

Green Jobs Taskforce report: UCU statement

On 14th July 2021, an [independent report](#) from the Green Jobs Taskforce was published. The report outlines the Taskforce's recommendations for how government, industry, the education sector and a wide range of other stakeholders can work together to enable transition to net zero carbon, whilst supporting industries and workers. This comes ahead of their Net Zero Strategy due to be launched in advance of [COP26](#) in Glasgow, this November.

Background

The Taskforce was announced as part of the government's [Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution](#), which stated £12 billion of government investment to create and support up to 250, 000 green jobs. UCU's response to the Ten Point plan can be seen [here](#). The Green Jobs Taskforce has been convened by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and the Department for Education. It is comprised of 17 individuals from industry, academia, unions, and the education and skills sector, who worked between November 2020 and July 2021, with various roundtables and meetings to obtain input from a diverse range of stakeholders.

This work is essential for supporting the economy to achieve the UK government's goal of **net zero carbon by 2050**, with key target dates being 2035 and 2050. However, according to the [latest report published by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change](#) (IPCC, 2021), 2050 may not be soon enough if we are to address the climate crisis.

Key findings and recommendations

The report has been divided into 3 main themes:

1. Driving investment in net zero to support good quality green jobs in the UK
2. Building pathways into good green careers
3. A just transition for workers in the high carbon economy

The report recognises that every sector of the UK will be impacted by the transition to net zero and consequently workers and communities will be too. The report states that the government has set an **ambition for 2 million green jobs in the UK by 2030**.

Although the report focuses on jobs that directly contributes to, or indirectly supports progress towards the UK's net zero carbon emissions targets, it does recognise that green jobs and skills should not be restricted to certain industry sectors. "Every job has the potential to become 'green' as the world moves to combat climate change, and there are a huge range of skills which will support the transition to a net zero economy" (Green Jobs Taskforce, 2021). This highlights the need for holistic understanding of green jobs and skills, to ensure we mobilise the nation in this movement for a green transition.

It is positive to see a strong emphasis on quality throughout the report and recognition of the Trade Unions' long called for Just Transition, to ensure Green Jobs are quality jobs with no one left behind. "The UK must manage the transition to net zero in an inclusive way, so that those affected workers have a voice in shaping the transformation" (Green Jobs

Taskforce, 2021). As a key stakeholder group for the Taskforce, unions are mentioned throughout the report and the need for collaboration and partnership is emphasised as critical for a joined-up approach.

There is significant focus on both skills transition and the role of education in achieving long term progress towards a green economy, stating that green skills and knowledge need to be built into curricula at all stages of the learning cycle. Although education is a key component to this report, the main focus is on skills, with less on knowledge and competencies, this likely to connect with the chosen emphasis of this report being on jobs that directly contribute to, or indirectly support UK net zero targets. With such a strong focus on specific green skills, it is not surprising Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) are prioritised, however there is a nod to other discipline areas. From a UCU perspective, it is important to also realise the role of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences in achieving a Just Transition.

See the [UCU Green New Deal for Universities and Colleges](#) for more information on UCU's bargaining and negotiation work on this. Also see UCU's call for skills based regional hubs as set out [here](#), with reference to the need for a retaining revolution.

It is advised that members also take the time to look through the 15 specific recommendations outlined in the report.

TUC have published a blog on their website with a list of highlights from the Taskforce's recommendations: <https://www.tuc.org.uk/blogs/green-jobs-taskforce-greener-economy-can-be-positive-workers-too>

The full report is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/green-jobs-taskforce-report>