

 **AUTODESK**  
Construction Cloud

Construction in DACH  
and Netherlands 2024

# Addressing Growth, Skills Shortages and the Future Workforce

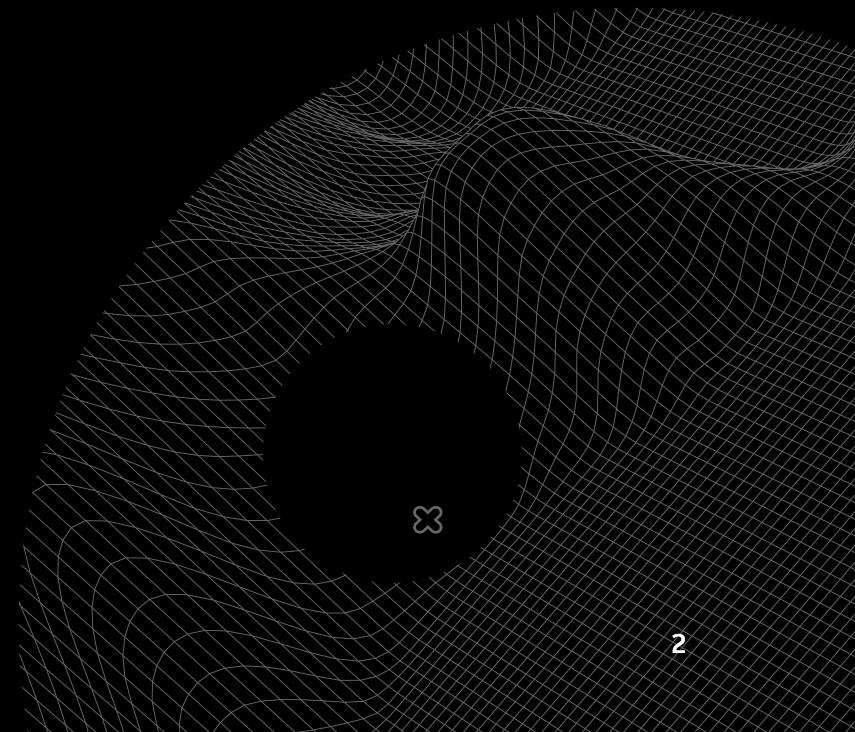
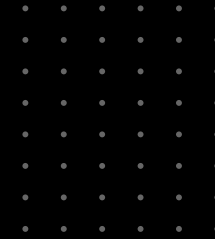
An Autodesk Construction Cloud Report





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# Foreword

**Construction has reached an inflection point. Developments like modern methods of construction, technology innovations and the drive for sustainability are starting to reshape how we build.**

Across both DACH and the Netherlands, there's greater focus than ever before on how we shape a built environment that will meet our future needs. We're seeing flagship projects like Roche Tower in Switzerland, the [Hameln net zero retrofitting project](#) and the Amsterdam Central Station renovations push the boundaries of design.

But there are clearly challenges for construction firms to contend with. Inflation is putting significant pressure on the cost of wages, building materials and energy. Companies must adapt to new client expectations and regulations, like the Wkb and the Environment and Planning Act (Omgevingswet) in the Netherlands.

And crucially, construction businesses across Europe are facing an acute skills shortage, making it difficult to find the people needed for projects today – let alone in the future.

This report will explore the experiences of 406 construction managers in Austria, Germany, the Netherlands and Switzerland to understand the challenges of hiring employees and how it is impacting businesses' operations today and their plans for the future.

During periods of economic pressure, it can be very difficult for construction businesses to invest in people, from entry level candidates to employee engagement and upskilling. But as the skills required by construction change, it may be time for coordinated action to attract new people, increase productivity and ensure we can build an industry, and a world, that is fit for the future.

**I hope you enjoy the report.**

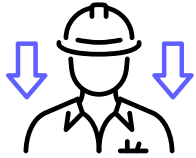
*Marvin Thiessen*

**Marvin Thiessen**  
Director of Construction Sales - EMEA,  
Autodesk





# Executive summary

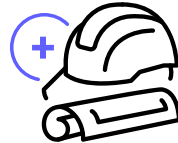


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**Construction firms in DACH and the Netherlands are optimistic about their prospects, but people shortages are hindering growth**

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- Three quarters of construction companies are predicting an increase in revenue over the next financial year, at an average of 41% year on year
- At companies where revenues are falling, the main reason is difficulty delivering projects due to skills shortages (41%)
- Seven in ten companies are planning to hire in 2024, but 81% are finding recruitment difficult

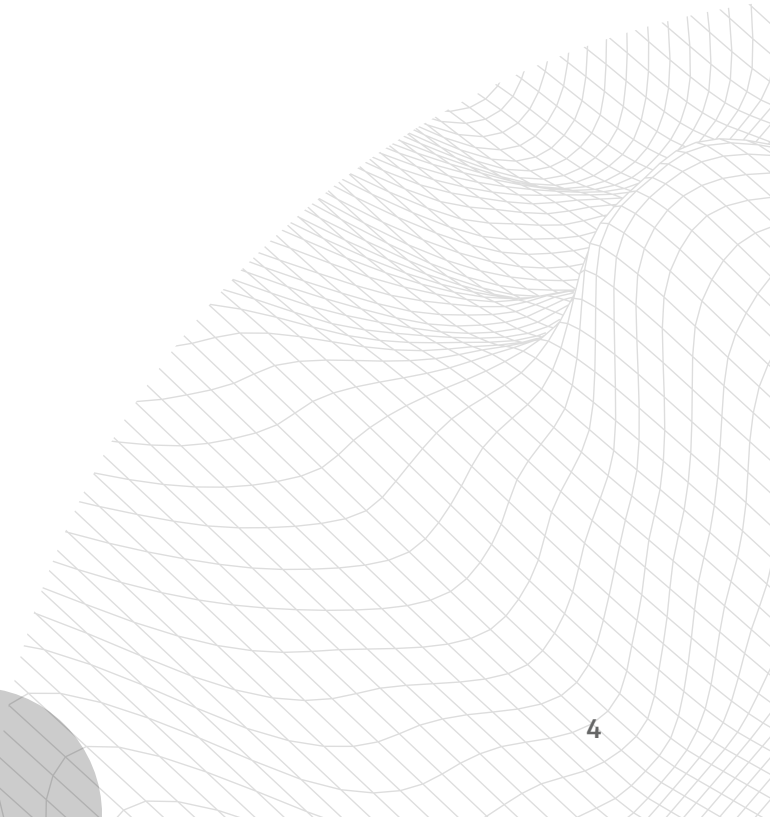


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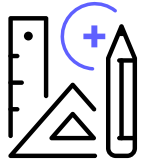
**There is an industry image problem, which may cause talent shortages for years to come**

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- One in three professionals say the industry's image problem is the main cause of recruitment problems
- 31% highlight the issue of a lack of diverse candidates for construction roles
- Difficulties offering competitive salaries due to the increasing cost of living are another blocker (34%)
- Construction being seen as a career of last choice (23%) and limited awareness of career options (23%) are both expected to cause talent shortages over the next decade







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**Businesses have ambitious plans to use modern methods of construction, but will need the skills to deliver**

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- Technology is the biggest investment priority for companies over the next two years (29%), with 35% of companies planning to invest in off-site manufacturing and 30% in artificial intelligence
- Professionals believe key construction skills will shift to include virtual reality (26%), design for manufacturing (25%) and data use for asset operations (23%)
- As well as recruitment, organisations plan to invest in training existing staff (27%) over the next two years
- However, in the Netherlands particularly there are short term concerns about meeting the new construction regulations, with one in five companies unprepared

**Based on these findings, we recommend that to ensure construction has a workforce fit for the future, companies and the wider industry should consider:**

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1. Launching national campaigns to underline the value and opportunities of construction careers
2. Increasing productivity through investments in digital technology and modern methods of construction, to mitigate the impact of talent shortages
3. Strengthening the whole talent pipeline through upskilling, from everyday digital skills to specialisms



Chapter 1

Construction 2024

# The outlook for construction







**It is a mixed picture for the construction industry. Economic pressures, like inflation and the rising cost of materials, have impacted many firms; in fact, construction volume in the EU is expected to decline by 1% in 2024 due to high interest rates and soaring building costs, while Swiss construction companies are facing high competition and even price wars.**

However, many of the construction professionals in DACH and the Netherlands are striking a distinctly positive tone about the prospects of their business and the wider industry.

A third of respondents attribute their **increasing revenues** to offering modern methods of construction

### Optimism in the industry

Nearly three quarters (72%) of the construction companies surveyed are predicting an increase in revenue over the next financial year, compared to 23% anticipating a fall. The level of confidence varies between countries: in Austria, 89% of companies expect an increase in revenues, compared to 53% in Switzerland.

These companies are expecting revenues to rise significantly, at an average of 41% year on year. In fact, one in ten companies (11%) are expecting revenues to increase by more than 80%.

Construction professionals often put their success down to their innovative approach to construction jobs. Across all the respondents, the most common reason given for anticipating an increase in revenues is the company offering modern methods of construction, like off-site manufacturing (34%).

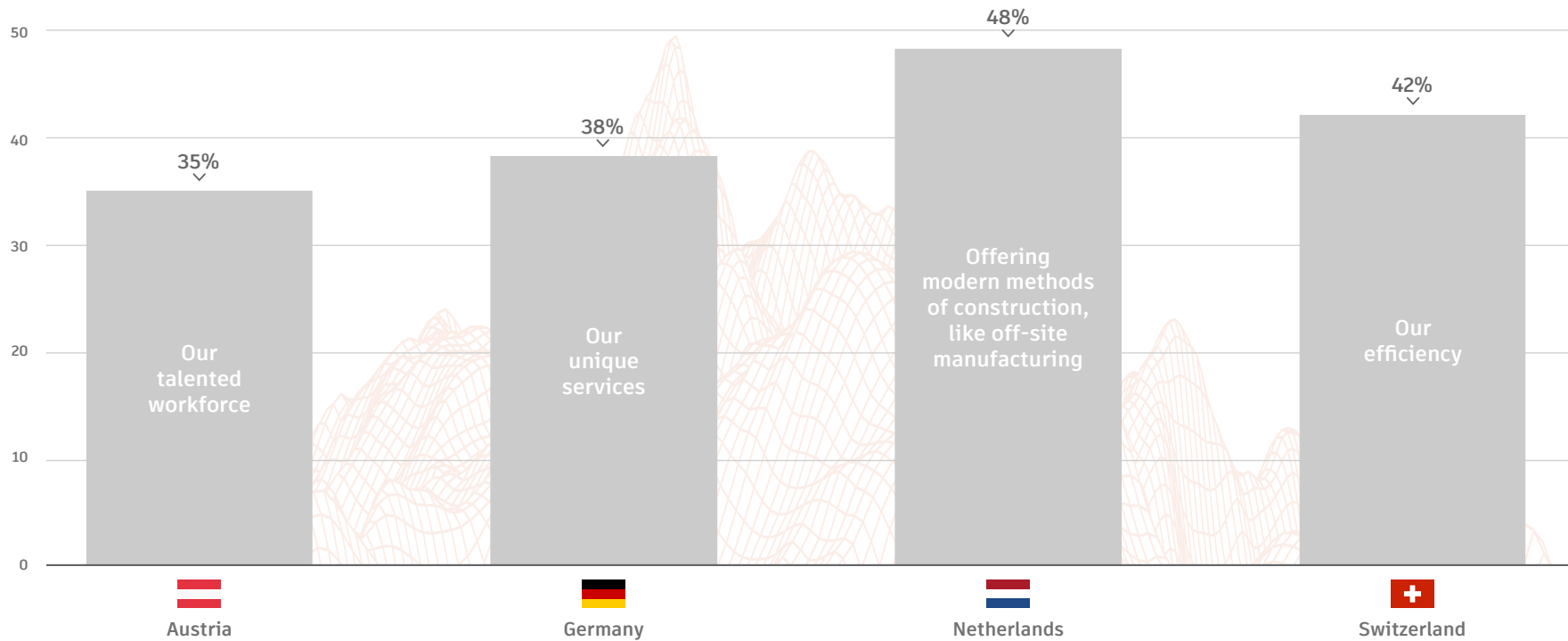
High demand caused by public and private investment is another key contributor to firms' optimism (31%).





Three quarters of construction companies expect revenues to rise, by an average of **41%**

By country: Why companies expect revenue growth – the most popular response







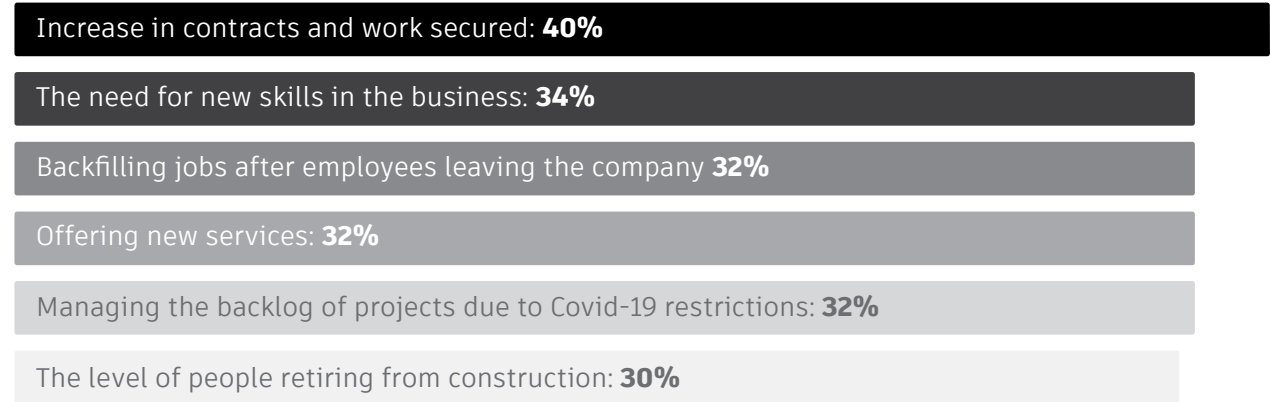
## Hiring for growth

To fuel this growth, over two thirds of the companies surveyed (68%) are planning to recruit in 2023-4. Swiss companies are the most likely to be hiring, with 92% of respondents recruiting, while in Germany this falls to 43%.

The main driver behind this recruitment is simply an increase in contracts and work secured (40%). There are also signs of how companies are evolving, as the need for new skills in the business (34%) and offering new services (32%) are key reasons for new hires.

Additionally, some businesses point to a talent drain, with three in ten hiring due to the level of people retiring from construction (30%).

## What is driving your need to recruit in 2023-4?





## Talent shortages and inflation

Other construction companies, however, present a less positive picture. Nearly one in four companies (23%) are expecting revenues to fall over the next financial year – and by a significant amount.

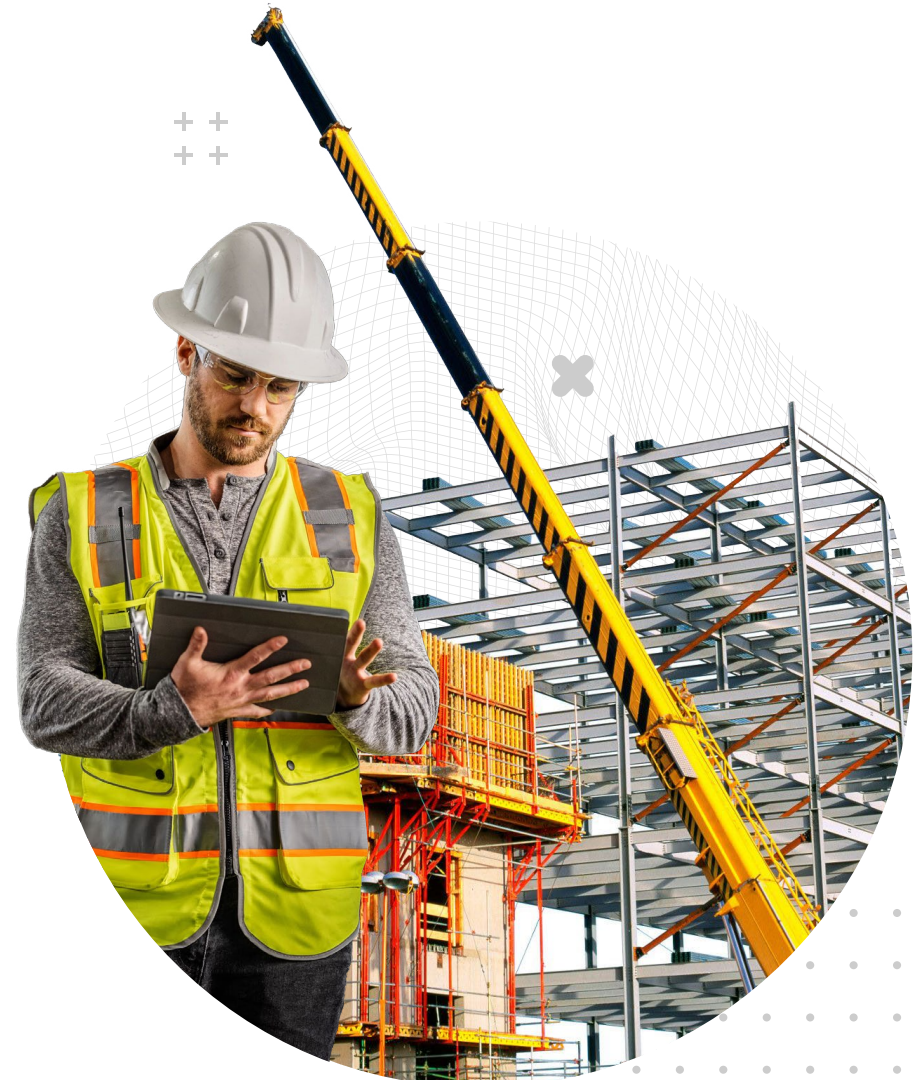
These professionals predict that company revenues will decrease by an average of 45% – with nearly one in four companies (23%) expecting a fall of more than 80%.

People play a key role, as the reason most commonly given for this expected decrease is difficulty delivering projects due to skills shortages (41%). One third of these companies (34%) are also struggling with a continuing backlog due to the Covid-19 pandemic, rising to 48% in Germany.

The economic climate is causing challenges too. At companies forecasting a decrease in revenues, 33% point to low client demand due to the economic climate and 25% highlight the issue of inflation, including the rising cost of materials.

Even at companies looking to hire, there are recruitment challenges due to difficulties offering competitive salaries due to the increasing cost of living (34%) and uncertainty associated with the rising cost of materials (29%).

Skills shortages are the most common reason for **falling revenues**





## **AUTODESK** Insight

There is real variety when it comes to construction companies' fortunes, with some optimistic about the opportunities ahead and others more concerned about factors like inflation.

But what is clear is that across DACH and the Netherlands, people are in high demand. Many companies are hiring to keep up with an increase in work – and where others foresee falling revenues, talent shortages are a key barrier.

Productivity will be key in the year ahead. Ensuring that teams have the data to build right first time, and avoid costly errors, is a simple way for companies to make the most of the talent available to them.

Cloud-based platforms focused on the construction industry can ensure that everyone has access to the latest data, wherever they are. This reduces time lost to administrative tasks, and will also help to mitigate the costly waste of materials and energy during this period of high inflation.

All of this will in turn enable construction companies to make better use of their data at a business level, so that even if economic conditions become more difficult, firms can make the best decisions and weather the storm.





Chapter 2

Construction 2024

# The skills shortage







**Construction is a key employer in Europe. Across the EU, the industry provides 18 million direct jobs, while over 350,000 people in Switzerland work in construction. However, even more people are needed; a recent European commission survey found 30% of EU contractors say the unavailability of sufficient labour is problematic - especially in Austria and Germany.**

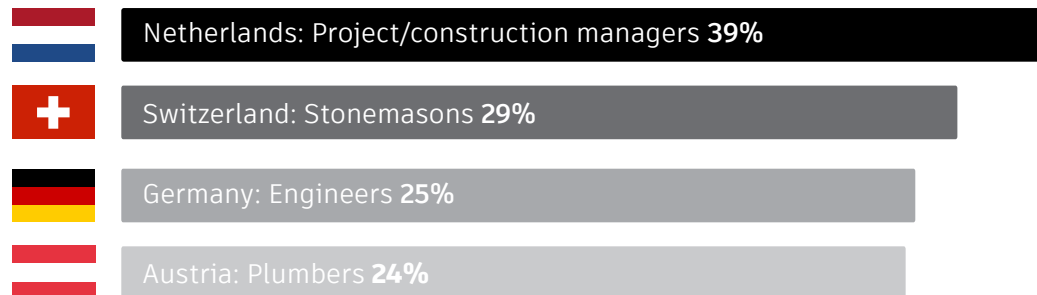
According to this survey, two thirds of construction companies across DACH and the Netherlands are looking to recruit (68%), and perhaps unsurprisingly competition for candidates is high.

### Recruitment struggles

**Four in five of the construction companies looking to recruit new employees are finding the process difficult (81%) – with Dutch companies encountering the most challenges (89%).**

This applies to a broad range of job roles. The most difficult positions to fill are project/construction managers (24%). Companies are also finding it hard to recruit sustainability and ESG officers (17%) and people with AI (17%) or data analysis (16%) skills.

### By country: The most difficult roles to recruit



There are a number of reasons behind this challenge. One third of professionals point to difficulty offering competitive salaries due to the increasing cost of living (34%).

Talent shortages are also clear, with companies highlighting the volume of people that left the construction sector during the pandemic (34%), not being able to find the exact skills needed (30%) and a shortage of skilled labour generally (30%).

**81% of companies are struggling to hire**



## A poor talent pipeline

Construction professionals are also concerned about the pipeline of talent over the next five to ten years. A quarter (26%) say there will be skills shortages caused by college courses or further education institutions not producing graduates with the skills required by construction.

A further fifth say there will be problems because companies are not investing in the upskilling of staff (20%) or due to the lack of career development in the industry (20%).

There is also an underlying financial challenge, with 20% saying that incomes and salaries won't be attractive enough and 18% saying the cost of living will divert people from the construction sector to other sectors over the next five to ten years.

## Construction's image problem

The construction industry has a poor reputation and this is impacting the talent pipeline, according to professionals. One in three say talent shortages are caused by the industry's perceived image problem (34%). Austrian companies say this is the biggest hindrance to recruitment (34%).

Firms are predicting this image crisis will cause long-term hiring challenges. Over the next five to ten years, professionals say there will be talent shortages because construction is seen as a career of last choice by school leavers (23%), it is less attractive than other sectors (20%) and working conditions are believed to be poor (20%). A further 23% believe there is simply limited awareness of construction career options.

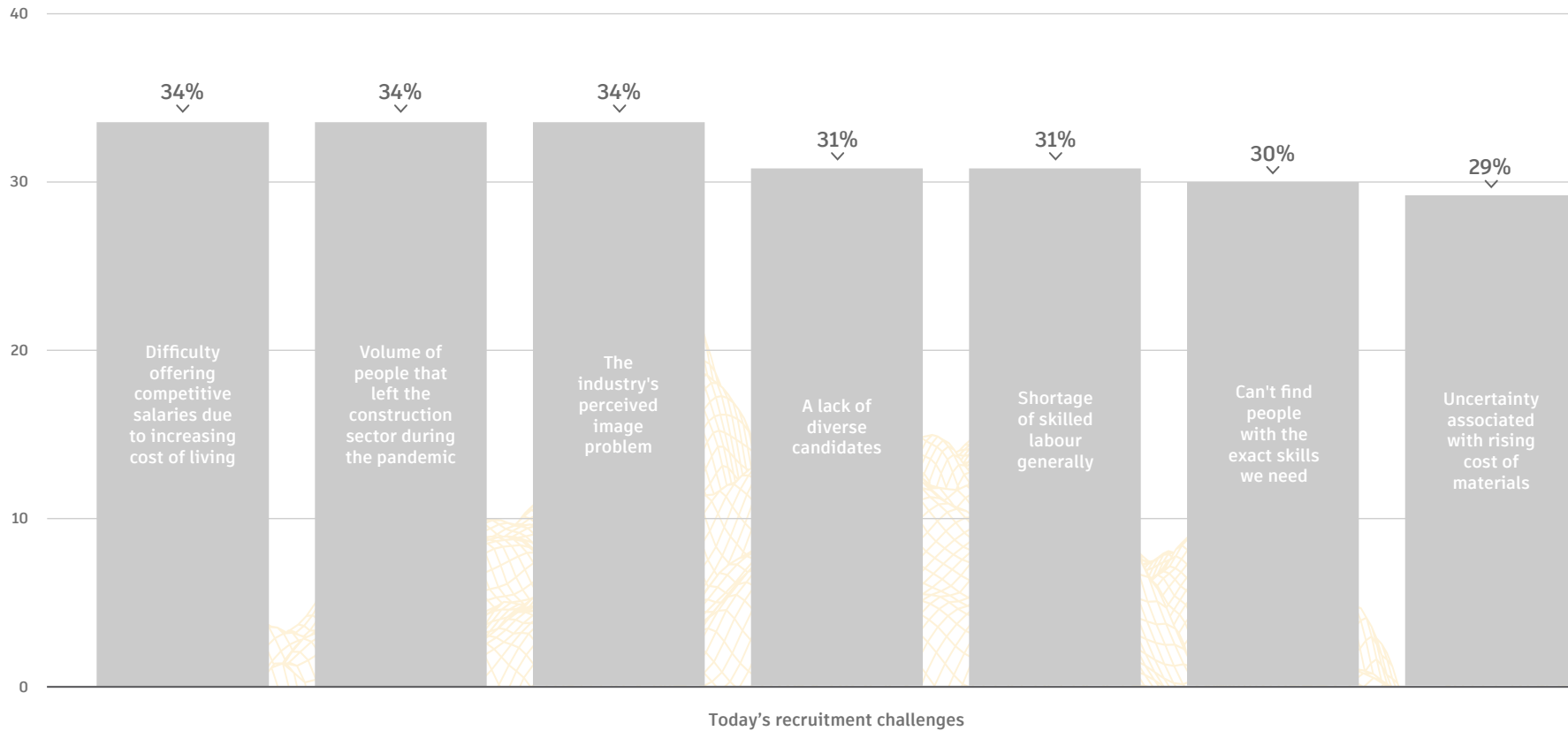
Perceptions about government policies across the region may also be playing a role, as 23% say political decisions are limiting confidence in construction's future – and putting candidates off the sector.







## What is driving your recruitment challenge today?





## **AUTODESK** Insight

With the vast majority of construction companies struggling to hire the people they require, it's clear that action is needed – both by firms and at an industry level. For companies, focusing on employee satisfaction and retention will be important to keep people on-board.

Easing day-to-day frustrations like tedious, repetitive administrative tasks can significantly improve job satisfaction – and this is an area where intuitive digital tools can help. This can also improve communication between teams, and the office and the site, to keep leaders in touch with their employees. Offering modern tools can also help to attract new candidates at a time when competition is fierce.

Meanwhile, industry action is needed to build the pipeline of talent over the next five years and beyond – and that starts with tackling the industry's image problem. A coordinated campaign could help to emphasise the opportunities in construction, including the varied roles and skillsets needed, particularly as roles shift towards digital operations and there is an increased focus on sustainability.

Partnerships between companies and educational institutes can also widen access to construction, and ensure that potential candidates have the skills and routes into jobs that they need.





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## View from the industry

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It is perhaps unsurprising that historically the construction industry has had a poor reputation, particularly when it comes to the environment. Even now, the built environment is responsible for a large proportion of global carbon emissions, and inefficient methods of construction are a significant challenge. This can put potential candidates off the sector.

However, today there are many roles and opportunities in construction that are focused on reducing emissions and creating a sustainable industry, often using innovative technologies. At ecoworks, we use prefabricated façades and roofs for the fast and cost-effective renovation of existing buildings. Within a few weeks, buildings that were once highly inefficient become plus-energy houses that generate more energy than they consume.

Methods like this will be critical for meeting climate change targets – and we will need to attract a wide range of people into construction roles to ensure the industry develops the workforce necessary to accomplish this aim. As a sector, we must raise awareness of how construction is evolving, so that we have the people we need to be a force for good.

*Christoph Bindal-Gutsche*

**Christoph Bindal-Gutsche**

Vice President IT, ecoworks

 **ecoworks**





Chapter 3

Construction 2024

# Future ambitions







The construction sector is shifting, as client demands and government regulations require firms to build in ways that are more sustainable and technology-focused. Climate change targets are also prompting a huge wave of renovation; in fact, the International Trade Union Confederation predicts 1.5m additional workers will be needed in the sector between 2023 and 2030 to achieve EU targets.

Construction companies in DACH and the Netherlands are recognising the need to invest in technology, sustainability and people as the industry evolves.

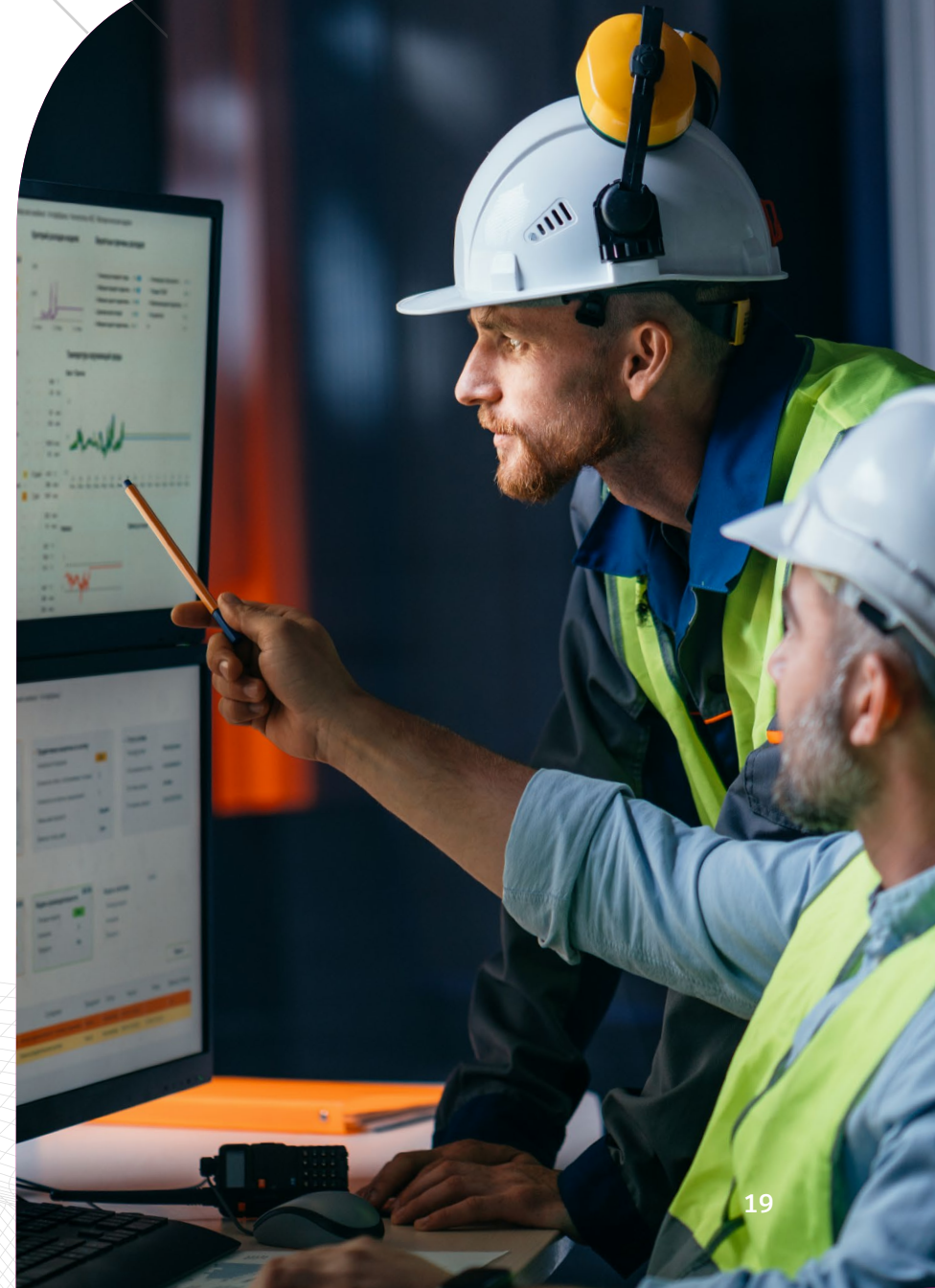
### A focus on innovation

There are clear signs that construction companies are looking to the future. Over the next two years, 29% of businesses will prioritise investing in IT and technology – the most popular answer – followed by 28% focusing on new equipment.

When it comes to the specific areas for technology investment, over the next five years 35% of companies are planning to invest in modern methods of construction, such as off-site manufacturing – rising to 41% in the Netherlands.

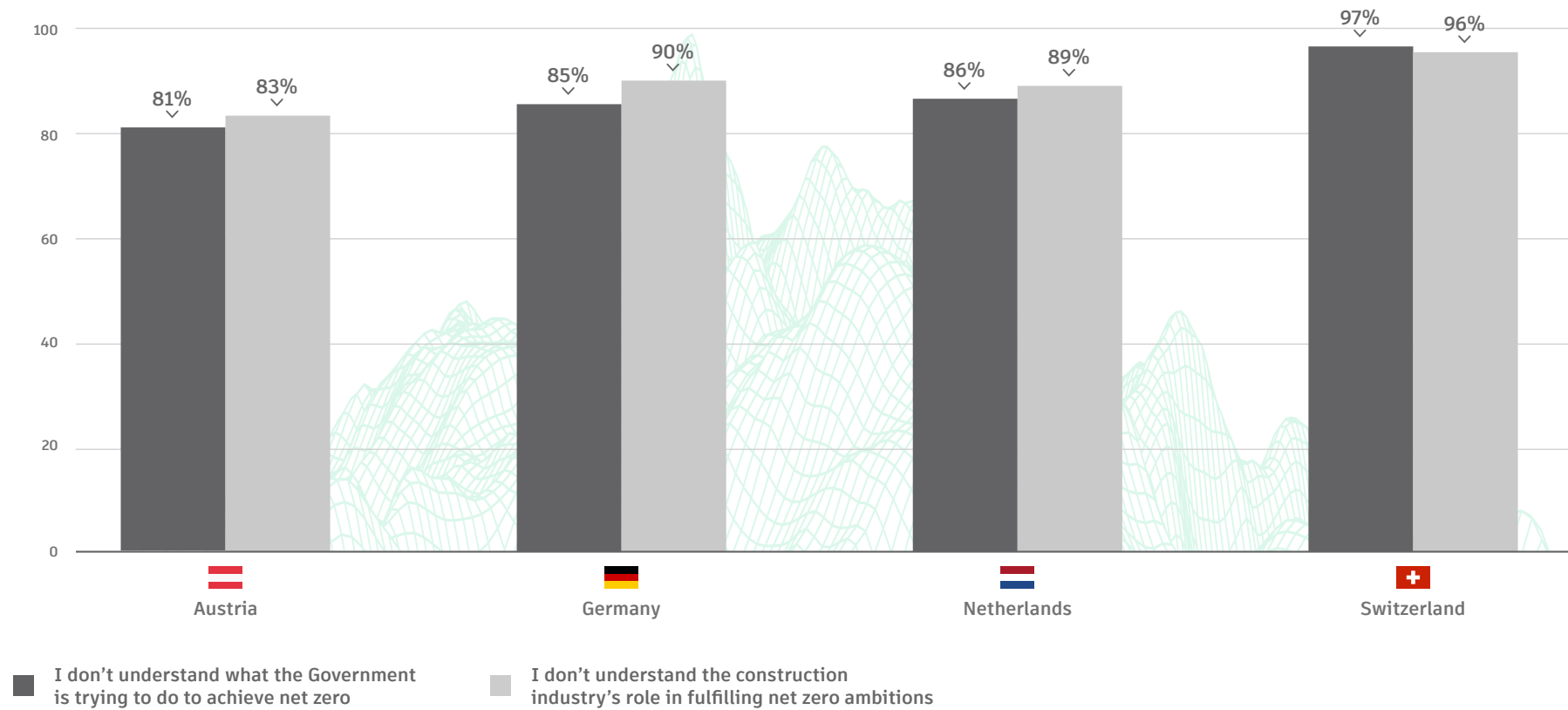
Other technologies of focus include building information modelling (BIM) (34%), artificial intelligence (30%) and data analytics (30%).

A further 28% will prioritise investment in their sustainability and ESG strategy. Interestingly, however, most construction professionals don't fully understand what their government is trying to do to achieve net zero or the construction industry's role in fulfilling net zero ambitions – across all of the countries surveyed.





### Results by country – Views on green policies







## Becoming more diverse

**Appealing to a broad range of candidates will be key for meeting construction's talent shortages. However, professionals view diversity as a key challenge for the industry; 31% of companies struggling to hire point to a lack of diverse candidates.**

A further 23% say a key driver for skills shortages over the next five to ten years will be the fact that construction is failing to attract a diverse enough range of candidates.

Across the board, 79% of construction companies are prioritising hiring people from diverse backgrounds, rising to 95% of Austrian companies. Over a quarter (26%) will focus business investment on diversity and inclusion over the next two years.

However, one in five professionals (21%) don't feel their company is prioritising this area at all. Here, the main reasons are that the business or working culture isn't set up to accommodate diverse candidates (52%), if clients aren't demanding diversity, they won't prioritise it (35%) and the hiring process not being geared towards diversity (33%).

**31% say a lack of diverse candidates compounds talent shortages**







## **AUTODESK** Insight

It's very positive to see the technology aspirations of construction firms across DACH and the Netherlands. Using digital technology, as well as innovative methods like off-site manufacturing, can significantly improve the productivity and sustainability of construction, helping firms to be ready for the future of the industry. This transition though will need to be underpinned by upskilling across construction, as all kinds of job roles shift to include digital skills.

Many firms are already investing in people, and offering accessible technology – designed with usability in mind – will help employees to become more comfortable with the processes and concepts of digital construction.

At the same time, broadening the appeal of the industry and accommodating a more diverse range of candidates will be crucial to securing the talent needed. By creating a working culture that embraces people with different abilities, care responsibilities and backgrounds, construction will benefit from a whole new wave of talent to meet its changing needs.

It's also interesting that while many firms are focusing on their own ESG targets, the majority don't feel aligned with national sustainability policies – a trend universal to the four countries. Partnership between government and industry may be needed to outline and communicate a clear path to net zero, so that companies feel aligned.





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## View from the industry

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At Dura Vermeer, we believe retaining talent is as important as attracting it. We aim to keep our team motivated and invested in our shared goals by fostering a culture that values innovation, continuous learning, and professional growth.

Skilled workers from all facets of construction play a crucial role in shaping the future of the built environment. In today's rapidly evolving landscape, the success of the construction industry lies in our ability to nurture the potential of our people and create a culture where everyone feels valued and empowered to make a difference. Our industry faces the dual challenge of attracting and retaining talent who can navigate the complexities of the present while pioneering the net zero and circular economy solutions of tomorrow.

Our industry is committed to sustainable development, which is driving a significant change in the way we work. To achieve our environmental goals, we need a workforce that is as innovative and adaptable as the challenges we face. Skilled workers are not only the backbone of our day-to-day operations, but also the architects of this transformation.

*Gert-Jan Ditsel*

**Gert-Jan Ditsel**  
Business Partner - Digital Building, Dura Vermeer







# Austria



Austria

### Positivity, underpinned by great people

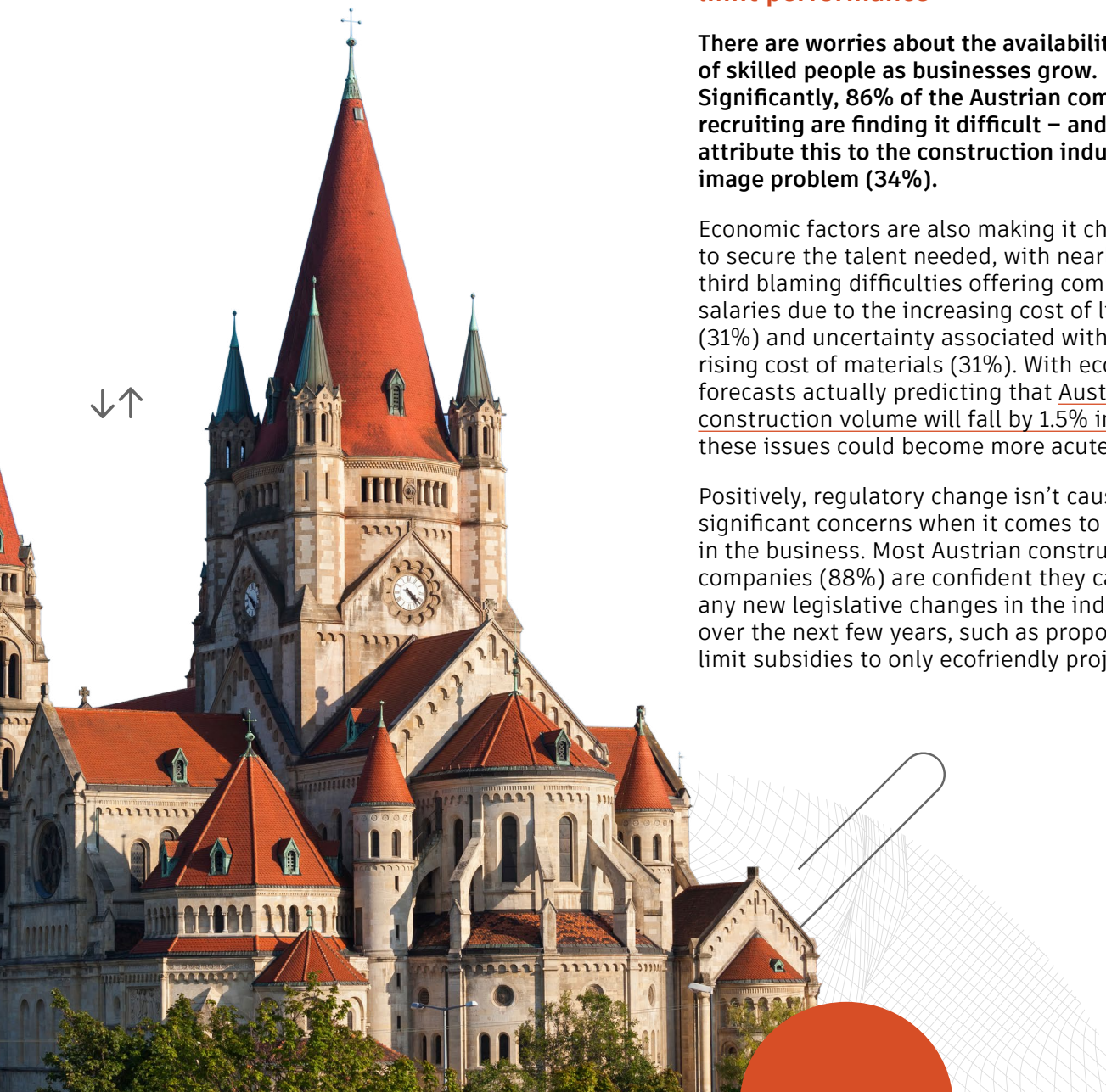
Construction companies in Austria are the most positive about their prospects over the next year. Nearly nine in ten expect revenues to rise (89%), the most of any country, with professionals predicting an average increase of 38%.

People play a significant part in this success, with professionals putting this predicted increase down to their talented workforce (35%) and strong relationships with repeat clients (33%). High demand caused by public and private investment is also playing a role (32%).

Three quarters (75%) of Austrian construction companies are recruiting, often motivated simply by the increase in contracts and work secured (37%). Continuing to clear the backlog of projects caused by Covid-19 restrictions is also a factor for 35% – the most of any country, in fact.







## Talent shortages could limit performance

There are worries about the availability of skilled people as businesses grow. Significantly, 86% of the Austrian companies recruiting are finding it difficult – and most attribute this to the construction industry’s image problem (34%).

Economic factors are also making it challenging to secure the talent needed, with nearly a third blaming difficulties offering competitive salaries due to the increasing cost of living (31%) and uncertainty associated with the rising cost of materials (31%). With economic forecasts actually predicting that Austrian construction volume will fall by 1.5% in 2024, these issues could become more acute.

Positively, regulatory change isn’t causing significant concerns when it comes to skills in the business. Most Austrian construction companies (88%) are confident they can meet any new legislative changes in the industry over the next few years, such as proposals to limit subsidies to only ecofriendly projects.

## Investing in education to meet workforce demands early

Austrian firms are concerned about the pipeline of talent in construction, pointing especially to some shortcomings in education. Professionals most commonly state that the main reason for skills shortages over the next decade will be that college courses and further education institutions are not producing graduates with the necessary skills (26%) – and that construction is seen as a career of last choice by school leavers (23%)

Perhaps to address this shortfall, 30% of Austrian companies will invest in apprenticeships over the next two years, the highest of any country. Furthermore, 31% will invest in IT and technology, with building information modelling (BIM) (41%) and data analytics (31%) the top priorities.

Building closer links with schools – and emphasising the role of technology in the future of construction – may help to change perceptions of the industry and also equip candidates with the skills and drive for careers in the sector.

**86%** of Austrian construction companies are struggling to recruit, most frequently blaming the industry’s **image problem**





# Germany

# Berlin





Germany

### Recruiting to replace, rather than to grow

Like their counterparts across DACH, most German construction companies (78%) are expecting revenues to grow over the next financial year; 33% is the average predicted increase, which is actually the lowest of the countries surveyed. Many German professionals put this down to the unique services they offer (38%), as well as their talented workforce (32%).

However, the majority aren't planning to recruit – and the companies hiring are usually doing so to replace lost staff. Only 43% are hiring, the lowest of any country surveyed. Where companies are recruiting, it's frequently to replace lost talent, with professionals pointing to backfilling jobs after people leave the company (37%), people retiring from construction (37%) and the need for new skills in the business (37%).

Two thirds of the companies looking to hire are running into challenges (65%). The main reasons are that firms are having difficulty offering competitive salaries due to the increasing cost of living (39%) or issues finding people with the exact skills needed (39%).





### Technology ambitions hindered by skills shortages

Technology is a key focus, with companies planning to invest in modern methods of construction such as off-site manufacturing (40%), robotics (31%) and AI (30%) over the next five years.

However, there are concerns about having the skilled workers needed to fulfil these ambitions. Nearly a quarter of professionals (24%) are worried about the shortage of digital and technology skills over the next five to ten years.

More broadly, professionals indicate there are issues with education that span the whole talent pipeline, from courses not producing graduates with the necessary skills (24%) to companies not investing in the upskilling of staff (24%). The joint highest investment priority for firms over the next two years is upskilling staff (33%), perhaps in response to these concerns.

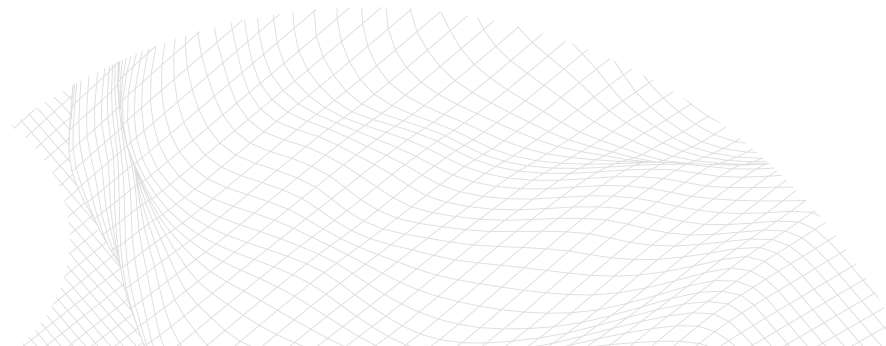
These skills shortages may in turn impact companies' abilities to meet new regulation, such as the proposals to increase energy efficiency requirements. Three in ten professionals (29%) don't feel their company is adequately prepared to meet any legislative changes – pointing to a lack of people with the necessary skills and expertise (59%).

### Sustainable, inclusive construction

Many German construction companies are considering their role in creating a sustainable, ethical industry. One in three German companies will prioritise investment in sustainability and their ESG strategy and plan (33%) over the next two years – their joint highest priority, alongside upskilling.

Interestingly, 32% of German professionals don't feel their company is prioritising hiring people from diverse backgrounds – the most of any country surveyed. Most put this down to a lack of people from diverse backgrounds entering the industry (44%). Further efforts will be needed at a national level to create an industry that accommodates and appeals to all kinds of people – to help meet skills shortages and create a more inclusive sector.

**Sustainability is the biggest investment focus for German companies over the next two years, alongside upskilling staff**







# The Netherlands



## Building on success with technology investment

**Many construction companies in the Netherlands are currently experiencing significant success; 69% of Dutch companies are expecting revenues to rise in the next financial year, by an average of 48%.**

Professionals most commonly attribute this success to offering modern methods of construction like off-site manufacturing (48%) – the highest of any country surveyed. Organisations also point to the quality of their work (41%) and high demand caused by public and private investment (36%).

Six in ten Dutch companies (61%) are recruiting workers, with 51% putting it down to an increase in contracts and work secured (compared to the survey average of 40%).

Businesses are also looking to build on their current success with more innovation. Over the next two years, 32% will prioritise investment in IT and technology. In the slightly longer term, companies will focus on modern methods of construction such as off-site manufacturing (41%), building information modelling (BIM) (40%) and artificial intelligence (38%).





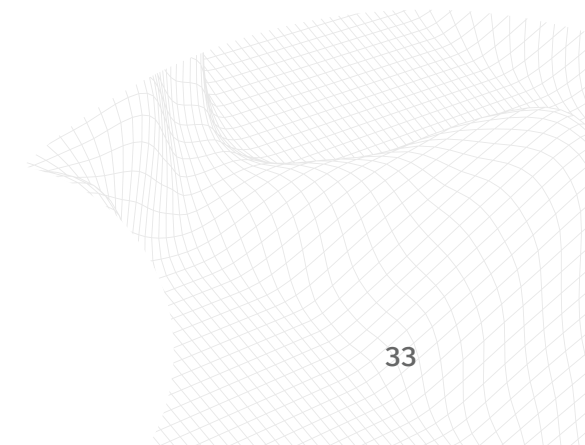


## Regulatory red flags

Despite these positive indications, one in five Dutch professionals (21%) don't think that their organisation is adequately equipped or skilled to meet the legislative changes that will come as a result of the Wkb and the Environment and Planning Act (Omgevingswet) that will be effective as of 2024.

The most common reasons given are that companies don't have the technology or digital tools (52%), don't know who is responsible for which area of compliance (38%) and don't adequately understand the requirements yet (29%). Greater dialogue between government and industry may be needed to ensure companies can meet the new rules.

There is confusion regarding climate change policy generally; interestingly, nearly nine in ten don't believe they understand what the Government is trying to do to achieve net zero (86%) or the construction industry's role in fulfilling net zero ambitions (89%).





## Acute skills shortages

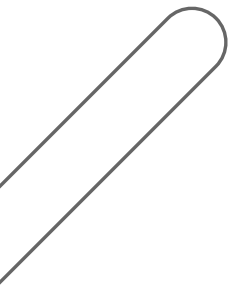
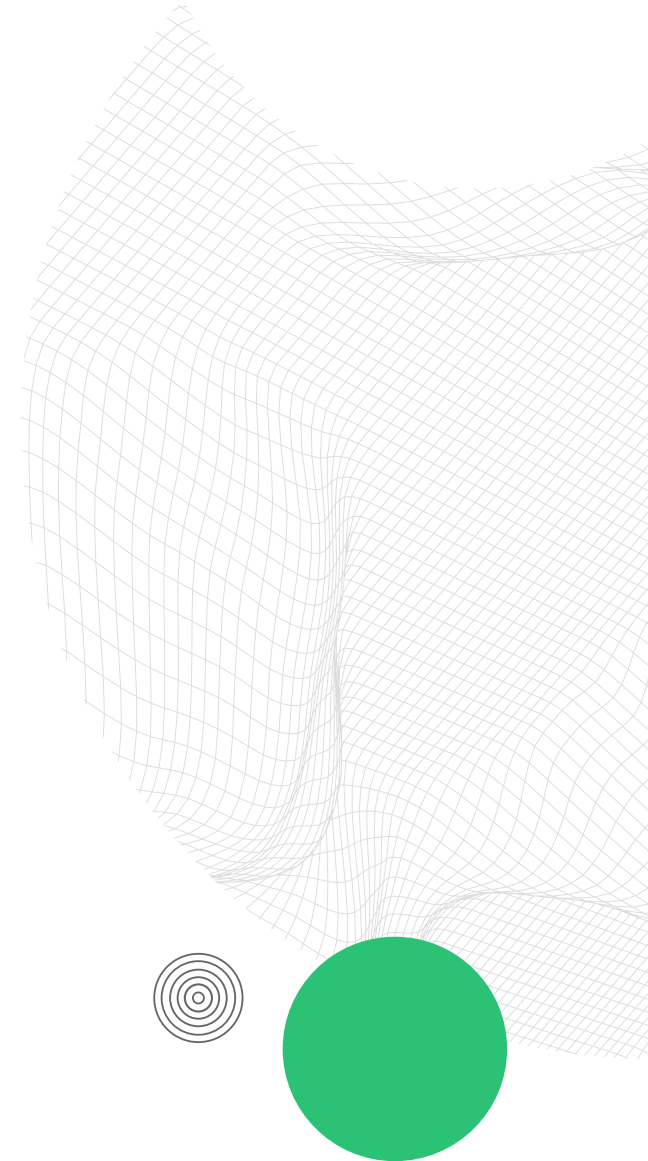
**Although many firms are hoping to recruit, nine in ten are finding it difficult (89%) – the highest of any country surveyed. There are clear indications of a talent shortage in the Netherlands, with professionals blaming the volume of people that left construction during the pandemic (43%) and a shortage of skilled labour generally (41%).**

In response 36% of Dutch companies will prioritise investing in training or upskilling existing staff in the next two years, which may help to equip internal candidates with the capabilities needed.

In the long-term, Dutch professionals believe that the main reason for shortages will be that construction is failing to attract a diverse enough range of candidates (29%). Currently 22% believe their companies aren't prioritising hiring diverse candidates, with the main reasons being their working culture isn't set up to accommodate diverse candidates (55%) or the hiring process isn't geared towards diversity (50%).

Positively, the emphasis on modern methods of construction may help firms to appeal to people with a more diverse range of needs and abilities – as building becomes more focused on a centralised, controlled location.

**One in five Dutch companies are unprepared for the impact of the Wkb and the Environment and Planning Act**







# Switzerland

Switzerland

## People shortages hit revenues

**Just over half of the Swiss professionals surveyed are anticipating a rise in their companies' revenues over the next year (53%), which is actually the lowest of any country surveyed – and significantly below Austria (89%), for example.**

The Swiss companies that expect revenues to grow most commonly put it down to their efficiency (42%). By contrast, 33% of businesses anticipate a fall in revenue – and they most often blame difficulties delivering projects due to skills shortages (48%).

Whether companies are growing or not, almost all are looking to hire. Nine in ten of the companies surveyed are currently recruiting (92%), the most of any country. The most common reasons are an increase in contracts and work secured (39%) or offering new services (39%).

Nearly eight in ten of these companies (79%) are encountering difficulties recruiting, which professionals most frequently put down to the challenge of offering competitive salaries in response to the increasing cost of living (38%). Given the high proportion of businesses hiring, there may also be significant competition between potential employers pushing wages up.







## Concerns about construction's future

Professionals are concerned that people are being put off the sector by some policies. Looking ahead, Swiss construction professionals are most likely to expect that people shortages will be caused by political decisions limiting confidence in construction's future (29%) – with more Swiss professionals selecting this than any other country. Another 25% say the construction industry is less attractive than other sectors.

Interestingly given this stance, 97% of respondents don't believe they understand what the government is trying to do to achieve net zero – with a further 96% unsure about the construction industry's role in fulfilling net zero ambitions. It may be that greater clarity on the path to sustainable construction will help to improve the sector's image and attract new candidates.

## Broadening the appeal of construction

Considering their priorities for the next two years, Swiss companies are most likely to be focusing their investment on diversity and inclusion (34%) after new equipment (36%). Given that skills shortages are actually limiting revenues, this may be critical to ensure that construction can draw from the widest talent pool possible.

However, by contrast 26% of professionals say their company is not prioritising hiring people from diverse backgrounds – which they most often put down to their business or working culture not being set up to accommodate diverse candidates (69%) or that the leadership of their company isn't diverse enough (42%). Addressing these issues may be crucial for securing critical employees.

From a technology perspective, companies are most commonly planning to invest in virtual reality (37%), modern methods of construction (33%) or 3D printing (32%) over the next five years – all of which may help with efficiency and productivity, at a time when people are in short supply.

Swiss construction companies with falling revenues blame skills shortages – and 92% of all companies are trying to recruit





# Conclusion

**It's very clear from this report that people are always at the heart of success in construction.**

Having talented, motivated and efficient employees – who forge excellent client relationships – is key to the success of growing construction companies.

By contrast, the firms seeing revenues fall often put it down to missing the right people, making it difficult to seize opportunities today and plan for the future.

Companies across the Netherlands and DACH are investing in new technologies and ways of working, to make construction a more sustainable and productive industry. But today, it's clear that people shortages are creating significant challenges for organisations of every size and discipline.

For construction to deliver its potential, it will be crucial to forge a strong, diverse pipeline of talent with the new skills and experience required.





Conclusion



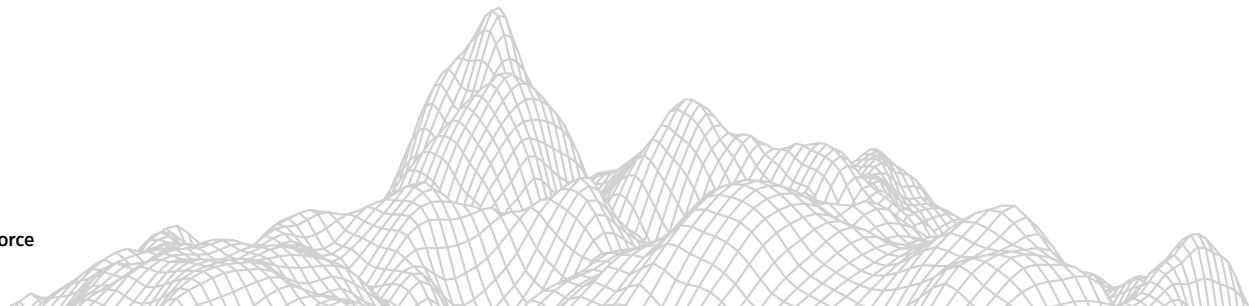
We have three recommendations for companies and the wider industry to strengthen construction’s prospects:

- 1. **Launch national campaigns to underline the value and opportunities of construction careers:** Address the construction industry’s image problem by raising awareness of how the sector contributes to society and the different roles in construction, including the new jobs being enabled by digital technology and sustainability initiatives. Showcase the wide range of people with diverse backgrounds and abilities that can thrive in construction today. Work in partnerships across industry bodies, companies and government to make construction a career to be proud of.
- 2. **Increase productivity through investments in digital technology and modern methods of construction:** Introduce digital tools that can enable employees to build right first time, reducing errors and cutting administration time for higher productivity, even when people are in short supply. Lay the foundations for modern methods of construction by getting the fundamentals right today, such as consistent data management and interoperable systems. Remember that techniques like off-site manufacturing can open roles up to more diverse candidates, improving the inclusivity, as well as the sustainability, of construction.

- 3. **Strengthen the whole talent pipeline through upskilling, from everyday digital skills to specialisms:** Dedicate time to creating an upskilling strategy for your company, considering the skills that will be needed in each role in a year’s time. Provide accessible digital technology to existing employees, with on-the-job training, to increase familiarity with processes and concepts of digital construction. Create links with schools and colleges to help change perceptions of the industry and ensure students are gaining the skills valued by companies to quickly find employment on graduation. At an industry level, consider a national talent strategy over the next decade to ensure enough specialists in fields like AI can find roles in construction.

Construction is changing, and it’s clear that many firms across the Netherlands and DACH are optimistic about what’s to come.

But it’s vital that as an industry, we tackle people shortages and create a workforce fit for the future, so that many people can enjoy the wonderful opportunities of a career in construction.







# Methodology

The research was conducted by Censuswide, with 406 managers and higher in the construction industry (Germany, Austria, Netherlands and Switzerland) between 06.10.23 – 16.10.23. Censuswide abide by and employ members of the Market Research Society which is based on the ESOMAR principles.





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