

Call for Papers:

EJWI issue on Green Skills, Workplace Innovations and Just Transition

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Climate change, digitalisation, shifting demographics and public health imperatives create new conditions and demands for skill development, workplace innovation, organisational development and occupational health and safety. The role of AI, algorithms, robots and cobots and new logistic tools in the value chain, will redefine the interface between humans and machines, with new opportunities for advanced decision-making as well as unforeseen impact on job quality. SDG 8 on decent work and economic growth must be seen in a broader context of social, economic, and technological transformation. Green transformation of society and industry must encompass a significant role for democracy and civic participation.

More specifically, green transformation actualizes four perspectives of relevance for employment, work and job quality: the implementation of non-carbon energy systems and non-fossil approaches; the importance of green growth and its impact on productivity, organisations, and employment levels; the circular economy, recycling policies, practices, and processes; and the socio-ecological transition with interdependencies, eventual contradicting demands, changing values and lifestyles, mobility, transport systems, gender equity and a fair transition.

These transformations are also in accordance with the Agenda 2030 goals of sustainable environmental, economic, and social development. The process of green transformation occurs at various societal levels, i.e., the macro level, the meso level and the micro level and actualises various challenges and threats in a local, regional, and national perspective according to the EU initiatives of Green Deal and FitFor55. Green jobs and green skills are generic concepts mirroring an ongoing development and transformation of the world of work in a global sense. These connotations differ between continents, countries, and sectors of the labour market. Our mission with this call is also to identify and share definitions of green jobs and green skills (Cedefop, 2015). How are green jobs and skills defined and how are they to be pursued, and

by whom? Individual workers, firms, secondary /tertiary educational institutions, State vocational training, private training, and credentialing agencies?

Skill formation and competence development via in-service learning, general and vocational education are necessary prerequisites and conditions to support the development of new, adaptive, and socially inclusive work organisation configurations. Some familiar jobs will cease to exist, and new jobs will be created in emerging market segments within a globally interconnected and likely volatile economy, yet its actual impact still is to be seen in the future. However, the development will certainly lead to new job openings in a re-defined labour market within the primary sectors as well as in supplementary segments of the market.

The EU predicts that the green transformation will create around one million new jobs in Europe. Social partners have a crucial role in the greening of the European world of work by setting standards of good and inclusive workplaces, but employee-based workplace innovations are also needed to both drive and ease the adaptation to greening imperatives. Development towards sustainable change processes in the green transformation will require increased collaborations spanning over traditional borders, both within and across functions and organisations; this requires a diversity of competencies. Moreover, development towards green transformation needs considerations from perspectives such as gender equity, integration of migrant workers and immigrants, and open access policies for disabled persons, which thus must be part and parcel of these developments at the organisational level.

The purpose of this Special Issue of the European Journal of Workplace Innovation is to provide a better theoretical and empirical understanding of green jobs and green skills in the European economy, focussing on Europe as a learning community, illuminating the role of formal, nonformal and informal learning contexts and how they can interact with various forms of workplace innovation, competitiveness, and socially inclusive work organisations. More generally, this Special Issue aims at a mixture of policy visions and political missions, theoretical approaches as well as case studies and examples of ongoing firm-level innovations in various sectors of working life that can inspire organisational strategy.

The Call for Papers opened in July 2023. Abstracts should be submitted by 31st December 2023. Authors will be notified regarding acceptance of abstracts by 13th March 2024. Full text is due 31st May 2024. Review process will be in Summer/Autumn 2024. Final text will be requested by 31st October 2024. Publication expected in EJWI 9.2 late Autumn 2024.