



ENERGY &
UTILITY SKILLS

Skills for a greener world

Workforce demand estimates – 2024 to 2030

The Gas Networks industry

Summary report
September 2024



Workforce demand estimates – 2024 to 2030

Gas networks

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1 About this report

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 This report is one in a series that contain estimates of the number of new jobs and people required across the UK energy and utilities sector by 2030.

1.1.2 This report focusses on the UK gas networks industry, which includes:

- **Manufacture of gas (SIC: 35.21)**
 - Production of gas for the purpose of gas supply by carbonation of coal, from by-products of agriculture or from waste
 - Manufacture of gaseous fuels by purification, blending and other processes, including natural gas
- **Distribution of gaseous fuels through mains (SIC: 35.22)**
 - Distribution and supply of gaseous fuels of all kinds through a system of mains
- **Steam and air conditioning supply (SIC: 35.30)**
 - Production, collection and distribution of steam and hot water for heating, power and other purposes
 - Production and distribution of cooled air
- **Trade of gas through mains (SIC: 35.23)**
 - Sale of gas to the user through mains
 - Activities of gas brokers or agents that arrange the sale of gas over gas distribution systems operated by others

1.1.3 In addition to this report, individual reports are available for:

- **Energy and utilities sector** (containing the aggregate analysis from across all five industry of the sector)
- **Gas utilisation** (consisting of the domestic gas engineer workforce and related activities)
- **Power** (including the production (via seven different technologies), transmission, distribution and retail trade of electricity; the construction of electricity assets)
- **Waste and recycling** (including the collection, treatment, disposal and recycling of waste)
- **Water** (including the collection, treatment and supply of water; sewerage; the construction of water assets)

1.1.4 All sector and industry estimates are broken down into 19 occupations (based on the two-digit Standard Occupational Classification system). See Annex 1 for examples of industry job titles within each of these occupations and their associated skill level.

1.1.5 Two headline estimates are provided: (i) **New jobs** is an estimate of the number of jobs that are forecast to be created over the period and (ii) **New people required** is an estimate of the number of new people that will be needed by the sector over the period (this is the sum of new jobs plus forecast retirements).

1.2 Principal assumptions

1.2.1 In order to produce these estimates, we have applied three assumptions to the estimates of current employment:

- **Anticipated retirement age:** We have assumed that all current workers will retire when they reach a certain age (see Figure 1). This assumption does not vary by industry.
- **New jobs:** This is an estimate of the net number of additional jobs that are forecast to be created. These are taken either from either published research by an appropriate organisation (e.g. trade bodies) from or Lightcast.

These new jobs have been applied to each occupation within an industry/sub-industry/technology either as close as possible to source's original estimates or pro-rata as per the current occupational distribution of employment.

Figure 1: Retirement and staff turnover assumptions by occupation

Standard Occupation Classification	Retirement age
11 - Corporate Managers and Directors	59
12 - Other Managers and Proprietors	59
21 - Science, Research, Engineering and Technology Professionals	60
24 - Business, Media and Public Service Professionals	60
31 - Science, Engineering and Technology Associate Professionals	62
33 - Protective Service Occupations	62
34 - Culture, Media and Sports Occupations	62
35 - Business and Public Service Associate Professionals	62
41 - Administrative Occupations	65
42 - Secretarial and Related Occupations	65
51 - Skilled Agricultural and Related Trades	62
52 - Skilled Metal, Electrical and Electronic Trades	62
53 - Skilled Construction and Building Trades	62
71 - Sales Occupations	65
72 - Customer Service Occupations	65
81 - Process, Plant and Machine Operatives	64
82 - Transport and Mobile Machine Drivers and Operatives	64
91 - Elementary Trades and Related Occupations	65
92 - Elementary Administration and Service Occupations	65

1.2.2 Throughout this analysis, all estimates have been rounded to the nearest 100. Therefore, industry and occupation totals may not equal the sum of their constituent rows.

1.3 How these estimates were produced

1.3.1 These estimates have been produced by Energy & Utility Skills using the following sources:

- Lightcast – Data is created from a collection of government sources covering more than 20 million data points describing labour market conditions¹
- Estimates of future employment relating to hydrogen production, transmission and distribution have been taken from *Economic Impact Assessment for the Hydrogen Sector to 2030*, Hydrogen UK, April 2024.

1.3.2 It should be noted that future employment estimates produced by Lightcast do not necessarily reflect actual or planned investment plans by government or individual companies – they essentially use the past to predict the future.

1.3.3 Finally, these estimates have been tested and adjusted through direct engagement with our members and employer network groups.

¹ For further information on Lightcast's methodology, [click here](#).

2 Estimated job creation and people requirements by 2030

2.1 Industry estimates

- 2.1.1 There are an estimated 23,500 people currently employed in the gas networks industry. By 2030, this is forecast to increase to 39,300.
- 2.1.2 All of the forecast growth contained in these forecasts relate to the production, transmission and distribution of hydrogen – other than that, the workforce associated with the principal activities of the networks remains unchanged.
- 2.1.3 Furthermore, the trade of gas through the mains (i.e. the retail of gas to customers), is forecast to reduce its workforce by 1,200 – from 6,100 to 4,900.

2.1.4 Our headline estimates for the gas networks industry for the period between 2024 and 2030 are:

- 15,800 **new jobs** will be created
 - Average of 2,300 per year
- 19,600 **new people** will be required to enter the industry's workforce for the first time
 - Average of 2,800 per year

Figure 2: Estimated number of new jobs created and new people required by sub-industry

Industry	Total employment		New jobs created		New people required	
	2024	2030	Number	% Growth	Total	Average per year
Manufacture of gas	1,100	8,000	6,900	627%	7,100	1,000
Distribution of gaseous fuels through mains	16,000	26,000	10,000	62%	12,700	1,800
Steam and air conditioning supply	300	400	100	33%	200	0
Trade of gas through mains	6,100	4,900	-1,200	-20%	-300	0
Gas networks	23,500	39,300	15,800	67%	19,600	2,800

Figure 3: Number of new people required by the sector – by cause and year



2.1.5 Of the 19,600 new people required by the sector by 2030, 50% of them (9,800 people) will initially be working at RQF level 3 or below.

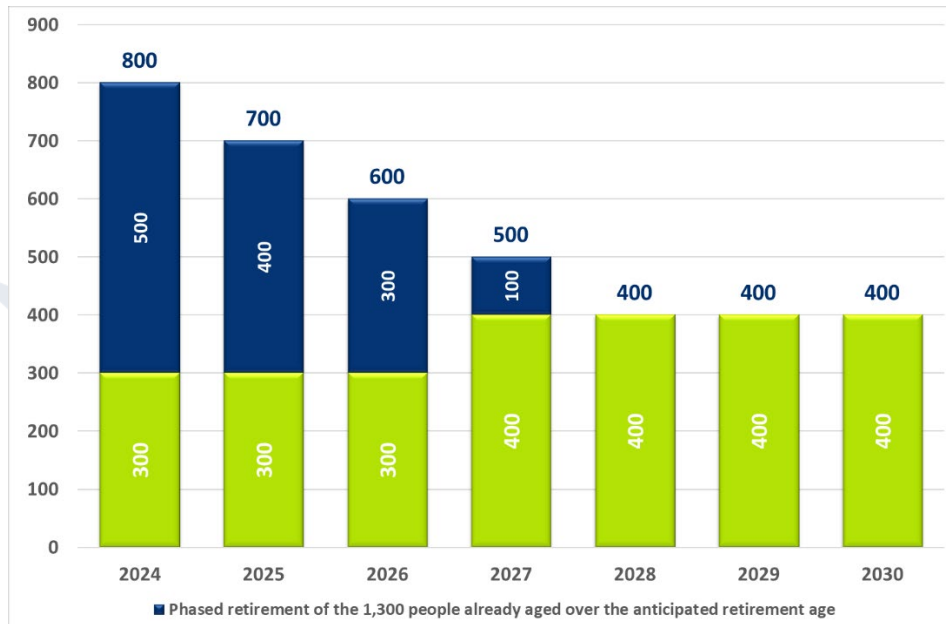
Figure 4: Estimates of new jobs and new people by skill level

Skill level	New jobs created		New people required	
	Number	% of total	Number	% of total
RQF 7-8 SCQF 11-12	1,600	10%	2,500	13%
RQF 6 SCQF 9-10	2,700	17%	3,300	17%
RQF 4-5 SCQF 7-8	3,700	23%	4,000	20%
RQF 3 SCQF 6	4,300	27%	5,400	28%
RQF 2 SCQF 5	2,000	13%	2,400	12%
RQF 1 SCQF 4	1,500	9%	2,000	10%
Sector total	15,800	100%	19,600	100%

2.1.6 16% of the workforce (3,800 people) are forecast to retire by 2030.

2.1.7 The number of people who will reach retirement age during each year is forecast to remain fairly stable (at between 300-400 per year) through to 2030 – see Figure 5 below (from 2030 onwards, the number of retirements in each year are forecast to remain at c500 through to the early 2040s).

Figure 5: Retirements by year



2.1.8 These retirement estimates include 1,300 people who are already aged over their anticipated retirement age. In this analysis, these people have been “retired out” of the workforce over the next four years (the orange column in the figure below).

2.2 Occupational estimates

2.2.1 Across the gas networks industry, none of the 19 occupational groups are forecast to decrease their workforce size by 2030.

2.2.2 The occupations which are forecast to see the **largest increase in jobs** are:

- 35 - Business and Public Service Associate Professionals (2,300; up 96%)
- 53 - Skilled Construction and Building Trades (2,200; up 53%)

2.2.3 The occupations with the **highest number of retirements** are forecast to be:

- 11 - Corporate Managers and Directors (700)
- 53 - Skilled Construction and Building Trades (700)

2.2.4 However, the occupations with a **higher-than-average proportion of retirements** from the current workforce by 2030 are:

- 51 - Skilled Agricultural and Related Trades (38%)
- 12 - Other Managers and Proprietors (29%)
- 11 - Corporate Managers and Directors (29%)
- 82 - Transport and Mobile Machine Drivers and Operatives (24%)
- 42 - Secretarial and Related Occupations (19%)

2.2.5 The occupations that will need to attract the **highest number of new people** into their workforce are:

- 53 - Skilled Construction and Building Trades (2,800; 400 per year)
- 35 - Business and Public Service Associate Professionals (2,500; 400 per year)
- 11 - Corporate Managers and Directors (2,100; 300 per year)
- 72 - Customer Service Occupations (2,100; 300 per year)

Figure 6: Estimated number of new jobs created and new people required by occupation

Skill level	Standard Occupation Classification	Total employment		New jobs created		New people required	
		2024	2030	Number	% Growth	Total	Average per year
RQF 7-8	11 - Corporate Managers and Directors	2,300	3,700	1,400	60%	2,100	300
SCQF 11-12	12 - Other Managers and Proprietors	700	900	200	33%	400	<100
RQF 6	21 - Science, Research, Engineering and Technology Professionals	1,900	3,400	1,500	81%	1,800	300
SCQF 9-10	24 - Business, Media and Public Service Professionals	1,400	2,700	1,200	84%	1,500	200
RQF 4-5 SCQF 7-8	31 - Science, Engineering and Technology Associate Professionals	800	2,100	1,300	158%	1,400	200
	33 - Protective Service Occupations	0	0	0	N/A	0	0
	34 - Culture, Media and Sports Occupations	0	100	100	694%	100	<100
	35 - Business and Public Service Associate Professionals	2,400	4,600	2,300	96%	2,500	400
RQF 3 SCQF 6	41 - Administrative Occupations	2,000	3,300	1,300	67%	1,600	200
	42 - Secretarial and Related Occupations	200	300	100	62%	100	<100
	51 - Skilled Agricultural and Related Trades	100	100	100	86%	100	<100
	52 - Skilled Metal, Electrical and Electronic Trades	1,200	1,900	600	50%	800	100
	53 - Skilled Construction and Building Trades	4,000	6,200	2,200	53%	2,800	400
RQF 2 SCQF 5	71 - Sales Occupations	400	700	200	49%	300	<100
	72 - Customer Service Occupations	3,300	5,100	1,800	55%	2,100	300
RQF 1 SCQF 4	81 - Process, Plant and Machine Operatives	1,300	1,800	500	34%	700	100
	82 - Transport and Mobile Machine Drivers and Operatives	1,000	1,700	600	63%	900	100
	91 - Elementary Trades and Related Occupations	0	0	0	N/A	0	0
	92 - Elementary Administration and Service Occupations	400	700	400	99%	400	<100
Gas networks		23,500	39,300	15,800	67%	19,600	2,800

Operational, technical and engineering occupations

2.2.6 The table below shows the headline estimates for those occupations that sit within the remit of Energy & Utility Skills and its membership.

Figure 7: Estimated number of new jobs created and new people required in operational, technical and engineering occupations – 2024 to 2030

Skill level	Standard Occupation Classification	Total employment		New jobs created		New people required	
		2024	2030	Number	% Growth	Total	Average per year
RQF 6 SCQF 9-10	21 - Science, Research, Engineering and Technology Professionals	1,900	3,400	1,500	81%	1,800	300
RQF 4-5 SCQF 7-8	31 - Science, Engineering and Technology Associate Professionals	800	2,100	1,300	158%	1,400	200
RQF 3 SCQF 6	51 - Skilled Agricultural and Related Trades	100	100	100	86%	100	<100
	52 - Skilled Metal, Electrical and Electronic Trades	1,200	1,900	600	50%	800	100
	53 - Skilled Construction and Building Trades	4,000	6,200	2,200	53%	2,800	400
RQF 1 SCQF 4	81 - Process, Plant and Machine Operatives	1,300	1,800	500	34%	700	100
	82 - Transport and Mobile Machine Drivers and Operatives	1,000	1,700	600	63%	900	100
	91 - Elementary Trades and Related Occupations	0	0	0	N/A	0	0
	92 - Elementary Administration and Service Occupations	400	700	400	99%	400	<100
Gas networks		10,700	17,900	7,200	25%	8,900	1,300

2.2.7 Focussing on these occupations alone, employment levels are forecast to increase from 10,700 in 2024 to 17,900 in 2030 – an increase of 7,200 **new jobs**.

2.2.8 8,900 **new people** will be required to enter the workforce in these occupations for the first time (average of 1,300 per year).

Annex 1 – Occupations and example job titles

Indicative skill/ education level	Standard Occupation Classification	Example industry job titles
RQF 7-8/SCQF 11-12 Master's Degree Doctorate	11 - Corporate Managers and Directors	Chief Executive; Operations Manager; Functional Managers/Directors
	12 - Other Managers and Proprietors	Recycling Plant Managers; Scrap Metal Dealers; Environmental Manager
RQF 6/SCQF 9-10 Bachelor's Degree	21 - Science, Research, Engineering and Technology Professionals	Chemical/Biological/Physical/Environmental Scientist; Countryside Manager
	24 - Business, Media and Public Service Professionals	Legal/Business/Quality/Regulatory Professional; Quantity Surveyor; Architect; Construction Project Manager; Public Relations Professional; Project Manager
RQF 4-5/SCQF 7-8 HNC/HND Foundation Degree	31 - Science, Engineering and Technology Associate Professionals	Electrical/Electronic Technician; Engineering Technician; Civil Engineering Technician; Laboratory Technician; Water Tester; IT Operations/User Support Technician
	33 - Protective Service Occupations	Security Manager
	34 - Culture, Media and Sports Occupations	Copywriters; Translator; Graphic Designer
	35 - Business and Public Service Associate Professionals	Legal Executive; Estimator; Financial Analyst; Accounting Technician; Financial Controller; Account Manager; Credit Manager; Buyer/Purchasing/Procurement Officer; Marketing Executive; Business Development Manager/Executive; Ranger
RQF 3/SCQF 6 A Level	41 - Administrative Occupations	Administrator; Credit Controller; Book-Keeper; Finance Officer; Despatch Clerk; Stock Control Clerk; Office Manager/Supervisor
	42 - Secretarial and Related Occupations	Company Secretary; Personal Assistant/Secretary; Executive Assistant; Receptionist
	51 - Skilled Agricultural and Related Trades	Aboriginal Specialist; Tree Cutter/Surgeon;
	52 - Skilled Metal, Electrical and Electronic Trades	Welder; Pipe Fitter;
	53 - Skilled Construction and Building Trades	Mechanical Engineer; Fabricator; Maintenance Fitter; Mechanic; Heating/Air Conditioning Engineer/Installer; Electrical/Electronic Fitter; Electrician; Cable Joiner; Telecoms Engineer; IT Hardware Engineer; Overhead Linesworker;
RQF 2/SCQF 5 GCSE (grade A*-C)	71 - Sales Occupations	Sales Adviser/Assistant; Meter Reader; Debt Collector; Sales Supervisors
	72 - Customer Service Occupations	Call Centre Agent/Operator; Customer Service Adviser/Assistant/Representative; Call Centre Manager/Team Leader
RQF 1/SCQF 4 GCSE (grade D-G)	81 - Process, Plant and Machine Operatives	Chemical Process Technician; Gas Producer Operator; Process Worker; Boilerman; Control Room Operator; Power Station/Electricity Plant Operator; Water Treatment/Sewage Works Operator; Pump Attendant; Scaffolders; Cable Layer; Main/Service Layer
	82 - Transport and Mobile Machine Drivers and Operatives	HGV/Tanker Driver; Crane Driver/Operator; Digger/Plant/Excavator Operator
	91 - Elementary Trades and Related Occupations	Forestry Workers; Electrician's Mate; Fitter's Mate; Ground Worker; Labourer
	92 - Elementary Administration and Service Occupations	Refuse Collector; Refuse Disposal Operative; Security Guards; Warehouse Assistant

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