

GJA Newsletter article

Green Jobs and skills – Regional updates

The GJA newsletter will provide regular updates on the state of play in different parts of the UK. In this issue we look at London. In the next issue we will focus on the Yorkshire and Humberside Region.

The report *Green Jobs and Skills in London* was published in October 2021 by WPI and IES. [Green-Jobs-and-Skills-in-London-Final-Report \(2\).pdf](#)

It was commissioned by the 32 London boroughs that are organised into 4 hubs.

Current green jobs in London 2020 - The report estimates that there are 234,000 green jobs representing 4.4% of total employment. These are defined as *'those jobs that facilitate meeting net-zero and broader environmental goals.'* 3 sectors represent 82% of this total:

- Green Finance – 50,700 (22%)
- Home and buildings – 58,200 (25%)
- Power – 82,900 (35%)

Projected green jobs in London to 2030 and 2050 - The report contains low, central, and high scenarios. The total number of green jobs projected under the central scenario rises from 234,000 in 2020, to 505,000 in 2030 and then a little over 1 million in 2050. This represents a 4.5-fold increase in green jobs in London over three decades.

Equality and diversity - These jobs are less diverse than the overall labour market. Women account for 1 in 3 cf to 46% overall, BAME workers represent only 30% cf to 36% overall.

Job loss – The report calculates that there are 390,000 jobs at risk from the transition

Skills – The report identifies that *'there is an urgent need to increase education provision in subjects and courses that are relevant for green jobs, and to support those already in the labour market in non-green jobs to, retrain and upskill to acquire the skills that they need, in order to meet the rapid expansion of the sector over the coming decade.'*

The challenge for the trade union movement

Trade unions are not mentioned in the 115-page report, which given the references to just transition, is problematic. Despite this the executive summary concludes:

'London is one of the most inequitable places in the UK, with huge inequalities in pay, qualifications, health and outcomes such as poverty and deprivation. The changes that we are about to see through the shift to green sectors provides an opportunity to turn those around.... By doing so, as well as driving a just transition, these green jobs could also drive inclusive growth and tackle the underlying inequalities that have existed in London for decades.'

Getting a seat at the table - Unions in each of the 4 hubs will need to work together to ensure that the references to a just transition are not just empty phrases. This will include calling for the establishment of green jobs and skills taskforces in each of the boroughs covered by the report. Where these committees already exist, it will be vital that there is union representation. The link between a just transition and representation of those organisations that are set up to deliver justice in the workplace and community must be reinforced.

The record so far on this is not good. Most London boroughs do not engage with unions on the issue of green jobs and skills. This is partly down to the fact that in many places the unions have not been calling for it in a systematic way. There are some exceptions. In the LB of Wandsworth after years of campaigning the UCU and Battersea and Wandsworth TUC have been offered a seat on 2 Skills and Jobs forums that have been set up as part of a local climate action strategy. The *Green Jobs and Skills* report will form the basis for the first meetings in 2022.

This is the year when the noise around just transition must be translated into action in local authorities across the UK. Jobs and skills will be central to this and trade unions must make their voices heard.

Graham Petersen