Épreuve d'admission du concours droit-économie 2026

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Épreuve orale d'anglais

Sujet n° 1

Vous ferez une analyse de ce texte et la présenterez au jury

Beyond the AI bubble: where technology is driving progress in 2025

The Economist Impact, Jan 2025 (abridged)

AI's hype fades, but its impact deepens

The peak of AI hype has given way to more sober expectations. Firms are struggling to derive meaningful value from generative-AI, while reports late in the year suggest that advances in core capabilities could be plateauing. The year ahead will be critical for the big model-makers to see whether a trillion-dollar bet pays off, as they seek a path to profit with a slew of "agents" that automate tasks. Time will tell whether the benefits will justify the expense for many.

But AI's broader impact is undeniable. Over the past year, AI whizzery has helped preserve indigenous languages, restore the voice of an ALS patient and reconstruct the epic of Gilgamesh, one of humanity's oldest texts—bringing "extreme acceleration" to ancient scholarship. Several drugs designed with AI are expected to enter phase-three trials this year. AI is also enabling breakthroughs in protein design, climate modelling and brain research, predicting clinical outcomes and future brain states just from scans. Whatever its future capabilities, the potential of current AI models has barely been explored. […]

The accelerationist agenda

Donald Trump's return to the White House could mean loosening AI regulations to boost innovation and America's competition with China. In some respects that may be a good thing for innovation. But such moves are likely to provoke alarm among those focused on AI safety (which may include Mr Trump's wingman, Elon Musk, who has both backed safety measures and invested heavily in AI). Expect more talk of "defensive acceleration" —the idea that sometimes the best way to mitigate technological risks is to develop better technology, to tackle challenges from AI and cyber-security to nuclear threats. […]

A reckoning with AI's hidden costs

The coming year will sharpen attention on the physical demands of artificial intelligence. Generative-AI is straining energy grids, with data centres consuming as much as 30% of grid capacity in some parts of the US. To meet demand, Microsoft will buy up all the electricity from

the revived Three Mile Island nuclear plant. Others are exploring small modular reactors to power new facilities, though scaling nuclear energy is slow and contentious. AI's energy use is keeping coal plants running, as seen in Omaha, where a power station serving Google and Meta scrapped plans to phase out coal. Data centres also gobble up vast amounts of water for cooling.

Assessing these impacts is difficult due to a lack of transparency, though this may soon change. The European Union will require data centres to disclose their energy and water usage, a move that could clarify their environmental costs and prompt debates about trade-offs. Can better laws reduce emissions? How will utilities, tech firms and regulators manage resource constraints? These questions will become pressing as AI expands.

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Épreuve orale d'anglais

Sujet n° 2

Vous ferez une analyse de ce texte et la présenterez au jury

Urban AI: balancing technology with ecological needs

The Economist Impact, May 2025 (abridged)

At first glance, cities and AI are a good match, with AI having the potential to optimise many operational aspects of urban life. Cities are messy, dynamic and full of data. Luckily, AI thrives on this chaos. It's not surprising then that technology firms are rushing to integrate AI into their urban software systems to help optimise urban traffic flows (a major contributor to greenhouse-gas emissions), reduce the power demand of street-lighting systems (1-3% of electricity globally) and model better waste-management pick-up routes.

The slogan "AI for Good", coined by the United Nations International Telecommunications Union in 2017, offers a tidy moral wrapper for this convergence, and "AI for Good" events provide plenty of examples of practical applications.

But as I've observed while working with public-sector digital initiatives, this courtship is more complicated than it appears. Cities are not just networks of roads, pipes and power lines waiting to be optimised; they are human and ecological habitats. Citizens want well-being: safe neighbourhoods, social connection, green spaces and economic opportunity. Nature is critical to successful cities and needs clean air, flowing water and biodiversity for systems to thrive. People and nature's needs overlap—doctors now prescribe time in nature as therapy, and green cities attract the best talent, good jobs and great culture—but this critical element is not something that AI can address.

The resource appetite of AI

The challenge goes deeper. AI's own appetite for energy is voracious. According to a major report released in April by the International Energy Agency, data centres are projected to consume 945 terawatt-hours of electricity annually by 2030—more than the current consumption of Japan. AI is the principal driver of this surge. In Ireland, data centres already use as much power as all urban housing combined.

Water, too, is drawn in staggering quantities to cool the vast racks of processors crunching AI models. (…)

Today, more than half the world's 8bn people live in a city. By the mid-century, that share will rise to three-quarters of the 10bn people expected to be alive. Urbanisation is accelerating fastest in South-East Asia and Africa, where entire cities are being built from

scratch, and half of the world's population lives. It means that every week a million more people live in a city than they did the week before. (…)

And so we face a paradox. AI might help optimise the city—but only if the city can power, hydrate and absorb the demands of AI.

Aligning intelligence with resilience

The solution is not to reject AI, but to govern it wisely and align its use with the goals of regenerative urbanism. AI can be used to enhance water recycling, optimise microgrids and forecast extreme weather. It might support better decision-making, rather than merely automate it.

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Épreuve orale d'anglais

Sujet n° 3

Vous ferez une analyse de ce texte et la présenterez au jury

Rising Costs and Competition at Top N.Y. Schools Have Parents on Edge

The New York Times, March 2026 (abridged)

Claudia O'Brien struggled to find the right school for her bright son.

New York City, with the biggest education system in the United States, seemed to offer a world of choices. But her neighborhood public schools were "not up to par," she said. Herson landed on waiting lists at some of the more desirable public options. And as a single, middle-class mother, Ms. O'Brien felt private school was beyond her reach.

The city's education landscape is a labyrinth, where time, inside knowledge and deeper pockets can help parents gain an edge.

Yet some education leaders and parents worry that a widening income divide amid the current affordability crisis could amplify the role that money plays in access to a quality education in New York, one of the nation's most economically unequal cities. (…)

Tuition at some of the city's prestigious private schools will break $70,000 next year. That left even some higher-earning families worried about their children's prospects. (By way of comparison, the average New York City household earns about $77,000 a year.)

New York has many excellent public schools that prepare students to succeed. But the number of schools in which almost all of the pupils come from families living in poverty is rising, threatening to widen the existing gap in offerings and outcomes.

And when a third of family income goes toward rent, there can be little remaining for other needs — much less test prep, summer camp, private tutoring or additional help for students to get ahead in the public school system.

In nearly two dozen interviews, educators, experts and parents said they see an urgent need for New York to make life more affordable for families, but also an imperative to build a city where talented teachers, challenging coursework and support are guaranteed for all children.

The risks for the future are clear. The crushing costs of living are often the top factor when parents choose whether to remain in New York City. But access to a quality education is often at the top of their minds, too, surveys show.

One recent report on “attractive” cities put it simply: “Schools are the most powerful tools cities have to attract and retain the next generation.” (…)
Today, classrooms a mile away from one another can feel worlds apart. And money stands to play a growing role, even in public education.

Families who might not have hesitated to enroll in the past are now digging into the issue of whether they will get value for their money.

That hasn’t prevented the city’s most renowned private schools from seeing a surge in demand. They’re also receiving more applications for financial aid, often driven by families who earn $250,000 and above, underscoring just how many households feel newly strained.