GREENFIT

Funded by the European Union

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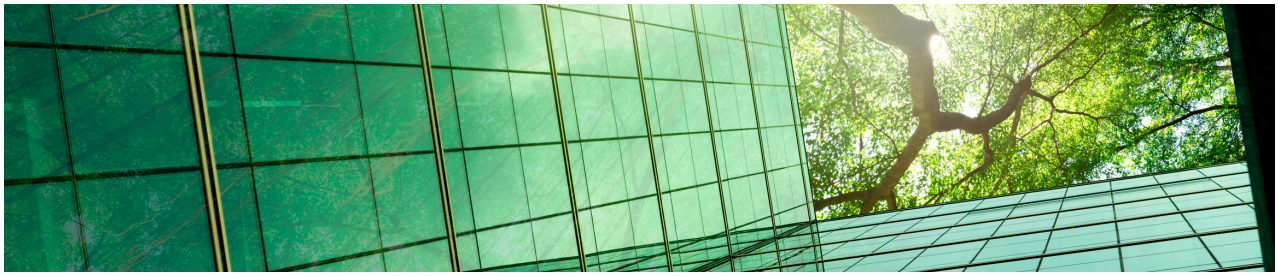
NEWSLETTER #2



THE MISSING LINK IN THE GREEN TRANSITION? SKILLS

While climate goals, sustainability reporting and industrial decarbonisation dominate policy discussions across Europe, one critical question remains:

Do companies actually have the skills needed to make the transition happen?

GREENFIT's early research suggests that awareness is no longer the main challenge. Across Poland, Türkiye, Italy and Sweden, companies increasingly recognise the importance of sustainability, yet many lack the practical competences needed to put environmental ambitions into practice.

Source: GREENFIT – Green & Resilient Future Industrial Training, Erasmus+ project

A Skills Gap That Matters

Across countries, the most frequently identified skills gaps relate to carbon footprint measurement, environmental data management, energy and resource efficiency, life-cycle assessment (LCA), and the translation of sustainability objectives into operational business practices.

The findings also highlight a structural challenge faced particularly by SMEs. In many organisations, responsibilities related to sustainability are assigned to a limited number of employees rather than dedicated specialists or departments. As a result, companies often struggle to monitor their environmental performance, respond to evolving regulatory requirements, and identify opportunities for sustainable innovation.

These results suggest that the success of the green transition will depend not only on technological solutions and policy frameworks, but also on strengthening the skills and competences of the workforce responsible for implementing change. The ability to measure, manage and improve environmental performance is becoming a key capability for industrial competitiveness and long-term resilience.



WHAT ABOUT FUTURE PROFESSIONALS?

GREENFIT's student survey, conducted between May and June 2026 among students (n=247) from the University of Gdańsk (UG), Middle East Technical University (METU) and the University of Naples Federico II (UNINA), revealed a significant gap between sustainability awareness and practical competence.

Although students demonstrate relatively strong awareness of climate-related challenges, 61% report limited or no knowledge of carbon footprint calculation methodologies and 59% indicate limited familiarity with life-cycle assessment (LCA) tools. Furthermore, more than half of respondents (51%) believe their current study programmes do not adequately prepare them for the demands of the green industrial transition.

At the same time, students clearly recognise the value of green skills in the labour market. Half of respondents consider technical sustainability competences to be a significant professional advantage, highlighting growing demand for more practice-oriented sustainability education.

The message is clear:
The demand for sustainability skills is growing faster than the supply.

Source: GREENFIT – Green & Resilient Future Industrial Training, Erasmus+ project



Where Research Turned into Action: GREENFIT Partners Meet in Naples

On 17-18 September 2026, project partners met at the Faculty of Political Science of the University of Naples 'Federico II' in Naples to review the outcomes of the research phase and agree on priorities for the next stages of the project. The meeting marked a transition from research and needs assessment activities towards the development of practical educational solutions supporting industrial sustainability.

Partners discussed the implications of the research findings for future training activities and agreed that the GREENFIT learning offer should focus on practical skills that can support companies in addressing real-life sustainability challenges, including emissions accounting, resource efficiency, circular economy implementation and sustainability-related decision-making.

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BUILDING THE GREENFIT FRAMEWORK

Partners are currently working on the development of a Sustainability Framework that will define the key competences needed to support the green and digital transformation of the manufacturing sector. The framework is structured around three complementary dimensions:

Technical competences

- carbon accounting,
- life-cycle assessment,
- energy and resource efficiency,
- eco-design,
- digital environmental monitoring.

Operational and managerial competences

- sustainability regulations and compliance,
- environmental indicators,
- sustainable procurement and supply chain management,
- transition planning,
- organisational change management.

Cross-cutting sustainability competences

- systems thinking,
- communication and collaboration,
- stakeholder engagement,
- continuous learning and adaptation.

Looking Ahead

In parallel, partners have started developing training modules on climate change, the circular economy and other key sustainability challenges. The modules will be delivered through a multilingual MOOC platform, with their content gradually aligned with the Sustainability Framework.

Over the coming months, the consortium will also conduct research among business leaders and continue preparations for pilot training activities involving sustainability experts, employees and manufacturing companies across partner countries. The insights and feedback gathered during this phase will support the further development and refinement of the training offer.

Join the Dialogue



Join the dialogue and subscribe to our newsletter to stay updated on results, events, and opportunities. Together, through cooperation and open dialogue, we can support Europe's green transformation.