

OSKA study of water, waste and environmental management occupations

Key findings

In the future, the most jobs are created for environmental consultants and environmental specialists and technologists in businesses

- The environmental protection responsibilities as well as some of the public sector jobs are moving more to private sector.
- The development of green and circular economy increases the number of jobs in water, waste and environmental management; however, the automation could replace some jobs.
- The number of jobs for meteorologists, refuse and recyclable material sorters and laboratory technicians is in decline.
- The number of jobs for managers and machines operators in waste management and engineers in water supply and sewerage will slightly increase.
- The number of managers in water management, environmental management specialists in public sector, environmental inspectors and environmental monitoring specialists will slightly decrease.

The number of engineers in water supply and sewerage, water treatment operators, water system technicians and garbage truck drivers is not sufficient

- There are not enough new employees in water and waste management.
 - In water management, the percentage of employees over 55 years is one of the highest in Estonia.
- There is a lack of students in water supply and sewerage engineering programmes, the demand for graduates is twice as much.
- More students are enrolled in environmental management and protection programmes than there are jobs for them.
 - In the next few years, the number of graduates will decrease and getting a job in one's specialty becomes easier.
- There is a lack of hydrologists.
 - In Estonia, there are no hydrology degree programmes, but the solution could be to support the hydrology studies abroad.

The development of environmental knowledge and skills in all fields is the prerequisite for more sustainable economies

- There is a demand for knowledge in environmental laws, information technology skills, and skills to raise environmental awareness and to present environmental information.
- The employees in water and waste economy with innovation management skills and technological knowledge are more valued.

Background

- Approximately 5,800 people are employed in the occupations of water, waste and environmental management, which is under 1% of the total number of employees in Estonia.
- Professional training in water, waste and environmental management can be obtained from:
 - the institutions of higher education, which altogether offer 68 curricula: Tallinn University, University of Tartu, Tallinn University of Technology, Estonian University of Life Sciences, TTK University of Applied Sciences.
 - and 12 vocational educational institutions, which offer altogether 23 curricula.
- The OSKA study of water, waste and environmental management occupations analysed the need for labour and skills until 2026 and made proposals on how to meet it.
- The OSKA forecasting system produces projections of the need for labour force and skills in all fields of the Estonian economy by 2020 and compares these to the education and training offered by higher education institutions, VET institutions and continuing education courses.
- OSKA studies are conducted by the Estonian Qualifications Authority (Kutsekoda) and funded by the European Social Fund.