

## Green skills in the eyes of European businesses

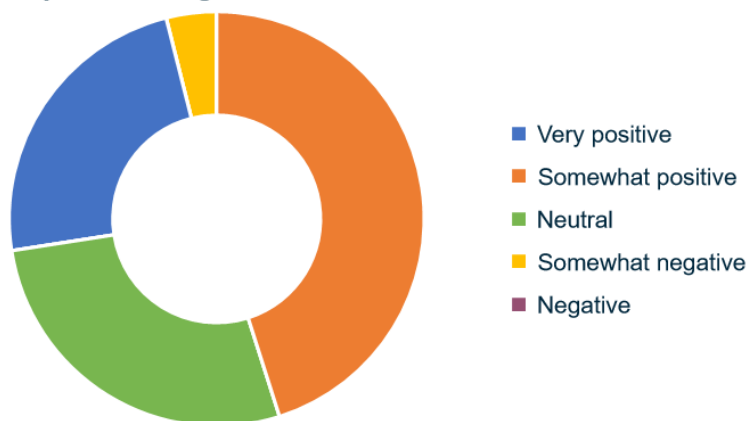
### Flash Survey – May 2022

The shift towards a greener and more sustainable economy has a profound impact on the European labour market. Green skills and green jobs are instrumental in translating the new opportunities created by clean and sustainable technologies into actual economic growth. Decisive skills-related measures need to be implemented by European, national, and regional authorities, social partners, civil society, and industry as part of an effective green transition.

51 national and regional chambers from 15 European countries responded to a Eurochambres survey in May 2022. The survey investigates the hurdles that companies face in implementing policies to speed up the green transition and dealing with skills shortages, while also highlighting the importance of investing in green skills.

#### 1. From the business perspective, what impact does the green transition have on the labour market in your country?

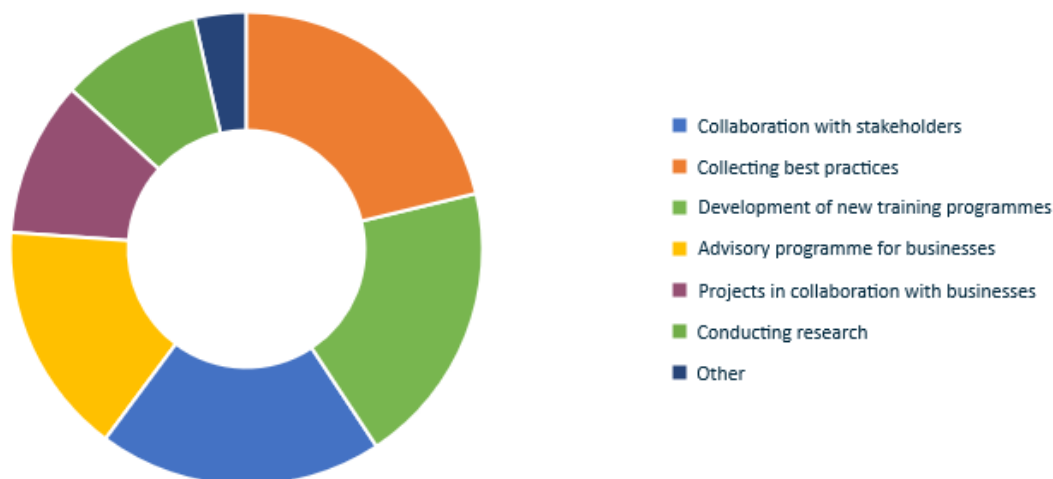
Impact of the green transition on the labour market



- The large majority of respondents were positive about the green transition and the impact that it has at both national and regional levels. Acknowledging the positive impact of the green transition does not automatically imply an easy implementation of the process, as the green transition contributes to the widening of already severe skill shortages.
- Indeed, 24% of respondents highlighted a strong satisfaction with the structural adjustments that the labour markets experience nowadays, while 45% suggest a somewhat positive impact of the same.
- 27% of respondents consider that the green transition will have a neutral impact on the labour market. This may reflect the fact that some companies and sectors are less directly affected.
- A slight minority of respondents, 4% of total surveyed chambers, expressed somewhat negative feedback.

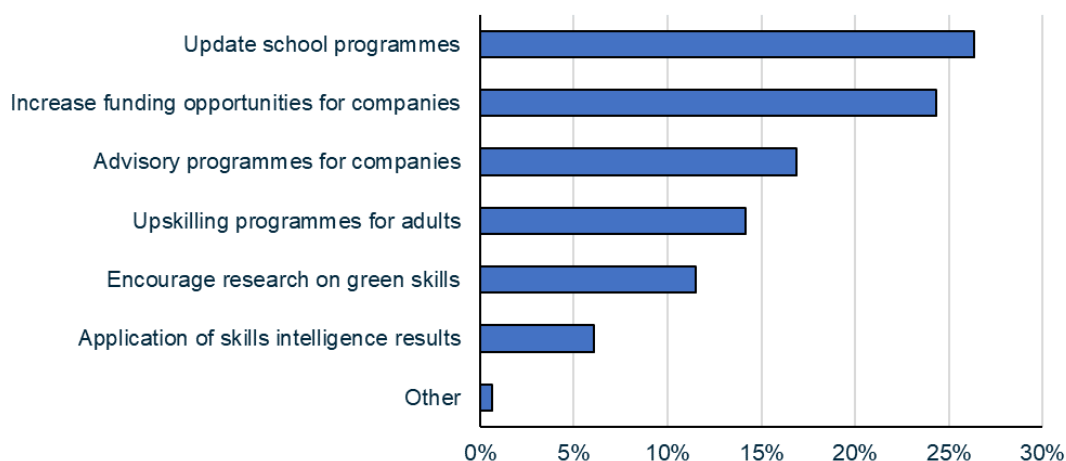
## 2. What initiatives have been promoted by your chamber to assist businesses in facing the challenges of green jobs?

Initiatives to assist businesses with the challenges of green jobs



- Chambers are committing to preparing European companies for the green transition. 21% of respondents identify the **exchange of best practices** as an important tool for this.
- **Collaboration with stakeholders** is fundamental according to 19% of surveyed chambers, maintaining a dialogue and mobilising a variety of actors in local and regional economies.
- The value of **developing new training programmes** is also highlighted by 19% of respondents.
- 16% consider the preparation of **advisory programmes** for businesses, especially SMEs, as necessary to assist with issues linked to the creation of green jobs and implementation of green practices in their business models.
- 11% of the chambers cite direct **collaboration with businesses in projects**.
- 1 in 10 respondents conduct **research** to support their member companies in relation to green skills and jobs.

## 3. How to support the acceleration of businesses' efforts towards greener jobs?



- More than a quarter of respondents cite the need to **update school programmes** to meet the labour market priorities. This should be done in accordance with forecasting the skills required for the green transition; thus, the development of effective skills intelligence tools is critical.
- Almost a quarter highlight the need for **funding** for companies to adapt their business to the green transition. This has certainly been exacerbated by the economic impact across Europe of the pandemic and now of the war in Ukraine.
- **Advisory programmes** for companies (17%) are considered important in accelerating companies' transition towards greener jobs.
- Green skills shortages should be addressed by investing in **upskilling programmes for adults** (14%). **Investments in research and innovation** will also be crucial to speed up the green transition, according to 11% of respondents.

#### 4. Examples of projects and best practices

- **Austria:** The Umweltstiftung (Foundation for Environment) was implemented by social partners – including therefore the Federal Economic Chamber (WKÖ) – to help qualify unemployed people for green jobs in the environmental services and environmental technology sector, e.g., construction, thermal insulation, environmental consulting, etc.
- **Croatia:** In frame of the EU project Greenomed (Interreg Mediterranean), the Croatian Chamber of Economy - Varaždin County Chamber with the expert support of the Geotechnical Faculty started Living Lab - Environmental Engineering. Unfortunately, after the end of this project, due to lack of finance, the activities stopped and now, in new EU financial perspective, the CCE - Varaždin is waiting for evaluation of other green projects.
- **Cyprus:** The Cyprus Chamber of Commerce and Industry in collaboration with a tertiary academic institution have set up the Green Business Transition Observatory with the aim to inform, assist and train all Cyprus business on matters related to green business transition.  
Additionally, the chamber has signed a memorandum of cooperation with Ecole Business School, Paris, and it has become a member of Circular Economy Alliance with the aim to train and educate SMEs and their employees in relation to circular economy matters.
- **France:** To meet the needs of the territory, CCI France's vocational education centres have developed, in addition to their "core business" of tertiary training, centres of expertise in technical training areas, generally in partnership with local players in the profession.
- **Italy:** As part of the annual surveys of the Excelsior information system, Unioncamere published two specialist volumes on 'Green Skills' and 'Sea Economy and Green Deal'. Two events were held to present the volumes, aimed at operators and Italian chamber staff.
- **Romania:** Timis Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture is part of a [Circular Economy in the Balkan Countries project](#). In 2020 it provided training for companies, in 2021 training for municipalities regarding the circular economy, and this year the chamber is developing a service that can be offered to companies of municipalities to help them understand, assess, and implement the principles of sustainability and circularity. The chamber is also organizing the largest green business idea competition since 2015 - [Climate Launchpad](#) and it is doing capacity building in Systems Innovation with the [Pioneers into Practice Programme](#).

- **Serbia:** The Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Serbia currently works on:
  - [Finance4SocialChange - Leveraging Finance4 Positive Social Change](#);
  - [SENSES](#) - Strengthening Social Entrepreneurial Landscape through involving socially responsible corporate Practices in Entrepreneurial Competences and Skills enhancement in the DANUBE region.

## 5. Policy recommendations

- The green transition is still a new phenomenon, not just in the labour market. There must be a **more efficient system for disseminating information** among stakeholders, including businesses, on possibilities and challenges. Initiatives to provide assistance and financial support may well be unknown by the businesses that could benefit most from them, SMEs. Effective campaigns, far-reaching best practice sharing, community building, and connecting with financing and support institutions must therefore be at the centre of skills development initiatives.
- **A multistakeholder approach** is critical to ensuring the success of the green transition in labour markets. Currently, businesses themselves are responsible for financing and organising the vast majority of labour market relevant training; however, conducting a massive up/reskilling towards green jobs is a significant burden for an individual business to bear, especially an SME; therefore, public employment offices, education providers, and public and regional authorities must step in and assist businesses in the green transition, in close collaboration with chambers as trusted service providers.
- Even with the best attempts of the private sector, real change in the labour market necessitates an effort on the part of formal education providers. The **curriculum of school, university, and vocational training programmes must be reviewed and modified on a regular basis to reflect the most recent findings of regional skills intelligence tools**. Empirical experience of climate change-related initiatives developed by businesses and chambers should be the basis to develop and deliver labour-market relevant courses at all levels of education.
- Furthermore, a **broader and more adequate adult education offer** is critical in adapting current jobs to the green transition; thus, the target of 60% of adults in education every year set at the Porto Summit in 2021 must be met by offering labour-market relevant programmes that correlate with labour skills demands. Increasing training opportunities should help to reduce the skills shortages that are an unavoidable consequence of the green transformation.
- **Advisory programmes for SMEs**, particularly on energy efficiency and circularity, are required to increase knowledge and accelerate the pursuit of these political goals. The green transition presents challenges to the entire economy, but especially to SMEs, which have limited resources and time. Many green skills are multi-faceted and affect virtually every process in a company. To implement the green transition effectively, it is therefore often necessary to train the entire staff. Dedicated programmes with training assistance for SMEs should be put in place while taking into account the diverse local and regional demands.
- Many of these measures will require **long-term and targeted funding for businesses, particularly SMEs** and not least given the highly challenging economic situation across Europe. The green transition is a long-term goal for the entire economy and society, and the private sector will bear a significant portion of the cost of this transformation. public funding targeted particularly towards SMEs in

the green economy must be increased, both from EU funds and from national programmes.

Further information: Mr Giacomo Fersini, Tel. +32 2 282 08 89, [fersini@eurochambres.eu](mailto:fersini@eurochambres.eu)  
Press contact: Ms Karen Albuquerque, Tel. +32 2 282 08 72, [albuquerque@eurochambres.eu](mailto:albuquerque@eurochambres.eu)