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Green Jobs

Successes and opportunities for Europe

Unemployment is one of Europe's most pressing problems. In the European Union today, more than 25 million people - more than 10% of the active population - are out of work. The situation faced by young people is even bleaker, with almost one in four young adults aged under 25 jobless. In the hardest-hit European countries, like Greece or Spain, more than half of all young people are unemployed and austerity policies are merely exacerbating the situation.

At the same time, the climate and environmental crisis is becoming increasingly serious. Scientists are more certain than ever that human activity is changing our climate and are stressing the dangers of not taking action to stop the rot. Meanwhile, economists are warning us that the longer we wait before taking action, the more it will cost us to do so.

But there is a way out: by greening our economies, we can provide high-quality green jobs to fight unemployment and at the same time combat climate change and environmental decline. The EU can only benefit from such efforts. Remaining a 'green leader' would enable the EU to generate exports worth an additional €25 billion per year, cut energy bills by as much as €350 billion per year by 2050,2 reduce our dependency on imported energy and resources purchased at volatile prices, and boost Europe's security of supply.

If we can ensure the strong involvement of social partners, establish targeted training and education programmes and implement ambitious, stable policies designed to foster innovation and green investment, millions of sustainable high-quality green jobs can be created, many of them in local small and medium-sized enterprises throughout Europe.

This brochure aims to inform you about Europe's opportunities for creating green jobs and the efforts of the Greens/EFA in the European Parliament to boost green employment.

The second part of the brochure describes some of the successes in creating green jobs across Europe. Green jobs in Europe are certainly no utopian dream: they are already a reality!

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