

# BRIDGING THE GAP IN THE PURSUIT OF SUSTAINABILITY: A FOCUS ON WORKERS



## Bridging the Gap in the Pursuit of Sustainability: A Focus on Workers

Climate change is reshaping global production and consumption patterns, inevitably affecting jobs worldwide. Workers are aware of impending industry transformations, yet uncertainty surrounds the nature of the green transition. The Labour Movement must align efforts towards meaningful employment with climate change mitigation. Therefore, the implementation of a Just Transition strategy is imperative to ensure that the future sustainable economy provides new and meaningful green jobs for workers in Singapore.

In this edition of the *Singapore Labour Research Digest*, we explore workers' top concerns today and in the next decade, including their perception of climate change's impact on organisations. Our study highlights the crucial role of unions in supporting a Just Transition for workers.

Click [here](#) for the full report!

## What is a Just Transition?



A "Just Transition" contributes to the goals of decent work for all, social inclusion, and the eradication of poverty. It is the idea that the transition to a more sustainable and equitable economy or society should be fair and equitable for all stakeholders, including workers, communities, and marginalised groups. It involves ensuring that affected individuals and communities have the support and resources they need to adapt and thrive in the new economic and social environment.

## Workers' Top Concerns Today and in the Next Decade

An online survey was conducted with **1,000** Singaporean and Permanent Resident workers.



Despite the ongoing push for sustainability, workers' top concerns today and in the next decade were the **cost of living** and **livelihoods**. Climate change was of less concern. Even among workers with strong pro-environmental attitudes, the **cost of living** and **livelihoods** were greater priorities.

### Top 3 Urgent Issues Today

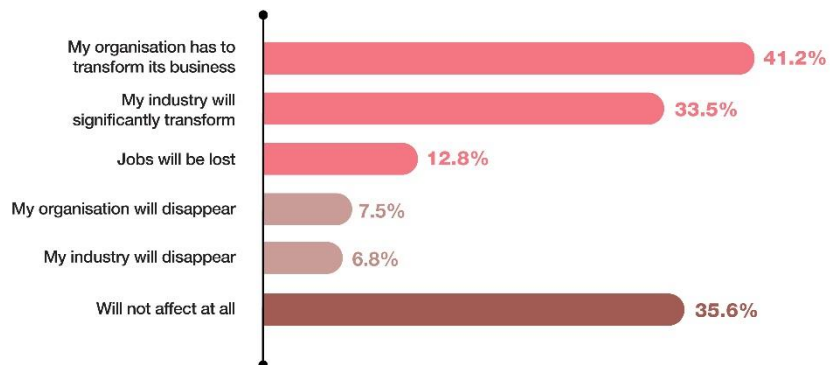
- 1  Cost of Living
- 2  Ensuring Job Opportunities Exist
- 3  Physical and Mental Well-Being of Workers

### Top 3 Urgent Issues in a Decade

- 1  Cost of Living
- 2  Ageing Population
- 3  Ensuring Job Opportunities Exist

## Perceived Climate Change-related Impact on Organisations by Workers

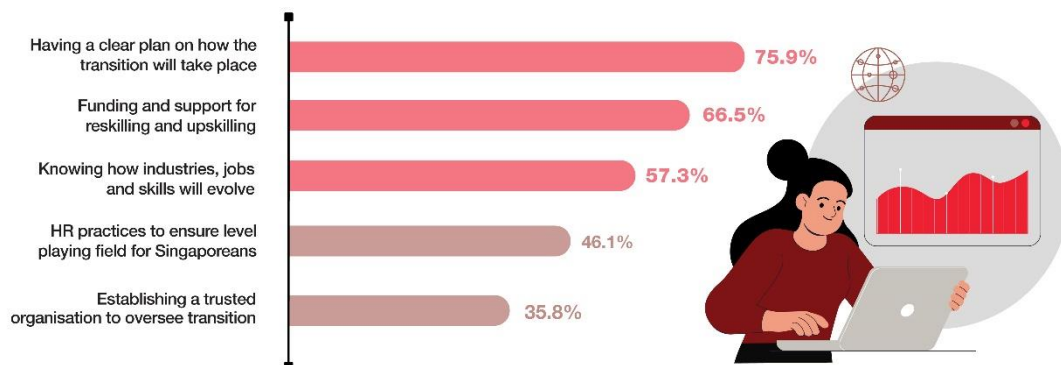
The need for organisations to **transform their business was most reported (41.2%)**. Our report shares how this was **significantly higher** among respondents from the **aerospace and aviation industry cluster (70.6%)** and **significantly lower** among those from the **essential domestic services industry cluster (32.1%)**.



## Assuring Workers in a Just Transition

Ensuring clear and viable job transition pathways for workers was reported by survey respondents to be the most important focus they would expect of companies in a Just Transition, followed by providing continuous training and learning opportunities.

### ASSURING WORKERS IN A JUST TRANSITION



## The Role of Unions in a Just Transition

Almost all (99.9%) respondents saw Unions playing a role in the Just Transition. The **top two roles** for Unions were to **facilitate upskilling and reskilling opportunities** (68.5%) and to support workers through **personalised career transitions** (63.8%).

### HOW WORKERS VIEW THE ROLE OF UNIONS IN A JUST TRANSITION



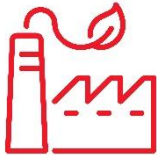
## At A Glance: The Green Transition's Impact on Jobs

Following the findings of the World Economic Forum's (WEF) Future of Jobs Report 2023, we analysed the net job creators in the green transition. The shift towards sustainable and environmentally friendly practices will inevitably disrupt jobs and necessitate new skills as industries pivot, catalysing business and workforce transformation.

Jobs will continue to exist in Singapore as we switch to renewable energy, but they will evolve:



Job displacements and obsolescence will primarily affect **technical, specialised jobs that are specific to material infrastructure and capital assets that are being phased out or replaced**



**Highly polluting/ energy-intensive industries** (e.g. shipping and logistics, transport, construction) will face greater disruption

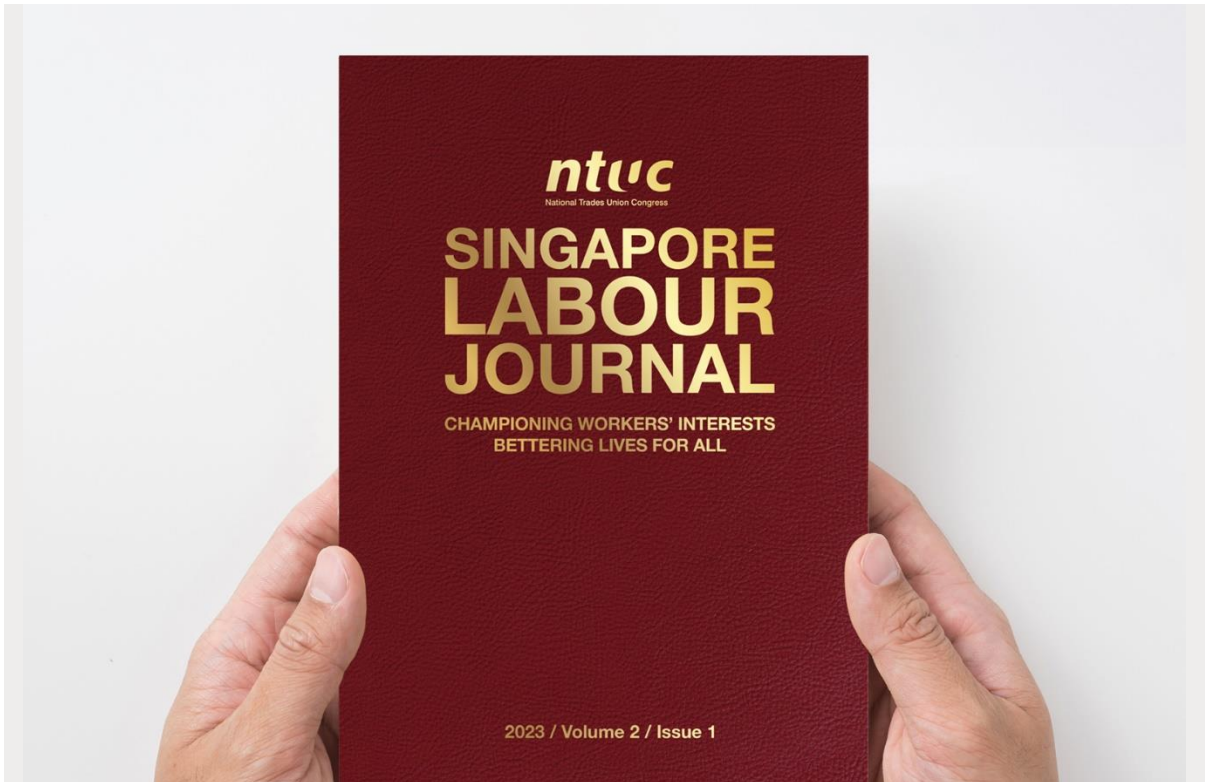
**But overall, new, higher-value jobs will be created**, especially in energy and infrastructure:



- Sustainability specialists
- Solar energy installation & system engineers
- Renewable energy engineers
- Environmental protection professionals



**Workers will need STEM skills, green skills, and soft skills** to exploit new opportunities

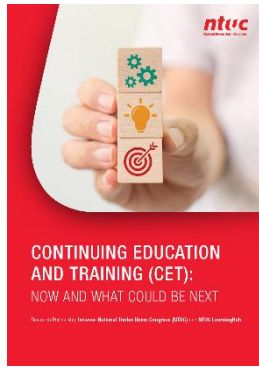


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NTUC launched the **second volume of NTUC's Singapore Labour Journal** in November 2023! The peer-reviewed journal promotes labour research and enhances the awareness of labour-related topics, contributing to the development of fair, inclusive, and sustainable labour practices and policies that benefit workers and society as a whole. It provides a platform for academics, policymakers, and practitioners in Singapore and the region to publish and advance research in the field of labour. Some of the articles in this volume are "Addressing Employment Challenges for Ex-Offenders" and "Business Need to Sustain Output for Four-Day Workweek to Work". Click "read more" to download a copy.

If you're interested in contributing an article, get in touch with us at [strategy@ntuc.org.sg](mailto:strategy@ntuc.org.sg).

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Have feedback you would like to share, or interested in a research collaboration? Get in touch with us at [strategy@ntuc.org.sg](mailto:strategy@ntuc.org.sg).

Stay tuned for our next newsletter!

**Presented by the NTUC Strategy**  
Find out more about the team behind the research [here!](#)

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