

Renewable Energy Skills Partnership

Position paper on skills: Recommendations for addressing the skills challenge

The European Union has committed to reaching at least 42.5% renewables by 2030 - with a 2.5% additional indicative target. This is almost doubling our current capacities in 6 years. This transition will not happen without the right, qualified workforce. Currently, national policies fall short on providing the right incentives for prospective workers to enter the green workforce. Renewable energy workers will need to develop new skills, and be ready to adapt and work with new, emerging technologies. Workers from other sectors will also be required to learn these new jobs via upskilling and reskilling. This new workforce will need to be mobile across Europe. Therefore, like the energy system overall, skills policy will need to be adaptive, flexible, and coordinated at the European level. With the closing of the [European Year of Skills¹](https://year-of-skills.europa.eu/index_en), the Renewable Energy Skills Partnership has formulated 18 policy recommendations for skills, to be implemented without delay to address these challenges. These policy recommendations have been integrated into the 4 priority areas below:

- 1 Prioritise renewable energy skills and workforce building in policymaking
- 2 Boost the visibility and attractiveness of technical, scientific, and engineering renewable energy careers
- 3 Foster recognition and mobility in educational pathways and the job market
- 4 Ensure a strong and swift response to skills needs

Disclaimer: The views expressed in this document solely reflect the view of the Renewable Energy Skills Partnership, and do not reflect the views of the European Commission or any other members of the Pact for Skills initiative.

¹ https://year-of-skills.europa.eu/index_en



1. Prioritise renewable energy skills and workforce building in policymaking

We must avoid a gap emerging between countries' ambitious national renewable energy trajectories from their National Energy and Climate Plans (NECPs), and EU Member States failing to prepare for the necessary qualified workforce to accompany this transition. Mitigating it requires strong political commitment and sound policymaking. The Partnership recommends the following actions:

- 1. Make workforce training in renewable energies an industrial priority**, impacting education, vocational training, and employment policies.
- 2. Shape these policies through a comprehensive assessment of the current and foreseeable skill needs** across renewable energy technologies.
- 3. Set-up the new Net-Zero Europe Platform quickly**, as a central coordination body for the EU-level assessment, monitoring and forecasting of workforce demand and supply, in accordance with the Net Zero Industry Act.
- 4. Establish an inclusive dialogue with social partners and industrial partnerships** about skill-related policies, e.g. when designing training programmes to align with labour market needs.

2. Boost the visibility and attractiveness of technical, scientific, and engineering renewable careers

Currently, the need for qualified workers as well as a diversity of technical, scientific, and engineering careers is underestimated. Raising awareness on these dimensions across the education and job market ecosystems is essential to the success of renewable energy policies. The Partnership recommends the following actions:

- 5. Organise nation-wide awareness-raising campaigns** to attract more workers among students and jobseekers alike, through networks of public employment agencies, secondary schools and universities.
- 6. Promote perspectives for youth and those not in employment, education or training (NEETs) in the field of technical education and vocational training, emphasising the equal value to academic paths**, and the crucial role of technical jobs for the energy transition.
- 7. Foster early exposure to the diversity of technical careers across different renewable energies**, by including adequate learning content in primary and secondary schools.
- 8. Keep career advisors, teachers, and trainers across educational levels, updated with market, technological, and job opportunities trends**, through easily accessible lifelong learning opportunities.
- 9. Promote inclusivity** by raising awareness about the diversity of career possibilities.

3. Foster recognition and mobility in educational pathways and the job market

Educational pathways can often be too restrictive in terms of job prospects, with perceived lock-in effects in specific sectors. In addition, there is often a lack of information on opportunities for workers to join reskilling programmes from one sector to another. Creating mobility possibilities is part of the short-to-long-term response to the needs of the renewable energy sector. The Partnership recommends the following actions:

10. **Promote a multi-technology approach in vocational training, where appropriate**, to allow trainees to be acquainted with different types of renewable energy systems, thus facilitating mobility across different sectors.
11. **Facilitate movement between higher education, vocational education and training centres**, by creating recognised bridges and transferable credentials.
12. **Support the recognition of informal acquired skills and experience from related professions**, to allow the move of career changers into the renewable energy sector, while being supported by an efficient reskilling and upskilling over time.
13. **Strive for the cross-border recognition of qualifications and certifications** for the professions that are important for net-zero industries, in order to support cross-border mobility of workers wherever relevant.

4. Ensure a strong and swift response to skills needs

The need for a qualified workforce in the short to medium-term is critical to accelerate the green transition. Policymakers and the vocational training ecosystem must go further. The Partnership recommends the following actions:

14. **Promote a modular approach to vocational training where appropriate, to bridge the skills gap**. A modular approach is about structuring training around key modules that may be common to multiple technologies. For relevant professions, this can make it easier and quicker to train new workers and reskill existing ones, while avoiding duplication caused by working in silos, i.e. working in isolation from the wider team, and favouring the combination of renewable solutions.
15. **Prioritise European Net-Zero Academies with a focus on areas where current and foreseen skills shortages are critical** for the deployment of renewable energies. In accordance with the Net-Zero Industry Act, these Academies will be new organisations, consortium or projects tasked with developing “*education and training programmes, content and materials, as well as the credentials*” for the net-zero technology value chains. Their programmes and materials will then be used by education and training centres across EU countries.
16. **Incentivise apprenticeships** in the renewable energy industry to get more qualified technicians into the job market.



17. **Invest more in infrastructure and trainers for vocational and lifelong learning, with the support of public authorities**, ensuring attractive courses that are at the forefront of new technologies, with adequately-paid teachers and up-to-date equipment. Companies should be supported to increase their training capacity.

18. **Support training programmes development in the fields of permitting, impact assessment, and technical regulations**, to support capacity-building in national and local administrations, and to reduce disparities in length, and complexity of authorisation procedures amongst Member States.

About the Renewable Energy Skills Partnership

The Renewable Energy Skills Partnership brings together leaders from the entire spectrum of the renewable energy value chain. It ensures sustainable and systematic sectoral cooperation to have a well-trained and sufficient renewable energy workforce. This is a major factor of competitiveness for the renewable energy ecosystem, and a decisive condition for the manufacturing, deployment and management of renewable energy technologies needed to achieve the EU energy and climate objectives.

According to the [EurObserv'ER report](#), the total direct and indirect employment from the renewable sectors is estimated at 1.69 million full-time equivalents by 2022. This figure is 15% higher than in 2021. This number is set to increase following the accelerated deployment of clean energy solutions.

Accounting for all renewable energy sectors, achieving our REPowerEU targets will require the creation of over 3.5 million jobs by 2030. This challenge is of a gigantic scale, and requires urgent action from all stakeholders and policymakers across the continent.

The Partnership provides an understanding of the sector and skills analytics, and will ensure that individuals entering the renewable energy workforce are equipped with appropriate skills, ready to face a rapidly growing and constantly evolving environment. It promotes quality careers within the renewable energy sector following the values of the just transition, and reinforces the sector's attractiveness for workers. It also aims at providing guidance and recommendations to public authorities.



Partners:

