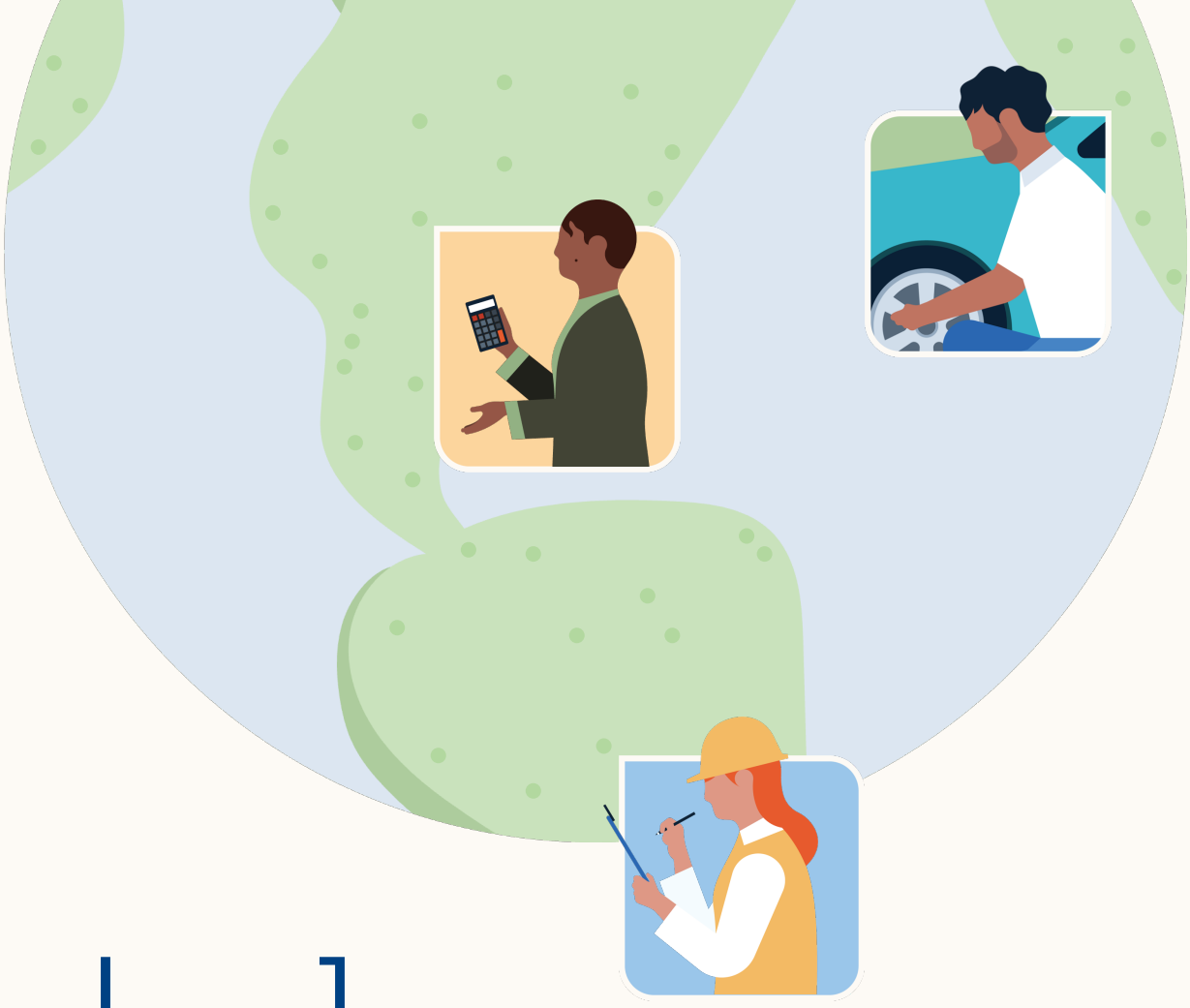


Global Green Skills Report 2023

EU Highlights

LinkedIn Economic Graph

Executive summary

According to a report recently released by the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the actions we take over the next decade will determine whether or not our planet is livable for generations to come.

The gargantuan challenge of drastically reducing greenhouse gas emissions demands a whole-of-economy shift — across industries, roles, and geographical regions. With every challenge comes opportunity: If we take the right approach, we can leverage our efforts on behalf of the environment to catalyse growth throughout the global economy.

At LinkedIn, we believe the most promising path forward is through a skills-based approach to greening the global workforce. By breaking down roles into the specific capabilities required to do them, we can develop talent strategies that recognize individuals for the capabilities they possess. And by thinking of climate-related jobs as collections of skills, specifically "green skills," we can expand the talent pool available to solve the climate crisis. Just as most roles now require digital skills, jobs ranging from procurement specialist to fleet manager to product designer to head chef can be performed in a more sustainable way if workers have green skills.

Our report identifies European trends at the intersection of the workforce and sustainability, based on data from a membership base that now exceeds 120 million LinkedIn users in the European Union. Our findings reveal that there are pockets of exciting momentum, but that we are still dangerously far from the scale of change that's required.

The concentration of "green talent" in the workforce — the share of workers who hold a green job or list at least one green skill on their LinkedIn profile — is growing in every one of the 26 EU[1] countries we studied. We also found, however, that the increase in demand for green skills is outpacing the increase in supply, raising the prospect of an imminent green skills shortage. Between 2022 and 2023 alone, the share of green talent in the workforce rose by a median of 11.6% across the 26 countries we examined, while the share of job postings[2] requiring at least one green skill grew nearly three times as quickly — by a median of 32.2%.

Remarkably, our data suggests that green skills, and the jobs that require them, are especially resilient during times of economic uncertainty. Even as overall hiring slowed over the past year, green hiring bucked that trend. While overall hiring slowed in the EU between February 2022 and February 2023, the number of job postings requiring at least one green skill has grown by a median of 20.1% over the same period. And since March 2020, our data shows, workers with green skills have been hired for new jobs at a higher rate than those without green skills in every single country we studied.

Growth in demand for green skills is outpacing the increase in supply

Between 2022 and 2023

+11.6%
Share of green talent in the workforce

+32.2%
Share of job postings requiring at least one green skill

[1] Bulgaria does not meet the minimum thresholds LinkedIn set for sharing data externally

[2] This analysis was conducted using paid job listings on LinkedIn posted by companies to ensure data consistency.

Still, we are far from the green skills penetration that we need. Our report reveals that just one in nine workers have green skills in the EU. Put another way: eight in nine workers lack a single green skill, at a time when the future of our planet depends on them.

This supply-demand disconnect is likely to rise considerably without significant workforce investments as policies destined to curb climate change are introduced and rolled out in the EU. The European Green Deal, for example, allocates substantial funding through the just transition fund to support member states or regions in investing in new green jobs and facilitating employment opportunities and reskilling.

But it's not enough for organisations to create more green roles, to be filled over time by a new generation of green-minded workers. The magnitude and urgency of the climate change problem requires that today's workers learn green skills on the job. And by identifying the most relevant green skills for each role and industry, we can develop targeted, tailored reskilling programs.

Accelerating the green transformation, while expanding access to the opportunities it opens up, will require unprecedented levels of cooperation among stakeholders in the public and private sectors. To that end, our report includes critical questions that policymakers, business leaders, and others might explore as they seek to develop regulations, programs, and policies that foster green skills development and create pathways for workers to transition into jobs that help green the planet.

Just as scientific research continually expands our understanding of climate change, data at the intersection of climate and the workforce can play a critical role in guiding workers, companies, and governments in making strategic decisions and developing targeted interventions to accelerate the transition to a green economy. We have a historic opportunity to save our planet — but to seize it, we need the right human capital.

Key findings

In the European Union, **only one in nine workers has one or more green skills.** Put another way, eight in nine workers lack even a single green skill.

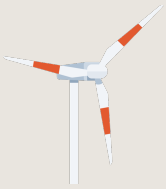
Between 2022 and 2023, the share of green talent in the workforce rose by a median of 11.6%[3] while the share of job postings requiring at least one green skill grew nearly three times as quickly — by a median of 32.2%.

The five-year annualised growth rate between 2018 and 2023 reveals a similar trend. **The share of green talent grew by 5.9% per year** over that period, while **the share of jobs requiring at least one green skill grew by 13.6%.**

Even as overall hiring slowed over the past year, green hiring bucked that trend. While overall hiring slowed globally between February 2022 and February 2023, **job postings requiring at least one green skill have grown by a median of 20.1% over the same period.**

The global median LinkedIn hiring rate[4] **for workers with at least one green skill is 29% higher than the workforce average.**

Our 2023 Green Skills Report also delves into **three sectors** that are especially pivotal to meeting sustainability targets:



Energy production

Transportation

Finance

Energy production and transportation are the first and second-largest sources of carbon emissions, respectively, while the finance industry is a critical enabler of the transformation that's required.

From 2015 to 2023, **employment in the renewable energy industry grew in every country we studied.** For every 100 workers who left the global renewable energy sector, 120 workers joined.

The transition to a greener economy is driving green skills growth across all industries, including the most carbon-intensive. For example, the green talent concentration in the oil and gas industry has steadily increased since 2016, reaching 20% in 2023.

[3] Unless otherwise specified, all global statistics refer to the median among all 48 countries we studied. We believe this is a more accurate, precise way to measure overall global trends because it reduces the extent to which a large economy can skew the data and subsume the data insights of smaller markets.

[4] The LinkedIn hiring rate is the ratio of hires divided by LinkedIn membership and is indexed to 2016.

The share of auto workers with EV skills (a subset of green skills) rose by a median of 54% between 2018 to 2023.

The EU countries with the greatest share of auto workers with EV skills as of March 2023 are Sweden (8.1%) and Germany (6.1%). The UK is at 7.3%, and the US lags behind, with 3.7% of auto workers possessing EV skills.

While **the median green talent concentration across all industries is 11.6%** (meaning that one in nine workers has green skills), **it's only 6.5% for the finance industry** (meaning that one in 15 has green skills). This places finance behind industries ranging from energy and mining to agriculture, healthcare, and manufacturing, when it comes to green talent.

With a 16.7% year-over-year increase in its green talent concentration, **the finance industry is greening faster than most industries.**

In 81% of transitions into green jobs — jobs that have sustainability at their core — workers already have green skills or prior green job experience. Certain green jobs are more likely to be available to workers without prior green job experience. These include relatively new and quickly growing roles like sustainability manager and energy auditor.

The **skills profile for the average job changed 24%** between 2015 and 2022 — and **green skills are increasingly among the newly added skill requirements.**