

The Quality Jobs Roadmap within the programme of the European Commission

Eurelectric response

Eurelectric represents the interests of the electricity industry in Europe. Our work covers all major issues affecting our sector. Our members represent the electricity industry in over 30 European countries.

We cover the entire industry from electricity generation and markets to distribution networks and customer issues. We also have affiliates active on several other continents and business associates from a wide variety of sectors with a direct interest in the electricity industry.

We stand for

The vision of the European power sector is to enable and sustain:

- A vibrant competitive European economy, reliably powered by clean, carbon-neutral energy
- A smart, energy efficient and truly sustainable society for all citizens of Europe

We are committed to lead a cost-effective energy transition by:

investing in clean power generation and transition-enabling solutions, to reduce emissions and actively pursue efforts to become carbon-neutral well before mid-century, taking into account different starting points and commercial availability of key transition technologies;

transforming the energy system to make it more responsive, resilient and efficient. This includes increased use of renewable energy, digitalisation, demand side response and reinforcement of grids so they can function as platforms and enablers for customers, cities and communities;

accelerating the energy transition in other economic sectors by offering competitive electricity as a transformation tool for transport, heating and industry;

embedding sustainability in all parts of our value chain and take measures to support the transformation of existing assets towards a zero carbon society;

innovating to discover the cutting-edge business models and develop the breakthrough technologies that are indispensable to allow our industry to lead this transition.

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Eurelectric, as Social Partner of the European Sectoral Social Dialogue for the electricity sector, has been invited to participate in the kick-off meeting of the Quality Jobs Roadmap (QJR) which will be the subject of a Communication from the Commission.

This is one of the initiatives contained in the Political Guidelines document published by Ursula von der Leyen in July 2024, in advance of her re-election as President of the European Commission.

In those guidelines, President von der Leyen called for:

- A Quality Jobs Roadmap, developed together with the social partners. It will support fair wages, good working conditions, training and fair job transitions for workers and self-employed people, notably by increasing collective bargaining coverage.
- A new Pact together with European trade unions and employers to strengthen European social dialogue in a time of economic and social change.
- A new Clean Industrial Deal for competitive industries and quality jobs.
- A revision of the Public Procurement Directive, to enable preference to be given to European products in public procurement for certain strategic sectors.

The new European Commission has followed up on its commitments by publishing the following Communications:

- [A Competitiveness Compass for the EU](#) (29 January 2025). The Competitiveness Compass establishes competitiveness as one of the EU's overarching principles for action.
- [Clean Industrial Deal](#) (26 February 2025), a bold business plan to support the competitiveness and resilience of our industry. The Deal will accelerate decarbonisation, while securing the future of manufacturing in Europe.
- [Unions of Skills](#) (5 March 2025) a plan to improve high quality education, training, and lifelong learning. It aims to deliver higher levels of basic and advanced skills; provide opportunities for people to regularly update and learn new skills; facilitate recruitment by businesses across the EU; attract, develop and retain top talent in Europe

On 5 March 2025, the [Pact to strengthen European social dialogue](#) was signed with the European Social Partners

The [Clean Industrial Deal](#) (pages 21-22) indicates the *Flagship actions – Skills and quality jobs for social fairness* that the Commission has planned for the next two years, among which the Quality of Jobs Roadmap.

[European social dialogue](#) procedures provide that the Social Partners are consulted if the Commission intervenes on social policy issues, such as on working conditions, and occupational health and safety.

In the case of QJR, since this is a particularly relevant topic for the social partners, the Commission, before launching the formal consultation, decided to promote participation by inviting all social partners, cross-industry and sectoral, to a kick-off meeting.

Contents and aims of the consultation of social partners

In the preparatory note of the European Commission for the meeting, which outlines the path of involvement of social partners in the preparation and implementation of the “Quality Jobs Roadmap”, the following questions are proposed as a guide for the conversation.

- How to support the creation of quality jobs?
- What is holding back the development of quality jobs?
- Do you have positive examples and best practices to share on quality jobs?
- What could be the contribution of social partners to the design and delivery of the Roadmap?

Below are some notes of the Eurelectric European Social Dialogue Task Force to share initial reflections on how to contribute, as social partners in the electricity sector, to the QJR.

What do we mean by quality jobs and what falls within the scope of QJR

The Commission proposes to consider in the area of QJR the following.

- **Good working conditions:** adequate wages, health and safety, work-life balance, enforcement
- **Digitalisation:** digital transformation of the workplace, use of digital technologies, including algorithmic management, remote work
- **Fair transitions:** opportunities for development, training, job security, labour mobility, anticipation and management of restructuring processes
- **Enablers:** supporting framework (i.e. quality childcare, long-term care), social dialogue and collective bargaining, funding

In addition to what has already been stated, social protection must be guaranteed, and the acquisition and transfer of rights to all forms of social insurance, including supplementary pensions, must be secured.

We should also consider the importance of engaging work, the skills necessary for high performance, personal motivation, and integration within a collaborative and supportive team.

The quality of work reflects deeper aspects of an individual’s well-being and fulfillment. This is crucial for attracting and retaining a qualified and motivated workforce.

While skills are fundamental, effective organization, well-defined work procedures, access to appropriate tools and equipment, and a healthy work environment are equally important in determining work quality.

In the electricity sector, safety is paramount. It relies on the proper execution of work procedures and strict adherence to regulations.

How to support the creation of quality jobs

We appreciate and support the approach proposed by the Commission to indicate “Competitiveness” in a broad sense, and therefore innovation, decarbonization, and electrification, as key elements from which to start to create and ensure good jobs over time.

The energy transition requires significant investments with extraordinary direct and indirect employment impacts, for these to translate into good jobs, it is necessary to ensure adequate financing, transparency of the rules, predictability of authorizations and long term visions (no stop-and goes).

All issues on which Eurelectric has represented its positions.

The electricity sector has a contribution to offer not only in terms of creating new jobs into the sector but also in terms of energy efficiency, supply of electricity at sustainable prices, decarbonization, etc. and more generally as an enabling factor for a clean European industry.

[Eurelectric is a partner in the Antwerp dialogue on electrification initiatives.](#)

What is holding back the development of quality jobs

The Utilities in the electricity sector offer excellent working conditions, opportunities for carriers, benefits and services, ecc. (even if the unions never consider them satisfactory enough), and even the opportunity for voluntary early retirement and reskilling and re-employment if necessary.

The issue is that most new jobs created by the investments in renewable and transmission and distribution grids are in contractors, service providers, and suppliers sometimes offer less advantageous conditions. It is not always the case, but it can happen.

Supply chain companies do not always have the resources and structures to dedicate to the orientation, selection and training of new employees.

In situations where it is necessary to close old power plants or for environmental reasons to relocate production, the greatest difficulties are for the related companies.

Positive examples and best practices to share on quality jobs

Companies in the electricity sector can contribute by sharing good practices in the quality of work in the areas we highlight below.

Just Energy Transition

In the electricity sector, innovation, competitiveness, and quality of work are closely linked.

The energy transition, along with the processes of decarbonization and electrification, generational turnover, and advancements in digitalization, automation, and technological innovation, is transforming the composition and structure of the workforce. More young people and women are entering the workforce, bringing diverse levels of education, new skills, and different expectations and approaches to work.

These transformation processes have the potential to yield positive outcomes; therefore, we emphasize that the transition must be "just for all."

The transition to renewable energy is not limited to specific geographical areas and sectors; it often affects entire territories and communities. In some cases, this change can be widespread and fragmented.

As examples of good practices, in Spain, Portugal and Italy, there are successful examples of "virtuous" reconversion that have led to the creation of quality jobs, such as the Andorra-Teruel project in Spain and the Futur-e and redeployment of coal-power plant phase-out in Italy.

In addition, in the event of decommissioning of thermal power plants, it has been observed in a number of Countries, including Italy and France for instance, that initiatives are undertaken for related companies and contractors, and for the recovery and enhancement of the territory.

The key factors for success include territorial planning, the active involvement of regional authorities, innovative entrepreneurial ideas, community engagement, collaboration with social partners, and sound financial planning.

What we are asking for includes the expansion of the Just Transition Fund (JTF), financial and technical support for local development partnerships, and the promotion of public-private partnerships.

The Electricity Sector as a Whole

The energy transition is being facilitated through significant investment plans aimed at replacing fossil fuels with electricity generated from renewable sources.

This transition requires approximately 68 billion euros yearly investments to renovate and strengthen transmission and distribution networks. These investments are creating millions of new jobs—estimated at up to 2 million—fostering growth among contractors and suppliers of services and materials.

It is crucial to ensure that all workers in the electricity sector receive adequate wages, social security protections, and adherence to safety regulations. These factors could be managed within the procurement processes.

The electricity sector has long been committed to ensuring adequate working conditions in the supply chain through a series of actions/initiatives at the company level for qualifying, contracting, and managing suppliers.

We would ask the Commission to support voluntary initiatives of Companies and Sectors to promote the appliance of collective agreements, compliance with social security regulations, promoting the certification of supplier qualifications, introducing incentives for the adoption of safety tools and practices.

Digitalization, Automation, and AI for Safety

One crucial factor that influences work quality is the ability to reduce workers' exposure to risks. It is essential to promote the use and dissemination of devices, robots, and applications designed for this purpose.

The electricity sector companies are implementing technologies to enhance safety, including the use of robots for inspections in challenging locations such as heights, underwater, and narrow spaces.

Climate Change and Emergency Management

In the electricity sector, climate change manifests through electrical and hydro related emergencies caused by extreme weather events that impact the transmission and distribution networks.

It is essential to invest not only in the resilience of these networks but also in emergency preparedness for extreme situations.

This preparation of operators and technicians is crucial for ensuring the safety of operators and maintaining their psychological and physical well-being during challenging circumstances.

The European DSO has developed procedures, methods, training courses, and specific regulations on the management of emergencies on the electricity grid.

The enhancement of professional skills through the implementation of specific programs

The importance of professional orientation and training for the development of people and their skills, even more in situations impacted by energy transition which requires requalification and enhancement through reskilling and upskilling programs. Facing the undergoing rapid evolution means setting up an inclusive path in the workplace, which aims to make the human being protagonist of an ecosystem in which lifelong learning, well-being, productivity and safety can strengthen each other, contributing to maximum personal fulfilment, with a view to ever greater centrality.

Policies, procedures and processes

Within a company, existing resources, technologies and social attitudes facilitate progress for quality employment and become enabling factors for ensuring adequate working conditions and environment.

Key resources are policies, procedures and processes that define a clear commitment of the electricity sector Companies as HSQE policies (i.e. Stop Work Policy), Human Right Policy, Ia D&I Policy, the Workplace harassment policy, the Digital accessibility policy, and the Ethic code.

Attractivity / Gender equality

Beyond skills and training challenges, the decreasing attractivity of technical jobs among the younger generations should be a matter of concern. Any innovative initiative to promote, demonstrate or educate, including public opinion, on the usefulness of these jobs will be appreciated. It is also essential to promote the idea that jobs in the electricity sector are not reserved for the male population and that the sector can provide fulfilling jobs for women.

Eurelectric pursues in all its activities the application of the following sustainable development values:

Economic Development

- Growth, added-value, efficiency

Environmental Leadership

- Commitment, innovation, pro-activeness

Social Responsibility

- Transparency, ethics, accountability



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