friends/colleagues come to me with technology questions	743	2.77	1.16	16%
I adapt/configure technology to my needs	747	3.61	0.97	37%

7. Reach of the AI Leap programme and use of materials

7.1. Participation in programme activities

To develop the programme, it was important to examine participation in and the impact of specific activities.

ACTIVITY	AUTUMN 2025	SPRING 2026
Registered in Moodle	45.2% (455/1,006)	52.1% (399/766)
Participated fully in the August online training	57.9% (582/1,006)	–
Participated partly in the August online training	21.4% (215/1,006)	–
Participated in the facilitators' seminar (October)	17.1% (172/1,006)	–
Participated in the school leaders' seminar (September)	8.0% (80/1,006)	–

The share registered for the Moodle course increased and exceeded half of respondents by spring. Around 80% participated fully or partly in the August online training (including recordings), indicating strong initial reach.

Respondents could select multiple material formats they found most valuable.

FORMAT	AUTUMN 2025	SPRING 2026
Videos	57% (259/454)	42% (321/773)
Examples of AI use shared by colleagues	57% (260/454)	40% (311/773)
Reading materials	45% (203/454)	30% (234/773)
Learning-circle plans for facilitators	23% (105/454)	17% (134/773)
Cannot say	–	34% (260/773)

Videos and practical examples from colleagues were clearly the preferred formats in both waves. As expected, facilitator plans were selected less often, because facilitators account for fewer than 10% of teachers.

8. Responses to open-ended questions

In spring 2026, teachers could answer optional open-ended questions about how they had used AI, what they liked about the programme materials and what could be improved next year.

8.1. What was the most innovative way you used AI this school year?

The approx. 200 responses were grouped into eight main categories; around 30% mentioned agents or assistants.

Creating learning materials and tasks

- I asked AI to create knowledge checks using only materials I provided and prohibited it from using online sources.
- I generated English grammar tasks for CEFR levels A2, B1 and B2.
- I created adapted tasks and learning materials for students with special educational needs.
- I combined files into age-appropriate worksheets for students at different levels.
- Students generated their own practice tests.

Lesson preparation and planning

- I mainly used it to find ideas for lessons.
- I built an entire lesson with AI.
- I redesigned a lesson to support deep learning and make learning visible.
- I implemented metacognitive lesson plans.
- I prepared material and asked AI to teach how to solve the tasks.

Feedback and assessment

- I used AI to correct and give feedback on upper-secondary essays.
- I photographed handwritten English essays and had AI assess them against a rubric.
- Students used the same prompt to ask AI for feedback on writing, and I guided them in analysing it.
- AI helped analyse research papers by answering questions that arose while reading.

Creating assistants, agents and projects

- We tested a dedicated AI Leap assistant for writing a formal letter in English, guiding students step by step.
- I created a tutor in MagicSchool for a learner with special needs.
- I created an assistant for assessing writing tasks and trained it on Cambridge materials.
- I created an assistant for assessing students' research projects.
- I gave AI access to my cloud-based work data.

Actively engaging students with AI

- Students debated with AI; I anonymised the conversations and used NotebookLM to synthesise them.
- I had ChatGPT simulate an athlete's body during competition when teaching hormonal balance.
- Students compared AI role-play as a historical figure with the figure portrayed in a textbook.

- I created interactive language lessons in which students interacted with AI through role play.

Documentation and administration

- I answered parents' emails: I can now produce excellent letters quickly.
- I completed school documentation.
- I prepared tests for exempted students and set goals for development interviews.
- I did two hours of advance analysis to judge whether a training course would be useful.

Innovative tools and applications

- I used AI-generated audio reading German text with Swiss, Austrian and German pronunciations.
- I created code for LEGO Spike Prime and selected components.
- I created a podcast with NotebookLM; the students listened, we analysed errors, and I created a test.
- I used ChatGPT to dramatise a novel, saving hundreds of hours of work.

8.2. What do you like most about the materials we provide?

Practical examples and others' experiences (~45%)

- Examples of AI use shared by other teachers.
- Materials created by others help me develop my own ideas, including instructions for creating GPTs.
- AI learning-lab examples inspire analogous lessons in my subject.
- The abundance of examples.
- Everything is created by teachers themselves, so it is safe to assume it worked for them.

Videos and visual materials (~35%)

- Content-rich videos at a good pace.
- Authentic videos by specialists showing AI's role in their work.
- Videos and materials can be watched (not only read) later.
- YouTube tutorial videos are the best.
- Some videos, like those by Mario Mäemets, and Jaan Aru's explanations.

Accessibility and flexibility (~30%)

- They are easy to find and available whenever I need them.
- I can study them at a suitable time and access is continuous.
- Everything is in one place; there is no need to reinvent the wheel.
- I can choose when to view them; they are divided up into small bites.
- The ChatGPT app can search Moodle and YouTube for the topic I need at any given moment.

Simplicity, clarity and structure (~28%)

- Easy to follow: neither too much nor too little.
- Clarity and simplicity.
- Quality and clarity.
- Slides that clearly communicate their point.
- A clear overview, relevance, specificity, quality and depth.

Adaptability and inspiration (~22%)

- They can be adapted to my subject.
- I get new ideas and have "aha!" moments.
- I like ready-made prompts that I can adapt.
- I can explore possibilities and test them in the same or a modified form.
- The wide range, which broadens my perspective.

Have not used the materials (~20%)

- I have not used the materials apart from the AI Leap modules.
- I have looked at very few materials in Moodle.
- You do very good work, but my teaching load and responsibilities leave me no time to follow everything.

Critical feedback and requests (~12%)

- The amount of material is excessive; things come in from all over the place, making me not want to use them.
- Where are the one-pagers and materials I can use in five minutes?
- Very text-heavy.
- There aren't many subject-specific examples.
- I looked for targeted examples for foreign-language lessons but couldn't find any.

8.3. What could we improve so that the materials more effectively support your work or learning circle?

Subject-specific, concrete materials

- Concrete examples of AI use in a subject lesson, including a real lesson video with AI fully integrated.
- Please provide foreign-language examples, including one model video lesson covering all language skills.
- There is practically no material for art, physical education, mathematics or science.
- More subject material, cross-curricular integration and real examples.
- Start from subjects and concrete topics when designing AI assignments.
- Involve more teachers from my field to create task banks.
- Share and highlight useful materials teachers have created.

Shorter, immediately usable materials

- Concrete lesson plans that can be used immediately or adapted easily.
- Shorter module descriptions and instructions – when teachers struggle to process everything, students lack motivation.
- Fewer long instructions that require too much reading before use.
- Shorter, more concrete materials, with slides opening directly on the page rather than in downloaded folders.

Updating and organising materials

- Update materials continuously, because some technology recommendations from the start of the school year are already outdated.
- When better resources emerge, remove outdated or weaker material.
- Structure the material and add a search so that it can be reviewed quickly.
- Items are somewhat difficult to find in Moodle.

More practitioner examples and experience sharing

- Continue adding others' experiences; teacher-to-teacher is the best way to share.
- Share more teachers' examples and good practices.
- Provide lots of ready-made ideas so that everyone isn't reinventing the wheel.

In-person meetings, training and on-site support

- AI Leap teams could hold practical sessions for all teachers in different schools.
- It would be useful to discuss things with colleagues and specialists and meet periodically to talk about developments.
- There could be more discussion circles.
- Sharing information alone isn't enough; good communication, shared materials and regional support networks are needed.

Summary

Overview

The AI Leap teacher programme supports the development of AI literacy among Estonian teachers while promoting a thoughtful re-evaluation of teaching and learning in the age of AI. The programme's impact was assessed through two waves of a survey: the first was conducted in autumn 2025 and the second in spring 2026. Nearly 1,000 teachers from more than 150 schools participated in each wave, making it possible to examine changes in teachers' attitudes, knowledge, AI use and collaborative culture within schools.

Key findings

During the programme's first year, AI became a natural part of teachers' everyday work. By spring 2026, as many as 95% of respondents reported using AI in their professional practice, with most using it on a regular basis. ChatGPT was by far the most widely used tool, and the overwhelming majority of teachers found it easy and convenient to use. On average, teachers estimated that AI saved them almost two hours of work per week, while many reported even greater time savings.

Collaborative professional learning also increased substantially. The proportion of schools offering professional learning communities or other collaborative learning formats grew from approx. 60% to nearly 70%. The share of AI-focused professional learning communities increased even more. Most of the participating teachers used these learning communities not only to develop practical AI skills but also to reflect on how teaching, learning and assessment should evolve in the age of AI.

The impact of professional learning communities

The study clearly demonstrates that participation in professional learning communities supports teachers' professional development. The participants perceived collaborative learning as more valuable, expressed greater confidence in their ability to acquire new knowledge and experienced less stress and lower perceived costs than teachers who did not participate.

Furthermore, the teachers involved in professional learning communities were more likely to adapt their teaching practices during the school year. They reconsidered the competencies students need in the AI era, redesigned learning tasks to incorporate AI more effectively and introduced more substantial changes to their instructional practices. By contrast, teachers who did not participate showed more limited progress, with some indicators even declining over time.

Changes in teaching practices

Teachers are increasingly integrating AI into their classroom practice. By spring, there had been a significant increase in the proportion of teachers who assigned AI-supported learning activities, embedded AI meaningfully into their subject teaching and redesigned independent assignments to better reflect the realities of the AI era.

AI is most commonly used for developing learning materials and assignments, planning lessons, creating differentiated learning resources, providing feedback on students' work and streamlining administrative tasks. However, teachers have made considerably fewer changes to assessment practices and feedback methods. Only around a third have adapted their assessment systems to reflect the widespread availability of AI, making this one of the priorities for the programme's next phase.

Teachers' attitudes

Teachers generally hold positive attitudes towards AI. Confidence in their own AI-related knowledge has increased, as has their perception of support from school leadership. Teachers reported the highest levels of confidence regarding data protection and the responsible handling of sensitive information.

At the same time, many teachers feel less confident about evaluating the reliability of AI-generated responses. This highlights the need to place greater emphasis on developing critical AI literacy, particularly teachers' ability to critically assess, verify and interpret AI-generated output.

Key challenges

Teachers identified students' potential overreliance on AI as the greatest challenge. Approximately 80% expressed concern that students may delegate essential thinking processes to AI instead of fostering their own understanding. Many teachers also observed that while students produce high-quality work with AI assistance, they are often unable to explain their reasoning or adequately verify the accuracy of AI-generated information.

Another persistent challenge is teachers' lack of time. Although the programme's learning materials are widely regarded as being of high quality, many teachers struggle to engage with them due to heavy workloads and limited time for professional learning.

Teachers' feedback on the programme

Teachers particularly value practical examples shared by fellow educators, concise instructional videos, ready-to-use teaching materials and flexible access to programme resources. For future development, participants would like to see more subject-specific examples, shorter and more immediately applicable materials, additional authentic classroom case studies and expanded opportunities for teachers to learn directly from one another.

Main conclusions

The programme's first year was highly successful. AI has been rapidly adopted by teachers and has become an important professional tool. Teacher collaboration has increased, school leadership support has strengthened and teachers have become more willing to integrate AI into teaching and learning.

At the same time, a number of priorities remain for future development. Schools should allocate more time for teachers' professional learning, strengthen teachers' capacity for critically evaluating AI-generated information, support the transformation of assessment and feedback practices and help teachers foster students' responsible and informed use of AI. The programme should also continue developing practical, subject-specific learning resources based on authentic classroom experiences and teacher-led innovation.

Overall, the findings indicate that the AI Leap Teacher Programme has successfully achieved its first-year objectives and established a strong foundation for the informed, responsible and pedagogically meaningful use of AI in upper-secondary schools in Estonia.

Appendices

Appendix 1. Motivation among learning-circle participants

Teachers' motivation to participate in collaborative learning in schools where a learning circle exists and the respondent participates. Paired n = 241.

STATEMENT	AUTUMN M (SD) N=612	SPRING M (SD) N=555	Δ	p
I enjoy collaborative learning activities	3.94 (0.94)	3.91 (0.98)	-0.03	0.575
I have the necessary conditions to participate successfully	3.34 (1.09)	3.38 (1.13)	0.01	0.910
Learning with colleagues requires too much effort	2.43 (1.12)	2.35 (1.12)	-0.02	0.760
Collaborative learning helps me manage work tasks	3.43 (1.04)	3.52 (0.99)	0.07	0.320
I can handle tasks and responsibilities	4.03 (0.89)	4.05 (0.84)	0.00	0.940
I have to give up too many important activities	2.49 (1.20)	2.40 (1.16)	0.05	0.471
New knowledge is important to me	4.01 (0.97)	3.99 (0.99)	-0.07	0.263
I can acquire new knowledge with colleagues	4.10 (0.88)	4.13 (0.88)	-0.05	0.432
Learning with colleagues causes too much stress	1.91 (1.04)	1.83 (0.96)	-0.04	0.601
Collaborative learning improves quality and efficiency	3.75 (0.98)	3.76 (0.96)	-0.07	0.269
Other obligations leave me with insufficient time and energy	2.72 (1.24)	2.73 (1.24)	0.11	0.161
Participation is a pleasant experience	3.87 (0.94)	3.92 (0.96)	-0.02	0.664

Appendix 2. Motivation among non-participants

Teachers' motivation in schools where no learning circle exists and the respondent participates in no collaborative learning format. Paired n = 84.

STATEMENT	AUTUMN M (SD) N=409	SPRING M (SD) N=245	Δ	p
I would enjoy collaborative learning activities	3.45 (1.09)	3.45 (1.09)	-0.11	0.308
I would have the necessary conditions to participate	2.68 (1.18)	2.80 (1.22)	0.07	0.590
Learning with colleagues would require too much effort	2.74 (1.13)	2.93 (1.10)	0.18	0.181
Collaborative learning would help me manage work tasks	3.13 (1.08)	3.15 (1.12)	0.04	0.785
I could handle the tasks and responsibilities	3.53 (1.02)	3.59 (0.95)	0.13	0.193
I would have to give up too many important activities	3.02 (1.21)	3.07 (1.23)	0.05	0.689
New knowledge would be important to me	3.71 (1.09)	3.65 (1.09)	-0.19	0.077
I could acquire new knowledge with colleagues	3.83 (0.97)	3.81 (0.91)	-0.06	0.599
Learning with colleagues would cause too much stress	2.25 (1.11)	2.33 (1.11)	-0.06	0.603
Collaborative learning would improve quality and efficiency	3.38 (1.01)	3.41 (0.95)	0.10	0.328
Other obligations would leave me with insufficient time and energy	3.20 (1.18)	3.40 (1.24)	-0.07	0.567
Participation would be a pleasant experience	3.52 (0.99)	3.42 (1.01)	-0.02	0.807

Appendix 3. Changes related to the arrival of AI

STATEMENT	AUTUMN M (SD)	SPRING M (SD)	PAIRED Δ	t(322)	p
Used AI to simplify/enrich work	4.99 (1.07)	4.78 (1.12)	-0.22	-3.89	<0.001
Rethought students' necessary skills	4.04 (1.22)	3.90 (1.18)	-0.18	-2.47	0.014
Changed homework because of AI	4.02 (1.48)	4.03 (1.44)	0.04	0.49	0.621
Directed students to use AI applications	3.89 (1.42)	3.89 (1.36)	0.02	0.35	0.726
Changed feedback methods	3.33 (1.42)	3.35 (1.34)	-0.01	-0.13	0.899
Changed the assessment system	2.84 (1.33)	2.93 (1.36)	0.18	2.38	0.018

Appendix 4. Differences between participants and non-participants

Autumn: participants n = 486, non-participants n = 332. Spring: participants n = 465, non-participants n = 198.

STATEMENT	AUTUMN PARTICIPANTS	AUTUMN NON-PARTICIPANTS	AUTUMN t(df), p	SPRING PARTICIPANTS	SPRING NON-PARTICIPANTS	SPRING t(df), p
Used AI to simplify/enrich work	5.01 (1.05)	4.96 (1.09)	t(694.92)=0.70, p=.484	4.80 (1.08)	4.74 (1.19)	t(340.54)=0.56, p=.573
Rethought students' skills	4.19 (1.14)	3.82 (1.28)	t(655.34)=4.31, **p<.001**	3.98 (1.12)	3.76 (1.25)	t(338.30)=2.10, **p=.036**
Changed homework	4.12 (1.43)	3.87 (1.53)	t(677.41)=2.39, **p=.017**	4.11 (1.39)	3.84 (1.52)	t(344.32)=2.08, **p=.038**
Directed students to AI	3.98 (1.39)	3.75 (1.44)	t(693.65)=2.33, **p=.020**	4.03 (1.28)	3.62 (1.46)	t(330.45)=3.43, **p<.001**
Changed feedback	3.46 (1.39)	3.15 (1.44)	t(693.05)=3.02, **p=.003**	3.43 (1.27)	3.18 (1.43)	t(333.81)=2.13, **p=.034**
Changed assessment	2.95 (1.29)	2.68 (1.38)	t(678.32)=2.78, **p=.006**	3.02 (1.31)	2.71 (1.42)	t(347.99)=2.63, **p=.009**

Matched learning-circle participants (n = 170)

STATEMENT	AUTUMN M	SPRING M	ΔM	t(169)	p
Used AI to simplify/enrich work	5.14	4.94	-0.21	-2.62	.010
Rethought students' skills	4.31	3.99	-0.31	-3.25	.001
Changed homework	4.17	4.21	+0.04	0.33	.739
Directed students to AI	4.13	4.12	-0.01	-0.12	.905
Changed feedback	3.61	3.49	-0.12	-1.21	.230
Changed assessment	2.91	3.10	+0.19	1.99	.048

Matched non-participants (n = 66)

STATEMENT	AUTUMN M	SPRING M	ΔM	t(65)	p
Used AI to simplify/enrich work	5.05	4.91	-0.14	-1.24	.219
Rethought students' skills	3.92	3.68	-0.24	-1.62	.110
Changed homework	4.05	4.12	+0.08	0.46	.647
Directed students to AI	3.68	3.74	+0.06	0.37	.713
Changed feedback	3.29	3.18	-0.11	-0.69	.495
Changed assessment	2.70	2.74	+0.05	0.30	.768

Appendix 5. Changes in teachers' AI use

STATEMENT	AUTUMN YES	SPRING YES	YES→NO	NO→YES	McNemar χ^2	p
Assigned tasks requiring students to use AI	60.3%	79.7%	15	77	40.45	<0.001
Created AI-based learning tasks	75.0%	67.2%	63	38	5.70	0.017
Reflected on AI use in own subject	59.1%	70.6%	37	74	11.68	<0.001
Made tasks AI-resilient	24.4%	38.4%	25	70	20.38	<0.001

Appendix 6. AI use in teachers' work

Means, standard deviations and response distributions.

STATEMENT	M	SD	1 n (%)	2 n (%)	3 n (%)	4 n (%)	5 n (%)
Meaningfully integrated AI into my subject	2.62	1.23	143 (22.7%)	164 (26.0%)	163 (25.8%)	113 (17.9%)	48 (7.6%)
Created task versions with different support levels	2.84	1.38	151 (23.9%)	119 (18.9%)	128 (20.3%)	145 (23.0%)	88 (13.9%)
Created authentic cases/scenarios	2.91	1.32	132 (20.9%)	107 (17.0%)	156 (24.7%)	159 (25.2%)	77 (12.2%)
Assigned tasks using AI as creative partner	2.65	1.35	177 (28.1%)	123 (19.5%)	144 (22.8%)	118 (18.7%)	69 (10.9%)
Created error-seeded texts/solutions	2.20	1.31	272 (43.1%)	136 (21.6%)	90 (14.3%)	89 (14.1%)	44 (7.0%)
Translated/adapted terminology	2.34	1.38	262 (41.5%)	104 (16.5%)	109 (17.3%)	99 (15.7%)	57 (9.0%)

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