

5,000 new construction workers needed by 2026

A RECENT report has revealed that over 5,000 additional construction workers will be needed by 2026 in Northern Ireland to meet growing demand in the industry.

The new figures from Construction Skills Network (CSN), Labour Market Intelligence Report for Northern Ireland forecasts a big rise in the demand for construction workers over the next five years. If this projected growth is met, construction employment could reach 64,000 workers by 2026. The largest increases in annual demand are expected to be for occupations such as non-construction professional, technical, IT staff followed by wood and electrical trades.

With job vacancies at a record high, and unemployment at its lowest level in 50 years, the report forecasts that recruitment and developing a highly-skilled workforce will be the biggest challenge construction will face over the next five years.

The Construction Industry Training Board Northern Ireland (CITB NI) is already preparing for these challenges and opportunities. With a focus on supporting training for the industry to rebuild and recover, CITB NI is also committed to delivering on its recently published strategic road map which focuses on establishing a Training Hub, maintaining Quality Standards, continuing Partnership Work and Embracing Innovation.

CITB NI Chief Executive Barry Neilson, said: "The industry forecasts and projections detailed in the latest Construction Skills Network (CSN), Labour Market Intelligence Report for Northern Ireland are encouraging after the stalling effects of the pandemic. However, we must take into consideration that this is set against a current backdrop of higher energy costs, material shortages, and associated price inflation that is currently hitting companies across the sector."

He added: "CITB NI are aware of the challenges and opportunities ahead and are committed to continuing our role in promoting and attracting people into our sector. Training routes into the industry will be a focus for us and we must attract and retain those that are under-represented to ensure construction is a diverse and inclusive sector. It will be a major task, but construction needs to evolve and reach its untapped potential for the national economy and our competitiveness on a global scale."

