

The green skills divide hits: Failure to equip the workforce will derail the green transition from next year

New research reveals green jobs will outstrip skilled workers as early as 2027, threatening progress towards net zero.

BASINGSTOKE, HAMPSHIRE, UNITED KINGDOM, April 29, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- New research and an associated survey from [Zero Carbon Academy](#) reveals that the global green transition is at risk, as demand for green-skilled workers is set to significantly outpace the supply of talent from as early as next year. The findings show that governments and businesses are failing to retrain and upskill the workforce at the pace required, despite rapid growth in green roles across key industries.

Green job growth rapidly outpacing skills supply

The latest edition of ZCA's annual research report, [Green skills: Bridging the divide](#), finds that green skills vacancies are projected to reach 310 million by 2031, up from 95 million in 2026. Over the same period, the global workforce equipped with green skills is expected to grow by just 60%, reaching 159 million workers by 2031, compared with 100 million today.

The research forecasts the emergence of a significant global green skills gap in 2027, two years earlier than previously expected, with the shortfall poised to slow the pace of the green transition across key sectors including manufacturing and transport & logistics.

Workers increasingly recognise the importance of green skills

While workforce skilling is failing to keep pace with demand, ZCA's research shows employees are increasingly aware of the importance of sustainability and green skills. For the second year running, ZCA surveyed US adults aged 18–65 to assess attitudes towards sustainability initiatives and green skills development. Key findings include:

- When asked what employers should prioritise to become more sustainable and environmentally conscious, 72% said that upskilling workers to improve green skills was either slightly important or very important.
- 70% of respondents said that a workplace offering "a strong culture relating to sustainability" was of interest, this was up by 10 percentage points on ZCA's previous 2025 edition of the survey.
- Perhaps as a warning to businesses slow on the uptake of environmental issues, more than 1

in 4 respondents (26%) said they would change employer if their current employer was found to be lacking environmental credentials or knowingly damaging the environment. This was up from just 1 in 5 last year.

Lauren Foye, Head of Market Research & Consultancy at ZCA commented:

“Workers are acutely aware of the importance of obtaining green skills, and as industries face an accelerating skills shortage, those with the right knowledge and training will be increasingly sought after.”

“With employees more willing than ever to change jobs if their values and expectations are not being met, it is critical that organisations act now, if not only to futureproof their workforce, but also to maintain employee trust, engagement, and retention.”

A free sample of the research is available in the whitepaper [Mind the gap: Bridging the green skills divide](#), which includes a focused assessment of the agricultural sector and the challenges it faces related to the green transition.

Zero Carbon Academy provides information, training, and accreditation to organisations seeking to reach net zero, offering analyst reports and industry commentary, alongside educational courses, and consultancy.

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