



Skills for a Low-Carbon Future

Forthcoming publication

ABOUT LEED

The OECD Programme on Local Economic and Employment Development (LEED) has advised governments and communities since 1982 on how to respond to economic change and tackle complex problems in a fast-changing world. It draws on a comparative analysis of experience from some 50 countries in the Americas, Asia, Australasia and Europe in fostering economic growth, employment and inclusion.

For more information on the LEED Programme, please visit www.oecd.org/cfe/leed.

ABOUT CEDEFOP

Concerns over Europe's economic future and the pace of technological and social change make Europe's workforce and the quality of its skills more important than ever. Most of Europe's workforce acquires its skills through vocational education and training (VET). Consequently, VET in Europe must meet the highest standards. Cedefop (the European Centre for the Development of Vocational training) is the EU's agency that provides evidence from research, statistical data, policy analyses and stimulates debate on learning and the labour market to find ways to improve VET throughout Europe. Cedefop's work seeks to strengthen European cooperation in VET and is used by the European Commission, Member States and social partners to support their VET policy making.

To find out more about what Cedefop does, please visit www.cedefop.europa.eu.

ABSTRACT

Climate change is a major issue facing all countries. The efforts that countries make over the coming years to decarbonise their economies and production systems will have dramatic impacts on labour markets. These impacts will include winners and losers, and these will be geographically spread, as well as by sector and occupation. The depth of impact will also be evident on the skills needs and demands of a future low-carbon workforce.

Skills are inherently individual qualities, they are the bundle of knowledge, attributes and capacities that can be learned and enable individuals to perform activities and tasks. Green skills simply refers to "the knowledge, abilities, values and attitudes needed to live in, develop and support a society which reduces the impacts of human activity on the Environment" (Cedefop 2009).

Understanding and quantifying labour market impacts of low carbon transition offers a way to diffuse existing tensions around decisions to mitigate carbon emissions. The successful transition to a low carbon economy will only be possible by ensuring the labour force is able to transfer from areas of decreasing employment to other industries, and if adequate human capital exists to develop new industries that will grow as a result of climate change mitigation and adaptation activities. A further risk in not addressing green skills needs and the labour force gaps is the effect of resulting skills bottlenecks. This is where economic activity is stalled because of the unavailability of the correct range of skills, or the availability of these skills but at too high a cost. Skills bottlenecks will further increase the costs of society for mitigation and adaptation.

Green skill analysis offers a method to disaggregate impacts at the occupation level and look at sets of knowledge and attributes that individual workers possess and ways in which they can be augmented. This volume explores in depth the skills implications of transition to low carbon production systems. Public policy is already influencing both the supply and demand for green skills. Environmental regulation and government's role in creating markets that price carbon and the other negative externalities of industrial processes that are impacting on our climate are driving significant change in labour markets. This volume also explores early lessons from OECD countries and beyond, forthcoming challenges of transition and the policy implication for educational institutions, industry and government at multiple levels of jurisdiction.

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WEBSITES:

<http://www.oecd.org/cfe/leed/lowcarbon.htm>

<http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/about-cedefop/projects/green-skills/green-skills.aspx>

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