

INVEST IN #SKILLS4CLIMATE ↔ INVEST IN A GREEN RECOVERY

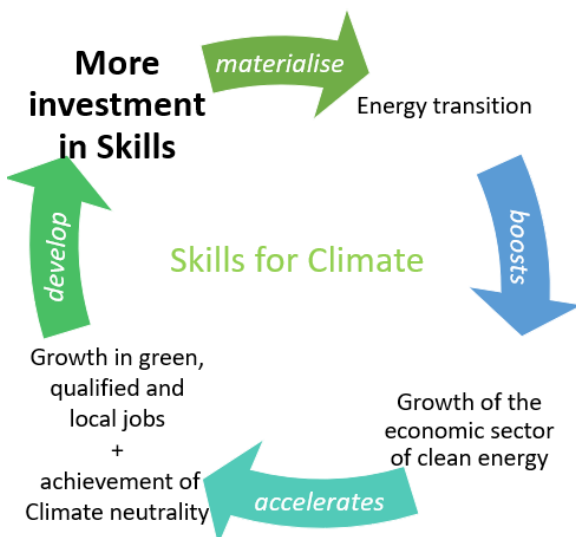
Dear Vice-President Timmermans,
Dear Director-General Petriccione,

As actors of the energy transition through electricity, we support the EU's ambition of becoming the first climate-neutral continent by 2050 and we advocate in favour of an EU Green Recovery, consistent with the Green Deal framework.

We are convinced that great potential lies in the development of Skills for Climate to drive both climate-neutrality and a recovery full of job opportunities.

Indeed, targeting investment in Skills for Climate in the upcoming economic Recovery packages is an efficient strategy as this serves to create employment in a sector ready to recruit workers with the adequate skillset, and to support climate policies which need the right skills, such as: digitalisation, solar and wind installation, energy system management, heat pumps setting, building automation and control systems, electric vehicles chargers, smart system integration, intelligent lighting systems and smart grids. Europe needs to bridge the gap with its international competitors!

Skills for Climate foster a virtuous circle:



2030 Climate Targets' achievement relies on the assumption that there are sufficient and skilled electrical contractors to install at least:

- ⚡ 3,000 solar panels per day,
- ⚡ 1,000 electrical vehicles' chargers per day - besides, more than 200,000 net jobs can be created just in the electrical automotive sector by 2030
- ⚡ 15,000 heat pumps per day

77% of all EU firms say lack of staff with the right skills is a barrier to invest and **25%** of SMEs say it is their most important problem.

We can already witness a huge shortage in Skills for Climate coupled with an ageing workforce; however, we also see a tremendous opportunity: investing in climate-related Skills creates jobs with multiple benefits:

- **NUMEROUS jobs:** the electrical contracting sector -mostly SMEs- already has many vacancies to fill for professionals with green skills and this trend will increase following climate & recovery policies
- **GREEN jobs:** workers will be offered sustainable and, by definition, permanent jobs
- **QUALIFIED jobs:** there is a need for cross-disciplinary incorporation of traditional and digital skills
- **LOCAL jobs:** they work on local installations that can inherently not be delocalised.

The electrical contracting sector is already taking it upon itself to raise awareness and address the issues within reach:

- ⚡ EuropeOn, the EU representative, has launched the [#Skills4Climate campaign](#) and takes part in the [#GreenRecovery Call for Mobilisation](#)
- ⚡ Recent initiatives have been put in place in many EU countries, from a [web platform](#) to make electricity jobs more attractive, to a humoristic series in 15 episodes on [YouTube](#) for young professionals to discover new careers, to a [weekly radio show](#), to developing online training for all electrical contractors across Europe during the Covid lockdown, to participating in [EuroSkills](#) competitions, to the building of a [Competence centre working at the EU level](#), etc.
- ⚡ Several associations of electrical contractors have applied together for a Call of interest launched by Erasmus+, to develop a European Qualifications Framework in the field of the electricity sector.

We are looking forward to seeing strong climate skills provisions in several recent or upcoming EU announcements:

- ⚡ The much-awaited EU Recovery Plan,
- ⚡ The upcoming update of the EU Skills Agenda,
- ⚡ The announcement by DG Joost Korte of substantial new EU funding for the Member states to boost their skills policy in the recovery period and further – which yet needs clarifications,
- ⚡ The European Investment Fund's new Skills & Education Guarantee Pilot, worth 50 million €.

We are strongly convinced that Skills should be at the very core of the Recovery Plan rather than an isolated target. Therefore, we call on EU and national authorities to :

- ⚡ **Intertwine Skills and Climate in the upcoming EU and national Recovery plans**, with funding made available for Member States to develop, circulate and incentivise Skills for Climate across Europe through Technical Education, Apprenticeships, Re-Skilling and Up-Skilling – we must bridge the gap with our international competitors.
- ⚡ **Take advantage of the upcoming initiatives on the Renovation Wave, Smart Sector integration, Sustainable and Smart Mobility and Consumers Empowerment in the Green Transition to roll out sectoral and cross-sectoral initiatives on Skills in digitalisation and decarbonisation.** Some ideas are already spreading, such as MEP Ciarán Cuffe's proposal¹ to create *"an EU skills initiative in the renovation sector"*.
- ⚡ **Strengthen Public-Private partnerships with a focus on Skills for Climate, including Digitalisation**, to ensure that students have the most relevant skills when entering the job market.
- ⚡ **Make the Just Transition Fund available for re-skilling programmes** to answer to the manpower shortage in digitalisation, near zero-energy building renovation, decentralised renewable based systems and e-mobility.

¹ DRAFT REPORT on maximising the energy efficiency potential of the EU building stock(2020/0000(INI))