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Young people are concerned they lack the green skills to effectively act on climate change

Six in ten 16–24-year-olds globally agree that developing green skills could open up new career opportunities but less than half (44%) possess the skills required for today's green workforce

Paris, May 16, 2025 – The [Capgemini](#) Research Institute and UNICEF* Generation Unlimited's report, '[Youth perspectives on climate: Preparing for a sustainable future](#)' published today, explores youth perspectives on the climate crisis. It includes their take on "green skilling" and graduating to a green job, as well as how business and government can collaborate with young people to inspire climate advocacy. The report finds that despite rising climate anxiety, a majority of young people remain hopeful that there is still time to address and fix the problems caused by climate change. Young people in both, the Global South and Global North, want to be a part of the solution, with most interested in shaping environmental policy and many interested in pursuing a green job, however the report highlights a worrying lack of requisite green skills.

According to the research, most young people worry about climate change. Over two-thirds of youth globally say they are concerned about how climate change could affect their future, representing an increase since 2023, when a UNICEF USA survey found that 57% of youth globally experienced "eco-anxiety."¹ Youth in the Global North report higher levels of climate-related anxiety (76%) compared to their peers in the Global South (65%). A rural-urban divide is also evident, with 72% of youth living in urban and suburban areas expressing concern about climate change impacts on their future, versus 58% in rural areas.

Young people believe there is still time to fix the problems caused by climate change

Despite their climate anxiety, most youths believe green skills are key to a brighter future, with 61% agreeing that developing green skills² will offer them new career opportunities. They are interested in aligning their paid employment with their climate conscious values, with slightly over half (53%) globally and almost two-thirds (64%) in the Global North interested in a green job.

"Young people across the globe, and in particular in the US, are hyperaware of the urgent challenges posed by climate change. It's clear that they are also eager to be part of the solution," said Sarika Naik, Group Chief Corporate Responsibility Officer at Capgemini. *"We need to help young people turn their passion into impact by investing in green skills. This report shows how critical it is that business, governments, and education leaders work together to bridge the skills gap, empower youth voices, and create pathways to meaningful green careers."*

"Young people are architecting climate solutions. They are designing and deploying innovative solutions that respond to the climate realities their communities are facing," said Dr. Kevin Frey, CEO, Generation Unlimited at UNICEF. *"Green Rising, with its ecosystem of public and private sector partners, is supporting young*

¹ UNICEF USA, "From eco-anxiety to eco-optimism, listening to a generation of resilient youth," January 2023.

² Green skills refer to the hard and soft skills which help people take care of nature, stop pollution, and use resources wisely.

people with the skills and opportunities they need to take climate action, start green companies, access green jobs and power green solutions.”

Youth lack the necessary green skills

Young people provide a workforce pipeline for tackling climate change, but the green transition requires a skilled workforce. According to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), environmental sustainability competency relies on a strong foundation in science, an understanding of climate change, a commitment to protect the environment, the confidence to explain environmental issues, and the motivation to act sustainably³.

However, the report finds that less than half of youth globally (44%) believe they have the green skills necessary to be successful in today’s workforce. In terms of green skills, young people in rural areas lag even further behind young people in suburban and urban areas. This percentage also differs across regions. In the Global South, around six in ten Brazilian youth say they are equipped with green skills, while only 5% of Ethiopian youth say the same.

Since the Capgemini Research Institute’s 2023 research⁴, youth in several countries in the Global North have regressed in their knowledge of green skills. Among youth aged 16 to 18 in Australia, France, Germany, Japan, the UK, and the US, recycling and waste reduction remains the most commonly held green skill. But the share of youth knowledgeable about sustainable design, sustainable energy, and sustainable transportation has significantly declined since 2023. In the Global South, young people are most knowledgeable about recycling and waste reduction, energy conservation and water conservation, but least knowledgeable about climate technologies, data analysis, and sustainable design.

The generational divide must be overcome to find solutions

Most youth globally (71%) agree that they should have a strong influence on environmental policy and legislation. However, the majority agree that business and political leaders are not playing their part and should be contributing more to the fight against climate change. While almost two-thirds of young people feel engaged enough to want to speak with local leaders about climate action, fewer than half believe their opinions are actually heard by community leaders.

The report urges community leaders to support young people in advancing climate solutions and green skills. According to the report, integrating green education, expanding access to training, and aligning climate goals with youth employment strategies should be part of the solution and implanted by policymakers. Whereas corporate leaders could be encouraged to co-create green job pathways, invest in youth-led initiatives, and embed young voices in CSR, ESG, and climate strategies in order to build trust and drive sustainable innovation.

As young people seek to upskill, global movements like Green Rising aim to support 20 million young people by 2026 in taking grassroots action, offering opportunities for volunteerism, advocacy, paid work and entrepreneurship. This initiative is led by Generation Unlimited at UNICEF and supported by the public and private sector, including Capgemini.

To read the full report: <https://www.capgemini.com/insights/research-library/global-youth-and-sustainability>

³ OECD, *Skills Outlook 2023: Skills for a resilient green and digital transition*, November 6, 2023.

⁴ CRI, *Digital skills and technology in secondary education survey*, March 2023

Report Methodology

The Capgemini Research Institute carried out extensive research into youth perspectives on climate change and interest in green skills and green jobs in February and March 2025. They conducted an online survey of 5,100 youth aged 16 to 24 across 21 countries in Africa, the Americas, Asia-Pacific, and Europe. This included 4,394 youth aged 18 to 24 and 706 youth aged 16 and 17 years old. For the 14% of the sample that were minors (<18 years old), they obtained parental permission from 706 parents. The majority (83%) of the youth surveyed live in the Global South (low- and middle-income countries).⁵ The remaining youth respondents live in the Global North or high-income countries.

About UNICEF

UNICEF works in some of the world's toughest places, to reach the world's most disadvantaged children. Across more than 190 countries and territories, we work for every child, everywhere, to build a better world for everyone.

About Generation Unlimited

Launched by the UN Secretary-General at the 2018 UN General Assembly, UNICEF's Generation Unlimited is a leading global Public-Private-Youth Partnership on a mission to skill and connect the world's 1.8 billion young people to opportunities for employment, entrepreneurship, and social impact. The partnership brings together global organisations and leaders including Heads of State, CEOs, Heads of UN agencies, and civil society champions with young people to co-create and deliver innovative solutions on a global scale.

* UNICEF does not endorse any company, brand, product or service

About Capgemini

Capgemini is a global business and technology transformation partner, helping organizations to accelerate their dual transition to a digital and sustainable world, while creating tangible impact for enterprises and society. It is a responsible and diverse group of 340,000 team members in more than 50 countries. With its strong over 55-year heritage, Capgemini is trusted by its clients to unlock the value of technology to address the entire breadth of their business needs. It delivers end-to-end services and solutions leveraging strengths from strategy and design to engineering, all fueled by its market leading capabilities in AI, generative AI, cloud and data, combined with its deep industry expertise and partner ecosystem. The Group reported 2024 global revenues of €22.1 billion.

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⁵ Bank Group, Income Group Class, according to 2023 gross national income (GNI) per capita, calculated using the World Bank Atlas method.