PANTOUR
PACT FOR NEXT TOURISM GENERATION SKILLS

02/24

COUNTRY SKILLS PROFILE REPORT

THE NETHERLANDS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This executive summary provides an overview of the field research (survey, interviews, best practices analysis) conducted to explore the significance of digital, socio-cultural, and environmental/green skills development in the Netherlands tourism industry.

THE NETHERLANDS IS ACTIVELY ENGAGED IN SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Given the small size of the Dutch sample, it should be made clear that the results of the survey should be taken as not representative for the whole Dutch tourism industry, but some indicative results are relevant for policies on different levels.

Digital skills

Advanced skills such as robotics, digital applications and AI are currently regarded as less relevant for the tourism industry. More traditional skills such as information processing, office administration and digital marketing represent a higher skills level currently. The survey (although not significantly representative for the Netherlands) has given some indication that the Dutch tourism sector faces the greatest challenges in adopting cutting-edge technologies like generative applications, digital technologies, and robotics. To thrive in the digital era, investments in training and education in these areas will be essential.

Green skills

At the highest proficiency levels, it's encouraging to see that "green procurement" ranks the highest. This suggests that the tourism sector in the Netherlands is actively seeking and purchasing products and services that have minimal negative environmental impacts. Embracing technology can enhance efficiency, customer experiences, and sustainability efforts.

In contrast, the smallest gap is found in relation to sustainability compliance: "Understanding of environmental laws" indicates that professionals in the industry have a relatively good grasp of the legal framework governing environmental practices, which is essential for compliance and responsible tourism.

Socio-cultural Skills

Looking at the current level of existing skills, we can conclude that the high proficiency in teamwork underscores the industry's ability to collaborate seamlessly.

In all three attention fields (Digital/Green/Socio-cultural) the Netherlands is actively engaged in developing itself: however challenges remain as described above and in the survey chapter.

INTRODUCTION

The Erasmus+ PANTOUR Project is a European partnership for improving a collaborative and productive relationship between education and industry. PANTOUR is the follow-up project of the NTG project (Next Tourism Generation Skills Alliance; 2018-2022). The PANTOUR project aims specifically at designing innovative solutions to address skills needs in tourism.

With the exploitation of its outputs, PANTOUR seeks to benefit job seekers, employed and unemployed workers from the tourism industry, employers, SMEs, sector associations and policy makers. Therefore, it has dedicated special attention to the reskilling and upskilling of the generic workforce on future skills needs. To be able to achieve this goal, research has been conducted in every country of the project consortium, to investigate the future of tourism, skills gaps between current levels of skills in the tourism industry and the future skills needed in the future.

As a start, up to date information is needed. This will be covered with this Country Skills Profile Report: a comprehensive document, covering one countr that provides an in-depth analysis of the general tourism and skills landscape, gaps, needs and workforce capabilities within a particular country. It serves as a valuable resource for policymakers, government officials, employers/employees, and educational institutions to understand the current state of skills and make informed decisions regarding workforce development strategies.

The purpose of this Country Skills Profile Report is to provide on the basis a comprehensive overview of the following:

General information of each country in the PANTOUR consortium regarding tourism and tourism employment, i.e., tourism facts & figures;

Summary of the current situation regarding the delivery of Digital, Green and Social Skills training provision for the main types of suppliers of education/training;

Analysis of online survey results within each country in the PANTOUR consortium, held among tourism professionals, HR managers and decision makers;

Overview of contemporary developments in tourism, trends in tourism employability, and the existing gaps between current levels of skills in the tourism industry and the projected future skills needed in 2030;

An inventory of Best Practices (i.e., innovative initiatives, projects, programs, philosophies, tools, methods, ideas, solutions, and concepts) in relation to upskilling, reskilling, attracting, and retaining staff in order to improve the knowledge on digital, social, and green skills development in tourism.

1. GENERAL TOURISM CHARACTERISTICS, FACTS & FIGURES OF THE NETHERLANDS

The primary aim of this chapter of this Country Skills Profile report is to elaborate on general information and give a summary of the tourism situation in the country. This is conducted by collecting and analysing data from country sources and summarising these. The analysis is built upon existing online sources, course content, reports, existing research results, articles, books.

1.2 TOURISM FACTS & FIGURES

Tourism globally

The tourism industry is a vast and complex sector that encompasses many industries, including accommodation, transport, attractions, travel companies, and more. According to the international statistics portal Statista (2023 [1]), the total contribution of travel and tourism to the global economy was $ 7.71 trillion in 2022 (Statista, 2022), a 7.6% share of the total global GDP, remaining 5% below pre-pandemic levels.

Prior to the pandemic, Travel & Tourism was one of the largest sectors in the world and accounted for 1 in 4 jobs. Growth is expected at 5.8% annually between 2022 and 2032, outpacing the general economy.

The same source (Statista, 2023 [2]) reports that the number of international tourist arrivals worldwide was 963 million in 2022.

According to another study of Statista (2023), global employment in the travel and tourism sector rose slightly in 2022 over the previous year, following a sharp drop with the onset of the coronavirus pandemic. Despite the increase, the number of travel and tourism jobs worldwide remained below pre-pandemic levels, totaling 295 million in 2022. As forecast, this figure is expected to grow to 320 million in 2023 and to 430 million in 2033.

1.1.1 Contribution of travel & tourism to GDP in the Netherlands

The Netherlands, a nation renowned for its picturesque landscapes, historic cities, beautiful nature and vibrant culture, has long been a sought-after destination for tourists worldwide. The significance of tourism and hospitality in the Netherlands cannot be overstated, as it plays a pivotal role in shaping the country's economy, cultural exchange, and overall societal well-being. At the heart of this flourishing industry lies the imperative of skills development. Skill development initiatives will not only enhance the sector but also contribute to the nation's broader economic growth and global standing.

In the Netherlands, in 2022 the total contribution of travel and tourism to the Netherlands' gross domestic product (GDP) was roughly 8.6% lower compared to 2019 (Statista, 2023 [2]), the year prior to the onset of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

Overall, the direct and indirect contribution of tourism to the Netherlands' GDP amounted to roughly € 95.8 billion in 2022 (CBS Statistics Netherlands, 2023 [1]). See Table 1 below for the development in the amounts, divided over domestic and incoming tourism.

Table 1: Contribution of tourism to GDP of Netherlands (millions of euros), division between domestic and incoming tourism

Year	Total tourism NL	Incoming tourism	Domestic tourism	Not specified
2011	62,237	15,569	43,869	2,799
2012	64,692	17,239	44,658	2,795
2013	66,037	18,986	44,284	2,768
2014	69,441	21,121	45,521	2,799
2015	73,513	23,957	46,691	2,864
2016	76,843	26,568	47,374	2,901
2017	82,188	30,040	49,154	2,994
2018	86,454	32,229	51,174	3,051
2019	90,814	34,729	52,924	3,161
2020	53,252	15,744	34,182	3,326
2021	59,291	18,104	37,696	3,492
2022	95,835	34,474	57,665	3,696

Source: CBS Statistics Netherlands (2023)

1.1.2 Size and relevance of the subsectors

In 2020, the Netherlands had more than 137,500 companies active in the tourism, recreation & hospitality sector (LDA, 2021). See Table 2 below. This is approximately 3.6% of the total number of companies in the Netherlands. A total of 68,000 business classified into several tourism sectors are identified, as follows:

Table 2: Number of tourism, recreation and hospitality companies in the Netherlands in 2020 (note: the total number of companies does not add up to the mentioned total of 137,500, because companies can be part of more than one category).

Tourism Sector	137,500
Food and beverage	37,800
Passenger transportation	13,400
Lodging	9,700
Travel agency	5,900
Organisation of fairs + conferences	1,200
Hospitality sector	58,800
Water sport and recreation	16,900
Day attractions (theme parks, sport events, etc.)	7,300

Source: Dutch National Data Alliance (LDA), 2021.

1.1.3   Share of different transportation modes (plane, car, train) in tourism

In 2022, still a Covid-19 year, people stayed closer to home during the summer, which is also reflected in the means of transportation used for foreign vacations. Fewer people went by plane: in 2022, 4.2 million summer vacations (35%) involved air travel. That was 1.0 million lower than in 2019, when the share of air travel was 45% (CBS Statistics Netherlands, 2023 [2]).

The car was the preferred mode of transportation for a foreign vacation in 2022: nearly half of the vacations were by car, up from 44% three years earlier, similar to the share of air travel. People also boarded trains somewhat more often in 2022: for 0.9 million (8%) of summer foreign vacations, compared to half a million (over 4%) in 2019.

In the intervening years with travel restrictions due to corona, fewer people went abroad. In 2020, 17% of those summer vacations went by plane, and in 2021, 30%.

1.1.4 Arrivals of international versus national tourists

The number of guests staying overnight in Dutch lodging accommodations in 2022 rose 40% (as a result of Covid-19) to 44 million from a year earlier. This is approximately at the level before the corona pandemic outbreak. Especially the number of foreign guests and the number of guests who stayed overnight in hotels increased (CBS, 2023 [3]). See Table 3 below.

*Table 3: Overnight stays in the Netherlands (all numbers * 1,000)*

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Domestic tourists	24,311	25,132	25,787	20,035	25,472	28,480
Inbound tourists	17,924	18,780	20,129	7,265	6,248	15,920
Total	42,235	43,912	45,916	27,300	31,720	44,430

Source: CBS Statistics Netherlands, 2023

Most important markets for inbound tourism to the Netherlands are the surrounding countries Germany, Belgium, France.

1.2 TRAVEL AND TOURISM'S CONTRIBUTION TO EMPLOYMENT

Employment in the tourism sector in the Netherlands experienced a decline in 2020 due to the pandemic. The number of jobs in tourism in the Netherlands shows the development as included in Table 4.

*Table 4. Development in the number of jobs (*1000) in tourism in the Netherlands*

Year	Jobs
2010	550
2011	567
2012	575
2013	581
2014	604
2015	616
2016	632
2017	656
2018	668
2019	692
2020	580
2021	552
2022	653

Source: CBS Statistics Netherlands, 2023

1.3 DIRECT AND TOTAL CONTRIBUTION TO GDP IN 10 YEARS TIME

The total contribution of tourism to GDP in the Netherlands will transform considerably, according to the report *'Perspective Destination Netherlands 2030'*. This report authored by the Dutch Bureau of Tourism and Conventions (NBTC) seeks to change the role of tourism and the sustainable development of the Netherlands as a destination (NBTC Perspective Destination Netherlands 2030, 2023). This report emphasizes the changing role of tourism and the sustainable development of the Netherlands as a destination. It aims to prioritize the common interests of visitors, businesses, and local residents, ensuring that tourism contributes to the prosperity and well-being of all Dutch people. The vision report outlines five priorities that play a key role in achieving this ambition:

- Benefits and burdens are in balance: Striving for more benefits from tourism than burdens.
- All of the Netherlands is attractive: Putting more cities and regions on the map as attractive destinations.
- Accessible and achievable: Ensuring easily accessible cities and regions.
- Sustainability is a must: Creating a living environment with less waste and pollution.
- A hospitable industry: Establishing the Netherlands as a welcoming destination.

The report acknowledges that achieving this vision requires broad cooperation with the tourism industry and government authorities.

1.4 DIRECT AND TOTAL CONTRIBUTION OF TOURISM TO EMPLOYMENT IN 10 YEARS' TIME

A scan of vacancies in tourism in The Netherlands shows that the demand for (highly) digitally skilled employees in the tourism industry has increased rapidly

since the pandemic. However, these people do not necessarily need to have a degree in tourism (other educational directions may also fit, or may be even better).

According to *Statistics Netherlands*, the Netherlands ranks among the top European countries with the largest share of inhabitants who are proficient in using the internet, computers, and software (digital skills). In 2021, nearly 80% of the Dutch population aged 16 to 74 years had basic or above basic overall digital skills, compared to an average of 54% in the European Union. This is evident from the study 'ICT use by households and individuals' by Statistics Netherlands and Eurostat.

1.5 COUNTRY-SPECIFIC CHALLENGES AND DEVELOPMENTS IN TOURISM

The Netherlands has no dedicated Ministry of Tourism; the tourism sector resorts under the Ministry of Economic Affairs. Tourism policy at a national governmental level is limited and mainly outsourced to other organisations, often consisting of public-private partnerships.

NBTC (Netherlands Board of Tourism & Conventions) is the 'overall' Dutch DMO; it is not only responsible for branding and marketing the Netherlands nationally and internationally but also for tourism policy development. NBTC receives government funding from the Ministry of Economic Affairs and cooperates with public and private partners within and outside the hospitality sector.

An important report, "Perspective Destination Netherlands 2030", authored by NBTC, seeks to change the role of tourism and the sustainable development of the Netherlands as a destination (NBTC, 2019). This report emphasises the changing role of tourism and the sustainable development of the Netherlands as a destination. It aims to prioritise the common interests of visitors, businesses, and local residents, ensuring that tourism contributes to the prosperity and well-

being of all Dutch people. The vision report outlines five priorities that play a key role in achieving this ambition:

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In NBTC's vision, the main action points for tourism are the following:

Valuation for balance, nature and wellbeing: Focus is placed on creating a living environment: one that is in balance with nature. Hence, respect for nature has become a top priority. A healthy and wholesome lifestyle is increasingly being chosen and this is done in combination with sustaining a proper physical condition. Such a strategy supports a sustainable way of life for the Dutch population in general.

Digitization: Digitization ensures that online offers/services are available and accessible. This way, reservation and payment options have become widely proliferated. One of the main drivers for the rapid need for digitization has been the COVID-19 pandemic. Due to this global catastrophe, digitization has been embraced and the widespread application of various (online) platforms on which to conduct meetings, discussions, webinars, conferences, just to name a few, have become commonplace.

Climate awareness: Sustainability has become a vital concern especially when making travel choices. For example, the train has emerged as a gratifying mode of transport, especially for domestic travels.

Choice for local: A sincere appreciation has emerged for local/regional localities. For instance, city, district / regional or neighbourhood destinations are preferred to distant/international destinations. In addition to this, conscious choices are made for local products from local suppliers.

Geopolitical developments: Unsurprisingly, tensions in the world have significant influence on both national and international tourism. The current crises - the COVID-19 pandemic; the energy crisis; the on-going war in the Ukraine etc, among others have prompted most industries (including the tourism industry) to find alternative solutions and re-conceptualise existing business models. These solutions affect both business and personal travels.

Visit with impact: Special efforts are being made to attract valuable visitors (directly or through intermediaries). In order to promote activities on specified channels, distinct target groups are determined. A valuable visit is one that has a positive impact on the Netherlands and its population. In fact, such a visit should embrace the values of the Netherlands and simultaneously contribute to national, regional or local development. Hence, value is placed on quality rather than quantity.

The report 'Perspective 2030' is used by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate Policy as a guideline for future policy development and policy objectives. Achieving the ambition of 'Perspective 2030' requires a switch from promoting destinations to developing destinations and making visitor flows more manageable while capitalising on ambitions and opportunities. The vision centres on the shared interest of residents, visitors and businesses.

The NBTC, the Ministry and the provinces adopted a related action programme, used as a living document in which the strategic pillars are worked out. Despite the enormous effect of COVID-19 on the tourism sector, the three main policy goals remain:

- Sustainable growth of tourism.
- Increased cooperation between different layers of government.
- Support for the tourism sector, focusing on opportunities for sustainability, entrepreneurship, innovation and digitisation.

NBTC, together with stakeholders within the Taskforce, aims to align the Dutch tourism sector in accelerating climate action by developing a Roadmap for Climate Neutral Tourism in the Netherlands. This roadmap, which will be based upon the main pillars of the Glasgow Declaration, will bring together knowledge on the state of the destination regarding climate action.

Tourism is an integral part of the Netherlands' enterprise policy, which focuses on stimulating innovation, entrepreneurship, digitalisation and sustainability, and access to financing and public services for business owners. In recent years the Netherlands has paid more attention to the sustainable development of tourism as the negative impacts of the country's popularity and growth in tourism have become clear.

The Ministry is also responsible for encouraging innovation, digitalisation and sustainability for entrepreneurs, specifically SMEs. To encourage nationwide co-operation, the Ministry, together with NBTC and the provinces, organised the National Tourism Summit. Three editions have taken place since 2018. This involved a broad group of representatives of the business community, tourist organisations and government bodies from all parts of the country. The objective was to work on a joint approach to enable cities, towns and regions to benefit from growing tourism and learn from each other.

1.6 COUNTRY-SPECIFIC CHALLENGES AND DEVELOPMENTS IN TOURISM

One of the challenges faced by the Dutch tourism industry (represented/outlined by the NBTC) is the dissemination of tourism throughout the country. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic most visitors flocked the major cities of the Netherlands (Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Utrecht - see report "*Overtourism*: *impact and possible policy responses*", written for the European Parliament by a team of researchers from the Breda University of Applied Sciences, Stenden University of Applied

Sciences and a number of foreign experts). In order to mitigate this problem, a program was designed to reduce the 'carbon footprint' of tourists (p.267).

An example of a new program launched by the NBTC, is *Perspective 2030* (Destination Netherlands). It is about changing the role of tourism and the sustainable development of the Netherlands as a tourist destination (NBTC.nl, 2019).

Social skills development is becoming increasingly important in the Netherlands. The Dutch government aims to revive tourism to unknown rural (Dutch) destinations, especially where the population seems to be diminishing. So, there is a need to get the local population of these areas educated in order to facilitate tourists to these areas. Hence, there is no need for the local inhabitants to move to (over-populated/congested) cities in search of work. The government encourages locals to be proud of their areas. It encourages them to understand the concept of "… What do we want to be and for whom?"

Reiswerk.nl is an online platform (travel college) that provides custom-built courses on social, digital and green skills for the tourism branch in the Netherlands. Due to the flexible nature of the industry, courses are updated annually to meet the dynamic needs of the industry. It works in close collaboration with the NBTC and other tourism organisations. Certification is provided upon completion of the specific course.

Leidse Onderwijs Instelling (LOI) is an online platform that offers training in tourism and recreation. Certification is offered for all training provided.

Lack of attention for general skills in higher education

This refers to literacy, critical thinking, including problem solving, analytical reasoning and communication skills. In America, the CLA+ test was previously developed to test these skills of students in higher education. The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has now also carried out this test in five other countries. There were disturbing results. Higher education appears to be training less and less according to the demand of many organisations and companies. Critical thinking skills are becoming increasingly important due to technological changes and digitization and increased mobility

in the labour market. "Fifty percent of the workforce in Europe works in a job for which he or she has not been trained. So, it is becoming increasingly important to teach students general critical thinking skills in order to prepare them well for the job market."

Improve social and cultural skills

Social and cultural skills are about being able to learn, work and live effectively with people from different ethnic, social and cultural backgrounds. Social origin and culture largely determine how we think, make and act, how we give meaning to an ever-changing society and how we interact and communicate with each other. In order to live well together, it is important to be aware of differences in social and cultural views and to take this into account when acting.

More specifically, it concerns:

- Being able to identify and reflect on one's own feelings and views

- To be aware of one's own individual and collective responsibility in a society

- To have knowledge about culture and to be able to reflect on cultural differences

- Show empathy and interest in others

- (Re)knowing codes of behaviour in different social situations

- Being able to communicate constructively in different social and cultural situations

- Have respect and understanding for other views, expressions and behaviour.

Critical thinking

With a deluge of "fake news" and disinformation flooding the internet, companies need to be able to make informed decisions based on a critical approach. There will therefore be a high demand for people with good media acumen who are able to objectively assess information from different sources.

Flexibility

The "lockdown" has brought many unexpected changes to our daily lives. The way we work is bound to change and employees who can adapt quickly to those changes will be of great value to their employers. However, flexibility is more than just adapting to changes in work: it is also about continuously acquiring new and retraining old skills in order to remain attractive for the labour market.

Life skills

The definition of life skills is self-explanatory: skills needed to deal with the daily challenges and problems that life brings. The different skills covered cover a wide range, from empathy to critical thinking and from self-perception to teamwork. These are important concepts both professionally and socially.

2. CURRENT SKILLS TRAINING DELIVERY IN THE NETHERLANDS

In this chapter, you will find an overview of the training delivery of digital, green and social skills sets in The Netherlands. This is conducted by collecting and analysing data from country sources and summarising these.

Tourism plays a significant role in the Netherlands, attracting millions of visitors each year to explore its rich cultural heritage, beautiful cities and nature. To ensure the industry's continued growth and success, a robust system of tourism training provision is in place. This introduction will provide an overview of the characteristics of tourism training in the Netherlands, encompassing key institutions, programs, accreditation systems, professional development opportunities, government initiatives, and potential future developments.

Major institutions and organisations

Tourism training in the Netherlands is facilitated by various institutions and organisations, each contributing to the development of skilled professionals in the sector. These include:

1. Higher Education Institutions (HEI's): Universities of Applied Sciences in the Netherlands offer a range of undergraduate and postgraduate programs related to tourism, leisure and hospitality management. These programs are designed to provide students with a comprehensive understanding of the industry, covering topics such as tourism marketing, context of the tourism industry, destination management, sustainable tourism, e-tourism, and cultural heritage management.

2. Vocational Education and Training (VET) institutes: VET institutions offer practical training programs tailored to the needs of the tourism sector. These programs equip students with hands-on skills required for various roles, including hotel management, travel agency operations, and event management.

3. Private training providers: Numerous private training providers and specialised companies offer short-term courses, workshops, and certifications in specific areas of tourism, such as culinary tourism, adventure tourism, and digital marketing for tourism businesses.

Types of training programs

The Netherlands offers a diverse range of training programs for individuals interested in pursuing a career in tourism or enhancing their skills within the industry:

1. Undergraduate and postgraduate degrees: Universities of applied sciences offer Bachelor's and Master's degrees in tourism management, hotel management, and related fields. These programs provide a strong theoretical foundation and often include practical internships.

2. Diplomas and certificates: VET institutes provide diploma and certificate programs in areas like travel and tourism, culinary arts, and event management. These programs focus on practical skills and are highly valued by employers because of their practical nature.

3. Specialised courses: Private training providers offer short courses and workshops in niche areas, catering to professionals seeking to gain expertise in specific aspects of tourism, such as sustainable tourism development, digital marketing, and destination management.

Accreditation systems and industry associations

There are three national/public organisations that have the authority to influence decisions about which skills and competencies are delivered in Higher education qualifications in tourism and hospitality programmes between levels 4-8. First of all, Dutch universities have awarding powers which enable them to develop their own curricula that adheres to the guidelines of the Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders (NVAO). This is a quality assurance agency, which upholds the quality of higher education in the Netherlands and Flanders. They do this independently, promoting the quality culture practised within the higher educational institutes . Within the educational institutions, the employee participation bodies, including students, and the supervisory board usually also play the role of monitoring quality.

Secondly, the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science is a governmental member of the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR). The EQAR is a register of agencies that review the quality of higher education institutions according to European standards (eacea.ec.europa.eu., 2019).

Thirdly, the International Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (INQAAHE), is a world-wide association of organisations that is active in the theory and practice of quality assurance (QA) in higher education in the Netherlands.

Having said that, higher education institutions still commission external quality assurance agencies, such as Quality Assurance Netherlands Universities (ENQA), to conduct the preparations for the assessment of education and research programmes in all scientific disciplines at Dutch Universities and other higher education institutions. The quality of education is generally monitored by the government by means of the NVAO accreditation system.

The Government believes it is important that the quality of Higher Education is not only guaranteed, but that it is continuously updated on a regular basis. This is the responsibility of individual educational institutions. However, the government provides instruments for external quality assurance in the form of an accreditation system.

Continuing professional development

For individuals already working in the tourism industry, there are ample opportunities for Continuing Professional Development (CPD). These opportunities range from short courses and workshops to online certifications, enabling professionals to stay updated with industry trends and best practices . For instance, The Netherlands Board of Tourism and Conventions (NBTC) often collaborates with industry partners to offer CPD programs.

Government initiatives and policies

The Dutch government recognizes the importance of tourism as an economic driver and has introduced several initiatives and policies to promote and improve tourism training provision. These include:

1. Investment in education: The government allocates funding to support higher education institutions and VET providers in developing relevant and up-to-date curricula. This ensures that students receive training that aligns with the evolving needs of the tourism sector.

2. Sustainability initiatives: Given the growing importance of sustainable tourism, the government encourages training programs and research initiatives that focus on sustainability, responsible tourism practices, and cultural preservation.

3. Workforce development: The government collaborates with industry associations to identify skills gaps and develop targeted training programs to address these gaps. This helps ensure that the workforce is well-prepared to meet the industry's demands.

Future developments and strategies

To enhance the quality, accessibility, and relevance of tourism training in the Netherlands, several strategies and future developments are considered and implemented by the government as well as by the sector itself:

- Digitalization: Embracing digital technologies and online learning platforms can make training more accessible and flexible for learners, especially in light of global challenges like the COVID-19 pandemic.

- International collaboration: Collaborating with international partners and institutions can facilitate knowledge exchange, leading to the incorporation of global best practices in Dutch tourism training.

- Industry partnerships: Strengthening partnerships with industry stakeholders can help align training programs with the evolving needs of tourism businesses, ensuring graduates are job-ready.

- Sustainability focus: Expanding sustainability-focused training programs can position the Netherlands as a leader in responsible tourism and attract environmentally conscious tourists.

2.1 DIGITAL SKILLS

Current situation

The Netherlands, like many other countries, has recognized the growing importance of digital skills in the tourism sector. Digitalization has become a key driver of innovation, customer engagement, and operational efficiency. Various types of education and training providers are actively involved in delivering digital skills training in the tourism industry:

- Higher Education Institutions: Universities and higher education institutions offer undergraduate and postgraduate programs in tourism management and related fields. These programs increasingly include modules or courses focused on digital skills. Students are exposed to concepts like digital marketing, data analytics, and e-commerce to prepare them for the digital demands of the industry.

- Vocational Education and Training (VET) Institutes: VET institutions in the Netherlands play a crucial role in preparing students for practical careers in tourism. They offer programs that often incorporate digital skills training, including reservation systems, online customer service, and using digital tools for travel planning.

- Private and commercial training providers: Numerous private training providers and consulting firms offer specialised digital skills training for tourism professionals and businesses. These programs cater to specific needs such as social media marketing, search engine optimization, and using booking platforms effectively.

Key challenges

- Rapid technological advancements: Keeping up with the fast-paced evolution of technology can be challenging for both educators and learners. Digital skills training programs must constantly adapt to new platforms and tools.

- Digital divide: Ensuring that digital skills training is accessible to all, including individuals in remote areas or those with limited access to technology, is a significant challenge. Addressing this digital divide is crucial for equitable skills development.

- Changing consumer behaviour: Tourism businesses need to adapt to changing consumer preferences, which have shifted towards online booking

platforms, personalised experiences, and digital interactions. This requires ongoing training and upskilling.

- Data privacy and security: With the increased use of digital tools and data collection in the tourism industry, there is a growing need for professionals who understand data privacy laws and can ensure compliance.

Implications for digital skills development

- Enhanced competitiveness: Tourism businesses that invest in digital skills development can gain a competitive edge by offering more personalised services, efficient booking processes, and targeted marketing campaigns.

- Improved customer experience: Digital skills enable tourism professionals to create seamless and personalised experiences for tourists, leading to higher customer satisfaction and repeat business.

- Data-driven decision-making: Proficiency in digital skills allows tourism organisations to gather and analyse data effectively, helping them make informed decisions regarding pricing, marketing strategies, and resource allocation.

- Sustainability: Digitalization can contribute to sustainability efforts in the tourism industry by optimising resource use and reducing waste through data-driven insights and efficient operations.

- Resilience: Tourism businesses with strong digital skills are better prepared to adapt to unforeseen challenges, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, by quickly shifting to online sales and marketing strategies.

The delivery of digital skills training in the tourism sector in the Netherlands involves a variety of education and training providers, from higher education institutions to private training firms. These efforts are crucial for equipping professionals with the skills needed to thrive in the digital age of tourism.

However, challenges such as the rapid pace of technological change and the digital divide must be addressed to ensure inclusive and sustainable skills development. The implications of digital skills development are broad, ranging from improved competitiveness and customer experiences to more data-driven and sustainable tourism practices. To understand the most current developments and strategies in this area, it is recommended to consult the latest reports and updates from relevant authorities and industry experts.

Please refer to Appendix 1 for examples of Digital Training provision in The Netherlands.

2.2 GREEN SKILLS

Green and sustainable practices have become increasingly important in the tourism industry worldwide, and the Netherlands is no exception. Various education and training providers are actively involved in delivering green and sustainable skills training to meet the growing demand for environmentally responsible tourism.

As indicated in the section above about Digital Skills, the major suppliers of Green skills education are Higher Education Institutions, Vocational Education and Training (VET) Institutes, and Private / Commercial Training Providers. This is conducted on various levels: undergraduate and postgraduate degrees, diplomas and certificates from VET institutes and from private training providers.

Key challenges in Green skills development

Despite the growing emphasis on sustainability in tourism, there is still a need to raise awareness among industry professionals about the importance of green practices and to educate them on the benefits and implementation of sustainable initiatives.

Secondly, there are financial constraints: implementing green and sustainable practices often requires investments in technology, infrastructure, and training.

Smaller businesses, in particular, may face financial constraints when trying to adopt sustainable measures.

Thirdly, achieving widespread adoption of green practices within the tourism industry can be challenging, as it often requires changes in behaviour and operations. Convincing businesses and stakeholders to commit to sustainability can be an obstacle. Balancing sustainability with traditional tourism practices can be complex. Ensuring that green initiatives do not compromise the quality of the tourist experience or profitability can be a challenge.

Implications for Green/Sustainable skills development

Tourism professionals and businesses equipped with green and sustainable skills gain a competitive advantage in the market. Tourists increasingly prefer environmentally responsible options, and having trained staff can attract eco-conscious tourists.

Developing green skills among tourism professionals contributes to reducing the environmental impact of the industry. Sustainable practices, such as energy-efficient operations and waste reduction, help conserve resources and minimise pollution.

Sustainable tourism practices often involve engagement with local communities and cultural preservation. Green skills training fosters responsible interactions with local populations and supports the social aspects of sustainability.

Government initiatives and policies

The Dutch government has recognized the significance of sustainability in tourism and has taken steps to promote green skills development. The Netherlands has implemented sustainable tourism policies that encourage environmentally responsible practices. Government initiatives promote the use of renewable energy, waste reduction, and sustainable transportation within the tourism sector. Moreover, there is funding and support: financial support is provided to businesses and training institutions that focus on sustainable tourism initiatives. Grants and incentives are available to help businesses implement green practices.

In sum, green and sustainable skills training in the Netherlands is gaining momentum in response to the growing demand for environmentally responsible tourism. Education and training providers, government policies, and industry initiatives are working together to equip tourism professionals with the knowledge and skills needed to reduce the industry's environmental footprint and meet the expectations of eco-conscious tourists. Challenges such as awareness, financial constraints, and industry buy-in need to be addressed to ensure the successful integration of green practices within the tourism sector.

Please refer to Appendix 2 for examples of Green/Environmental Training provision in The Netherlands.

2.3 SOCIAL/CULTURAL SKILLS

Social-cultural skills training in tourism is vital for enhancing the quality of interactions between tourists and local communities. The Netherlands, known for its rich cultural heritage and vibrant cities, places a significant emphasis on this aspect of tourism education and training.

Key challenges

-       Cultural sensitivity: The tourism industry in the Netherlands, as well as throughout Europe, often involves interactions with people from various cultural backgrounds. Ensuring that tourism professionals are culturally sensitive and respectful can be challenging.

-       Language barriers: Effective communication is crucial for social-cultural interactions. Language barriers can hinder effective communication between tourists and local communities, requiring training in overcoming these obstacles.

-       Overtourism: Popular tourist destinations in the Netherlands (e.g., Amsterdam, Kinderdijk, Giethoorn) sometimes face issues related to overtourism, which can strain social-cultural interactions. Balancing the needs of tourists and local communities is an ongoing challenge.

Implications for Social-Cultural Skills Development

1.   Social-cultural skills training equips tourism professionals to provide tourists with more meaningful and culturally enriched experiences, leading to higher satisfaction and repeat visits.

2.   Tourism can be a source of economic growth for local communities. Social-cultural skills training promotes responsible tourism practices that benefit both tourists and the communities they visit.

3.   Training in social-cultural skills helps tourism professionals manage potential conflicts that may arise from cultural misunderstandings, contributing to smoother interactions.

4.   Understanding and respecting local cultures and traditions is integral to sustainable tourism. Social-cultural skills training plays a role in promoting sustainable practices within the industry.

In conclusion, social-cultural skills training in tourism is a crucial component of the sector in the Netherlands, given its rich cultural heritage and diverse communities. Education and training providers, along with government initiatives, play a significant role in promoting cultural sensitivity, intercultural communication, and community engagement among tourism professionals. Challenges such as cultural sensitivity, language barriers, and overtourism need to be addressed through training and collaboration to ensure that tourism benefits both tourists and local communities.

Please refer to Appendix 3 for examples of Social-Cultural Training provision in The Netherlands.

3. SURVEY RESULTS

In this chapter, an analysis is provided of the online survey results within the Netherlands, held among tourism professionals, HR managers and decision makers. This survey aimed to investigate the gap between current levels of (green, social, digital) skills in the tourism industry and the future skills needed in 2030 – resulting in quantitative data about the skills gaps and future needs. In summary:

● Key trends are extracted from the survey results of the Netherlands to establish how the sector is responding to the skill sets, highs, lows, current and future level of proficiency in Green, Digital and socio-cultural skills set.

● An explanation and discussion of the results is provided.

Total number of responses in the Netherlands:	14 (including category 'Other' = 4)
Number of responses per tourism sub sector:	
Destination management organisations:	0
Accommodation providers:	1
Food & Beverage:	2
Visitor attractions:	3
Travel agents and tour operators:	4

3.1 DIGITAL SKILLS

Digital Skills	
Current existing level of proficiency	**Highest:** 1. 3.93 (use of office applications) 2. 3.71 (secure information processing) 3. 3.57 (use of digital marketing systems) 4. 3.29 (digital privacy and ethics) 5. 2.93 (web & app development) **Lowest:** 1. 1.79 (use of robots) 2. 1.93 (use of digital technologies) 3. 2.14 (use of generative AI applications) 4. 2.71 (digital business analysis)
Future necessary level of proficiency in 2030	**Most necessary:** 1. 4.50 (digital marketing systems) 2. 4.50 (secure information processing) 3. 4.36 (use of office applications) 4. 4.29 (digital business analysis) 5. 4.21 (digital privacy and ethics) **Least necessary:** 1. 2.71 (use of robots) 2. 3.21 (use of digital technologies) 3. 3.79 (web & app development) 4. 3.93 (use of office applications)
Skills gaps between existing and future level of skills sets	**Largest gaps:** 1. 1.79 (use of generative applications) 2. 1.71 (use of digital technologies) 3. 1.46 (digital business analysis) 4. 1.41 (use of robots) 5. 1.38 (web & app development) **Smallest gaps:** 1. 0.43 (use of office applications) 2. 1.03 (digital privacy and ethics) 3. 1.04 (use of digital marketing systems) 4. 1.19 (secure information processing)

Given the small size of the Dutch sample (n=14), it should be made clear that the results of the survey should be taken as not representative for the whole Dutch tourism industry, but some indicative results can be discussed.

Current skills levels

Advanced skills such as robotics, digital applications and AI are currently regarded as less relevant for the tourism industry. More traditional skills such as information processing, office administration and digital marketing represent a higher skills level currently.

Skills gaps

With regard to the gaps in Digital skills levels in the Netherlands:

- Use of Generative Applications (1.79): The significant gap in utilising generative applications suggests a need for tourism professionals to become more proficient in using AI-driven tools. This can enhance automation and personalization in various aspects of tourism, from customer service to content generation.
- Use of Digital Technologies (1.71): This gap underscores the urgency for tourism professionals to embrace a wider range of digital technologies. The industry must adapt to emerging technologies like IoT, AR/VR, and blockchain to remain competitive and meet evolving consumer demands.
- Digital Business Analysis (1.46): Digital business analysis skills are essential for identifying opportunities and optimising operations. Bridging this gap will enable tourism businesses to make data-driven decisions and drive innovation.
- Use of Robots (1.41): The gap in robot usage implies a need for the integration of robotics and automation into various tourism-related tasks, from e.g. check-ins at hotels to customer service in travel agencies.
- Web & App Development (1.38): Proficiency in web and app development is crucial for enhancing the online presence of tourism businesses.

Closing this gap will empower the industry to create user-friendly and engaging digital platforms.

Regarding the smallest gaps between existing and future levels:

- Use of Office Applications (0.43): Proficiency in office applications is relatively high, indicating that tourism professionals are already adept at using standard software for administrative tasks.
- Digital Privacy and Ethics (1.03): The small gap in digital privacy and ethics suggests that the industry recognizes the importance of safeguarding customer data and adhering to ethical standards in the digital realm.
- Use of Digital Marketing Systems (1.04): A modest gap in digital marketing skills implies that tourism businesses are relatively well-prepared to harness digital marketing tools for promotion and customer engagement.
- Secure Information Processing (1.19): A small gap in secure information processing indicates that the industry is taking cybersecurity seriously, which is crucial in an age of increasing digital threats.
- Web & App Development (1.38): Interestingly, web and app development also appear among the smallest gaps. This may indicate that while there is a skills gap in this area, there is also a willingness to invest in acquiring these skills.

The survey (although not significantly representative for the Netherlands) has given some indication that the Dutch tourism sector faces the greatest challenges in adopting cutting-edge technologies like generative applications, digital technologies, and robotics. To thrive in the digital era, investments in training and education in these areas will be essential. However, the industry is relatively strong in traditional digital skills such as office applications and digital marketing, suggesting a solid foundation to build upon as it adapts to the evolving digital landscape. Moreover, the focus on digital privacy, ethics, and information security reflects a responsible approach to digital transformation within the sector.

3.2. 'GREEN' / ENVIRONMENTAL SKILLS

Green Skills	
Current existing level of proficiency	**Highest:** 1. 3.43 (green procurement) 2. 3.36 (communication) 3. 3.36 (promotion of sustainable practices) 4. 3.07 (adoption of environmental certifications) 5. 3.07 (efficient use of resources) **Lowest:** 1. 2.64 (measurement of CO_2 emissions) 2. 2.64 (management of waste) 3. 2.79 (use of technology) 4. 2.79 (understanding environmental laws) 5. 3.00 (Green marketing)
Future necessary level of proficiency in 2030	**Most necessary:** 1. 4.71 (green procurement) 2. 4.50 (promotion of sustainable practices) 3. 4.36 (use of technology) 4. 4.36 (efficient use of resources) 5. 4.21 (green marketing) **Least necessary:** 1. 3.64 (understanding environmental laws) 2. 3.86 (measurement of CO_2 emissions) 3. 3.93 (measurement of waste) 4. 4.07 (adoption of environmental certifications) 5. 4.21 (communication)
Skills gaps between existing and future level of skills sets	**Largest gaps:** 1. 1.57 (use of technology) 2. 1.29 (efficient use of resources) 3. 1.29 (measurement of waste) 4. 1.28 (green procurement) 5. 1.22 (measurement of CO_2 emissions) **Smallest gaps:** 1. 0.85 (understanding of environmental laws) 2. 0.85 (communication) 3. 1.00 (adoption of environmental certifications) 4. 1.14 (promotion of sustainable practices) 5. 1.21 (Green marketing)

Likewise, in this second section about Green skills, it remains evident that the results of this survey should be taken as not representative of the entire Dutch tourism industry (as N=14), but some indicative results can be discerned.

Current skills levels

At the highest proficiency levels, it's encouraging to see that "green procurement" (3.43) ranks the highest. This suggests that the tourism sector in the Netherlands is actively seeking and purchasing products and services that have minimal negative environmental impacts. "Communication" (3.36) and "promotion of sustainable practices" (3.36) are also strong areas, indicating that the industry is effectively conveying its commitment to sustainability to both consumers and stakeholders. Additionally, the relatively high scores for "adoption of environmental certifications" (3.07) and "efficient use of resources" (3.07) signify an awareness of the importance of eco-certifications and resource efficiency in the tourism sector.

However, the lowest proficiency levels highlight areas that require attention. "Measurement of CO_2 emissions" (2.64) and "management of waste" (2.64) indicate a need for enhanced environmental monitoring and waste reduction strategies. "Use of technology" (2.79) and "understanding environmental laws" (2.79) underscore the importance of embracing digital tools for sustainability initiatives and having a comprehensive understanding of relevant regulations. Lastly, "Green marketing" (3.00) is another area with room for improvement, as effective green marketing strategies are crucial for attracting environmentally conscious tourists.

Skills gaps

With regard to the skills gaps in Green skills: the largest gaps are notably centred around sustainability in relation to technology:

- "Use of technology" (1.57) emerges as the most significant gap, underscoring the growing importance of digitalization in the tourism industry. Embracing technology can enhance efficiency, customer experiences, and sustainability efforts.

- "Efficient use of resources" (1.29) and "measurement of waste" (1.29) are closely linked, highlighting the pressing need for more sustainable resource management practices in tourism, including reducing waste and optimising resource utilisation.
- "Green procurement" (1.28) ranks high among the gaps, indicating that there's room for improvement in sourcing environmentally friendly products and services, aligning with the industry's sustainability goals.
- "Measurement of CO_2 emissions" (1.22) reflects a growing demand for accurate carbon footprint assessments in the tourism sector, as environmental consciousness becomes more prominent among tourists.

In contrast, the smallest gaps are found in areas related to sustainability communication and compliance:

- "Understanding of environmental laws" (0.85) indicates that professionals in the industry have a relatively good grasp of the legal framework governing environmental practices, which is essential for compliance and responsible tourism.
- "Communication" (0.85) ranks similarly low in terms of the skills gap, suggesting that the industry is already proficient in conveying sustainability initiatives and practices to various stakeholders.
- "Adoption of environmental certifications" (1.00) reflects a relatively minor gap, implying that the industry has been proactive in embracing eco-certifications, which are crucial for demonstrating sustainability commitment.
- "Promotion of sustainable practices" (1.14) and "Green marketing" (1.21) also have smaller gaps, indicating that there is already a foundation for promoting and marketing sustainable tourism practices effectively.

The Dutch tourism sector faces the most substantial skills gaps in technology adoption, resource efficiency, waste measurement, green procurement, and CO_2 emissions measurement. To bridge these gaps, investments in technology training and sustainability education will be crucial. On the other hand, the industry's strengths lie in its understanding of environmental laws, communication abilities, and the willingness to adopt environmental

certifications, all of which bode well for the sector's continued commitment to sustainability and responsible tourism practices.

3.1.3. SOCIAL AND CULTURAL SKILLS

Social-cultural skills	
Current existing level of proficiency	**Highest:** 1. 4.07 (effectively work in a team) 2. 4.00 (support diversity) 3. 3.93 (provide excellent customer service) 4. 3.86 (handling unexpected situations) 5. 3.79 (communicate with people from different backgrounds) **Lowest:** 1. 3.07 (communicate with guests in native language) 2. 3.57 (communicate with guests and colleagues) 3. 3.57 (understand cultural setting of own destination) 4. 3.71 (resolve conflicts)
Future necessary level of proficiency in 2030	**Most necessary:** 1. 4.93 (provide excellent customer service) 2. 4.64 (handling unexpected situations) 3. 4.64 (communicate with guests and colleagues) 4. 4.57 (work effectively in teams) 5. 4.50 (communicate with people from different backgrounds) **Least necessary:** 1. 3.79 (communicate with guests in native language) 2. 4.29 (resolve conflicts) 3. 4.43 (understand the cultural setting of own destination) 4. 4.5 (support diversity)
Skills gaps between existing and future level of skills sets	**Largest gaps:** 1. 1.07 (communicate effectively with guests and colleagues) 2. 1.00 (provide excellent customer service) 3. 0.86 (understand cultural setting of own destination) 4. 0.78 (handling unexpected situations) 5. 0.72 (communicate with guests in native language) **Smallest gaps:** 1. 0.50 (working effectively in teams) 2. 0.05 (support diversity) 3. 0.58 (resolve conflicts) 4. 0.71 (communicate with people from different backgrounds)

Current skills levels

Looking at the current level of existing skills, we can conclude that the high proficiency in teamwork (4.07) underscores the industry's ability to collaborate seamlessly. Teamwork is crucial in tourism, where various professionals from different areas must come together to ensure the smooth operation of services, from hotels and transportation to guided tours.

The strong emphasis on supporting diversity (4.00) highlights the industry's dedication to inclusivity. In a globalised world, tourists come from diverse backgrounds, and the ability to cater to their unique needs and preferences is vital for providing a welcoming and enriching experience.

Regarding exceptional customer service (3.93): it is the cornerstone of successful tourism. The high proficiency in this skills set indicates that the Netherlands' tourism professionals understand the significance of guest satisfaction and consistently go above and beyond to meet their needs.

The ability to handle unexpected situations (3.86) effectively is crucial for ensuring the safety and comfort of tourists. This proficiency level suggests that the industry is well-prepared to respond to unforeseen challenges, such as weather disruptions or emergencies, with poise and professionalism.

In an increasingly multicultural world, the skill to communicate with people from diverse backgrounds (3.79) is invaluable. This high proficiency level demonstrates the industry's commitment to fostering cross-cultural understanding and ensuring that tourists from all walks of life feel welcome.

Analysis of the gaps

Regarding an analysis of the gaps in social-cultural skills (difference between current and projected future levels), we can conclude the following - we will first look into the largest gaps:

- Communicate Effectively with Guests and Colleagues (1.07): Effective communication is the cornerstone of the tourism industry. A gap in this skills set indicates that there's room for improvement in ensuring clear, empathetic, and culturally sensitive communication with both guests and colleagues.

- Provide Excellent Customer Service (1.00): While the gap is not extreme, it suggests that the industry should strive for even higher levels of customer service excellence. Meeting and exceeding guest expectations is paramount in the highly competitive tourism sector.
- Understand Cultural Setting of Own Destination (0.86): This gap highlights the importance of local knowledge. Understanding the cultural context of one's own destination is crucial for providing authentic and meaningful experiences to tourists.
- Handling Unexpected Situations (0.78): In the tourism industry, unexpected situations can range from weather disruptions to emergencies. Bridging this gap will enhance the sector's ability to respond effectively to crises and ensure the safety and satisfaction of guests.
- Communicate with Guests in Native Language (0.72): While this skill has a relatively small gap, being able to communicate with guests in their native language can significantly enhance the overall guest experience and promote cultural understanding.

Regarding the smallest gaps between current and future skills level:

- Working Effectively in Teams (0.50): The relatively small gap in team effectiveness suggests that the industry recognizes the importance of collaboration and is already skilled at working together efficiently.
- Support Diversity (0.05): The nearly negligible gap in supporting diversity indicates that the industry values inclusivity and recognizes the importance of welcoming tourists from diverse backgrounds.
- Resolve Conflicts (0.58): While there is room for improvement, the tourism sector appears proficient in conflict resolution, an essential skill for managing guest disputes and ensuring positive experiences.
- Communicate with People from Different Backgrounds (0.71): The small gap in communication with people from different backgrounds reflects an existing aptitude for cultural sensitivity and inclusivity.
- Communicate with Guests in Native Language (0.72): This skill, while having a small gap, is also among the smallest gaps in the survey,

indicating that the industry recognizes the importance of linguistic diversity.

The survey highlights that while the Netherlands' tourism industry performs reasonably well in many social and cultural skills, there is still room for improvement, particularly in enhancing communication, understanding the local cultural context, and handling unexpected situations. The industry's strong focus on diversity, teamwork, and conflict resolution is commendable and reflects a commitment to creating inclusive and harmonious tourism experiences. Bridging the identified gaps will enable the sector to provide even higher levels of service, further enriching the experiences of tourists and contributing to the industry's overall success.

4. EXPERT INTERVIEW RESULTS

In this chapter, the results are presented of the semi-structured interviews that were held among experts in the tourism and hospitality sector in The Netherlands. With these interviews, we sought more detailed knowledge and fresh insights regarding trends in tourism, in tourism employment and in the development of Digital, Green, Social and Cultural skills in tourism. Semi-structured interviews were deemed an appropriate tool for this purpose, since they allow for new understandings and insights to surface during such interviews, which further facilitate participants' responses and elaborations.

In total, 10 interviews were held, equally divided over the five tourism sub sectors (travel agents/tour operators, destination management organisations, visitor attractions, accommodation providers and food & beverage providers. Interviewees were senior managers; human resource managers; company owners; entrepreneurs; and heads of departments.

4.1 THE FUTURE OF TOURISM AND TOURISM EMPLOYMENT

The future of tourism

The future of tourism and tourism employment in the Netherlands is impacted by various megatrends and societal factors. While it seems daunting to predict with absolute confidence, there are some key indicators and emerging developments that provide insights into the coming seven years.

Sustainable and responsible tourism is gaining traction as tourists are seeking eco-friendly and culturally immersive experiences, creating job opportunities in sustainable tourism management, eco-friendly accommodations, and culturally immersive prospects. The digital transformation of the tourism industry is ongoing, as mobile apps, virtual tours, and contactless services are becoming the norm. As a result, jobs related to digital marketing, app development, and data analyses have seen exponential growth.

The Future of Tourism Employment

The Netherlands attracts a wide range of visitors; not only pleasure-seekers, but also business travellers and students. This diversity in visitors demands skilled professionals who can cater to the needs of these guests. Most of them are seeking unique and personalised experiences, thus job profiles related to designing experiences, cultural understanding and local storytelling are on the rise. Personal health and safety have also become extremely important since the recent pandemic. Hence, functions related to health and safety protocols: hygiene and crisis response remain vital even in a post-pandemic era. Additionally, several new work forms have emerged: working from home (WFH); remote working; digital nomad lifestyle; hybrid work etc. are all new ways of working. This has an impact on both employers and employees. The Netherlands which is home to numerous prestigious universities and research institutions is attracting international students and scholars. Consequently, jobs related to educational tourism, student services and academia will continue to grow. Sustainable tourism practices will be crucial in adapting to the changing environmental conditions. This will cause job growth in eco-tourism and environmental management. Finally, inclusivity and accessibility are particularly important as tourism shifts to greater heights. Jobs related to accessible tourism and customer service training will mushroom in the Netherlands. The agility and resilience of the Dutch tourism industry is set to create new opportunities, but challenges will also be posed. For tourism employment in the Netherlands to succeed, individuals must consider developing diverse skills-sets that include digital skills, sustainability awareness, cultural competence, and adaptability to

changing circumstances. Remaining informed about industry trends and market demands is crucial for both job seekers and tourism providers.

4.1.1 INTRODUCTION

The Impact of Megatrends

Several societal megatrends - already visible today but with their full impact still unknown - are heavily influencing the future of tourism. Demographic developments - the continued growth of the global middle class, increasingly elderly tourists, digital natives coming of age and entering the travel market, less Asian tourists – has resulted in additional and more diverse tourist preferences and choices. Technological innovations (AI, robotization, virtual and augmented reality, etc.) continue to impact tourism and transform business models, jobs in tourism and tourist experiences. Social developments (COVID-19 and related health issues, migration, economic uncertainties, political and economically driven conflicts) also have an impact on tourism. The inclusion of more diverse, equitable and sustainable practices is widely debated in the consumption, production, and development of tourism.

Development in Tourism Employment

Looking at developments in employment, the tourism and hospitality sector has special characteristics: e.g., working on weekends and holidays, multiple shifts, seasonal work, etc. These atypical forms of employment include a variety of work contracts (e.g., temporary work, part-time work, temporary agency work and other multi-party employment arrangements). To keep pace with all these developments, the tourism sector needs to be prepared to adapt to these changes: to transform the tasks expected by employers into new jobs, thereby making these jobs more attractive to future employees by offering them richer career opportunities.

This section provides an overall understanding of the participants' ideas of the evolution of the tourism sector, tourism employment and the emergence of new job profiles – in tourism in general and specifically in relation to their own organisation, within the next seven years.

Questions that have been discussed with participants were the following:

- What will the sector and your organisation look like around 2030? Which new changes do you perceive could occur in your business?
- What impact do the current megatrends and crises (Covid-19 / health; Ukraine War; migration; demographics; environment and climate; energy; cost-of-living) have on employment in your organisation and how does your organisation deal with the consequences of these crises?
- What kind of people will be working in your organisation around 2030? Will there be a significant increase/decrease in the number of employees? And if so, how are these employees different from your current workers?
- How is your organisation changing the tasks that will be required into new job profiles?
- The above-mentioned developments have also transformed the way people work. New concepts such as working from home (WFH); digital nomads; hybrid working; workcations; remote working; etc. have emerged or intensified. Which work forms are you now experiencing in your organisation and what effect does this have on recruiting new personnel?
- How does your organisation deal with societal developments such as diversity, inclusion, and flexibility within the recruitment process?
- Which new job profiles do you see emerging in your organisation in the next seven years (2030) and why? Which new job positions will emerge and/or will be 'copied' from other sectors?

4.1.2 RESULTS FROM THE INTERVIEWS

Tourism Development

This section highlights the results from the interviews conducted among tourism stakeholders to get an overall understanding of the participants' ideas of the evolution of the tourism sector, tourism employment and the emergence of new job profiles – in tourism in general and specifically in relation to participants' individual organisation.

Future Tourism Employment

In the coming seven years considerable changes will be evident in the tourism business. Firstly, technology is replacing repetitive jobs, and queries are being dealt with by chatbots. Apps are used instead to replace physical menus in restaurants. Bookings are made online. AI usage is also becoming extremely important. VR and AR are also being used to provide virtual tours, and customers are better prepared for their journey, so they have insights into the destination in advance. Some jobs are disappearing, but new ones are emerging. New skills are necessary to fill the positions that are being created. Social, cultural and environmental skills are gaining traction, and a diverse workforce is crucial in meeting the challenges of a changing tourism world. A hybrid work form is becoming the norm. The need for a combination of both humans, enhanced by digital skills, remains urgent!

Transformation in Tourism industry / Jobs Due to Current Crises

Especially the Covid-19 has had a tremendous effect on tourism and travel and the generic global population for that matter. Travel was not possible during the early months of the pandemic, but the industry was disrupted for more than two years. When the world emerged from the pandemic, a fresh start had to be made, health and safety were the first measures that had to be taken, so tourism providers needed to make this a priority.

What most respondents recalled was that it was not possible to go back to 'business as usual' in a post-pandemic tourism world. Then, the Russian-Ukrainian War made things worse. The energy-supply chain was disrupted and cost-of-living exploded. Many travel & tourism employees did not return to their jobs, so there was a huge shortage of workers.

"It was very difficult to find staff, and so we did not bother to ask for skilled people, we hired anyone we could find. Then we trained them on the job".

[Int. 2].

"We were forced to raise wages, otherwise we could not get staff to come and work for us", said one accommodation provider. *"Our staff also demanded flexible working hours. We worked with 'contract' workers, and, like several other hotels in the Netherlands, we outsourced some of our services"*, according to another accommodation provider.

Effect of Crises on Skills Requirement

Data from another respondent suggests that the COVID-19 pandemic significantly impacted recruitment, talent development, and skills requirements in the tourism and hospitality industry. The digitalization of operations and customer interactions, along with the need for strong social skills, continue to shape the industry's workforce. Adapting to these changes and investing in employees' growth and development will be crucial for hotels and other tourism businesses to thrive in the post-pandemic era.

The Emergence of New Job Profiles

In 2030, there will be a more diverse staff working in this organisation. Flexibility, versatility, efficiency and being environmentally aware have become the most important factors. Business must be managed in a smart fashion. The tourism jobs of 2030 will require a blend of technical and soft skills. While technical skills may evolve quickly, soft skills such as creativity, emotional intelligence, and effective communication will become increasingly valuable.

Additionally, autonomy, language proficiency, and sustainability knowledge will be highly sought after. The ability to navigate the balance between flexibility and structure in a fast-paced industry will be a defining trait of successful tourism professionals. Ultimately, less people will be needed to do these jobs. New job profiles will emerge, and technology (digital) will replace the tedious jobs that humans are now performing.

The hospitality industry is dynamic, and roles and positions constantly evolve. Computer skills and tools are becoming increasingly important in HR departments. Tourism organisations are also changing and therefore many tasks are transforming into new job profiles. There is a need to focus on finding candidates who are eager to learn and have the potential to excel in the industry. In skills development and crisis response, training plays a significant role in equipping new talents with the necessary skills for the roles. Some organisations provide training for their staff, who are encouraged to follow specific online training (MOOCs). Flexibility and adaptability are crucial qualities in the sector, especially during crises. For example, F&B managers and front office workers are now making use of digital technology and AI in these processes. Automation and technological tools have reduced the number of personnel required for certain tasks. Language skills, flexibility, adaptability, online focus, and cultural awareness are highlighted as essential for these roles.

New Formats of Work

While some flexibility in work arrangements is offered, the hospitality industry remains primarily people-oriented, requiring in-person interaction and service. "*In my position as Head of Human Resources, I have adopted a hybrid work form: I go into the office 2 days a week and I work from home 3 days a week. This is ideal for me.*" Said one HRM manager interviewed. However, based on the nature of a position, it is mandatory that service staff are at their required post as they must serve the guests. But back-office personnel are more flexible. If the work can

be done remotely, then this is encouraged. Offering new personnel this possibility has a positive effect on both sides.

Organisations are sensitive to societal development such as diversity, inclusion, and flexibility. "*Many of our staff are from a diverse cultural background*", according to one participant. Another respondent, however, mentioned that it is hard to find a non-Dutch person to work in his tourism business. "*As a sustainable provider of natural and cultural heritage, finding personnel (tour guides, back-office staff, etc.) is rather challenging*". Similarly, a Food & Beverage provider complained that he cannot find staff to work in the restaurant. This is due to the low wages involved. The problem has been solved (partially) as an overall wage increase has resulted in procuring competent staff. But work needs to be done on the image of the industry to attract and retain skilled workers.

4.2 DIGITAL SKILLS

4.2.1 INTRODUCTION

Technological innovations will continue to impact tourism and change business models, jobs in tourism and tourist experiences. This section focuses on digital skills for the future. These are defined as skills related to working with computers, software, digital equipment, internet, online safety. This comprises not only Microsoft Office skills, skills for implementing online safety procedures or skills to adjust digital equipment such as Wi-Fi connectivity, sound systems and video equipment but also desktop publishing skills, computer programming skills, website development skills, social media skills, skills to monitor online reviews, data analytics, business intelligence, big data skills, AI and robotic skills (ChatGPT, Dall-E) and skills related to applying digital hardware technologies such as AR and VR.

This section provides an overview of digital skills that the interview participants rate as the most important in about seven years' time.

Questions that have been discussed with participants were the following:
- Which digital skills are important in your company today?

- Which digital skills are currently lacking in your company?
- How important will these skills be around 2030? Which ones will be most important?
- Which other digital skills can you think of that will be vital for the future?
- Which changes do you anticipate will be necessary within your organisation regarding digital skills (2030)?
- Does your company provide training or education for these skills? If so: what kind of training; if not: why not?
- Do you use an external organisation to help train your staff in digital skills? If so: which ones and what kind of training do they provide?
- What would be the most effective training method in digital skill development for your employees?

4.2.2 RESULTS FROM THE INTERVIEWS

The results of the section on digital skills are outlined in the following paragraphs. The structure is in line with the questions that were asked during the interviews.

Digital skills development in tourism and tourism employment are becoming increasingly important in the Netherlands. The results of the interview conducted revealed that web design, data analytics, e-marketing, and AI chat-bot expertise are the most important digital skills. In fact, the future of tourism and tourism employment is closely tied to digital skills and technology adoption. These skills are essential for efficiency, communication, and staying competitive in the industry. This section summarises the results of the interviews conducted. The paragraphs are organised based on the order of the questions asked.

Firstly, the digital skills that are important for most of the stakeholders interviewed included knowledge of AI and Automation; web design; data analytics, e-marketing; chat-bot expertise; technology adoption; leveraging digital platforms; data processing and general data management. While they may replace some back-office services and tasks like front-desk duties, they are unlikely to replace frontline staff. However, these technologies are expected to change the nature of some jobs. One interviewee stated that, "…. *Chatbots and AI are very useful in doing routine tasks like answering routine questions, but it will*

never replace humans". Another respondent who works as a recruiter in the tourism and hospitality industry explained that: *"No robot could do my job, for example. It's about people or humans. I hire people to work in the hospitality industry. A robot cannot discern who is right for the job or not: it has no feelings"*. *"Many front-office staff will be replaced by Apps. AI, ChatGPT, chatbots, telephone calls will be fully automated"*. Digital skills will also change the way people communicate as social media grows in importance. Jobs are also being created thanks to digital skills development. One participant claimed that *"We have a digital department consisting of networkers, product owners, software developers, data scientists, innovation experts, baggage conveyors / dollies programmers, just to name a few of the new jobs that have been created at our airport"*.

Skills such as social media marketing and management, app-based communication, and web design are emphasised as crucial for reaching and engaging with customers. Having a presence on social media platforms is important in marketing destinations. A social media manager is one of the new profiles sought-after by recruiters in tourism businesses. *"TUI has a specific role in which there are four persons who manage what is happening on social media platforms every day"*. So, they are better positioned to cater to their customers' wishes. In fact, they can also study their behaviours, and are aware of the trends and developments in the industry.

Hence, social media communication has become quite important for the tourism and travel industry, as it also enables digital nomads and remote workers to collaborate and stay connected to their work environment.

Digital skills currently lacking in some organisations include data management, big/data analytics; data security; social media management; general ability to work with digital technologies; AR/VR. *"Some staff-members, especially seniors, are not able to work in Zoom and Teams"*, according to one respondent. This issue seems to be prevalent among the older staff members, who are not so familiar with social media. Furthermore, some organisations lack flexibility as

when working remotely, it is necessary to know how digital technology works, to maintain contact with international clients. "*I lost many of my international clients during the pandemic, because some staff-members did not know how to organise a video conference*" one interviewee remarked.

Many of these skills will remain important after 2030, especially AI, robotization, cybersecurity, big data analysis; and AR/VR. Especially AI, Robotics, AR, and VR will be vital for the future. One participant stated that robots will replace many of the manual jobs: dealing with complaints, back-office work; even taking orders and serving meals. "*We see this at airports: many jobs are being replaced by automation: chatbots*".

Anticipated changes necessary within organisations include cloud-based working (booking systems); working digitally in the 'sharing' economy; efficiency (MS Office); and operating on digital platforms.

Other digital skills identified during the interviews include Data analysis: to better understand customers and improve services. Digital content creation: to create high-quality digital content, such as photos, videos, and blog posts. Tourism businesses require this skill to showcase their products / services. A well-designed and user-friendly website to attract and retain customers. So, skills in website design and development are mandatory for the industry. Cybersecurity is becoming a major concern with the increasing use of digital technologies in the tourism industry. Therefore, skills in cybersecurity management are important in protecting businesses and customers from data theft.

"*Data is the new gold,*" claimed one participant.

Most companies provide digital skills training for their staff. This depends largely on the type of company. Some small organisations do this online (MOOCs) or via tutorials available. "*This is mainly done via online courses, which workers can follow at their own pace and time*". The costs are usually covered by the organisation. However, some staff members show a preference for external

training, as this is seen as an "investment" by the trainees. In-house training is common as well. Training is provided depending on the digital skills that are lacking in the particular organisation.

The dynamic nature of digital technology in the tourism industry emphasises the need for continuous learning and adaptation. Professionals must stay updated with emerging digital tools and technologies. "*Especially after Covid, we were keen on reskilling and upskilling our staff, because we had to learn new skills: "Teams and "Zooms" had become important during the pandemic, and so we wanted to keep these platforms*", according to one participant. "*We had to work smart*".

In sum, the future of Dutch tourism and tourism employment is closely linked to digital skills and technology adoption. The outcome of the interviews revealed that web design, data analytics, e-marketing, and AI chat-bot expertise are the most important digital skills. Digital skills and technology adoption are essential for efficiency, communication, and staying competitive in the industry. Due to the dynamic nature of tourism and tourism employment, it is extremely important that organisations provide adequate training for their staff.

4.3 ENVIRONMENTAL (GREEN) SKILLS

4.3.1 INTRODUCTION

In the secondary data section of this report, it was demonstrated that green skills comprise more than skills for reducing the impact of tourism on the environment (minimise the use and maximise the efficiency of energy and water consumption; manage waste, sewage, recycling, and composting; conservation of biodiversity; knowledge of climate change). They also involve developing and promoting sustainable forms of transport and tourism in (rural) areas as an option to diversify local economies, create economic growth and decent jobs for local people (including women and youth) as well as conserve local natural and cultural heritage. On the other hand, managing and reducing the impact of over-tourism is also a part of sustainable tourism.

The results of this section provide an overview of environmental management skills that the interview participants rate as the most important in seven years' time.

Questions that have been discussed with participants were the following:

- What would you consider green / environmental management skills?
- How important will these skills be around 2030? Which ones will be most important?
- Which green/environmental management skills are important in your organisation today?
- Do you expect any changes regarding the necessity of staff with green skills in your organisation between today and 2030? If so, which changes? If not, why not?
- Does your company provide training or education for these skills? If so: what kind of training; if not: why not?
- Do you use external organisations to help train your staff in green/environmental management skills? If so: which one and what kind of training does it provide?
- What is your opinion on green certification/awards / eco-labels? Are you a member of one of these? Why? What are the benefits for you? If not, why not?

4.3.2 RESULTS FROM THE INTERVIEWS

Results from interviews: Green Skills

In the Netherlands, green skills development in tourism is becoming increasingly important, aligning with global sustainable development goals. Some of the key green skills and trends in the Dutch tourism industry for 2030 were mentioned by the participants during the interviews conducted. Key trends for 2030 are: increased emphasis on sustainability; certification and eco-labels; education and training; (local) cultural understanding; and nature and green living.

The results of the section on environmental skills are outlined in the following paragraphs. The structure is in line with the questions that were asked during the interviews.

In the Netherlands, there is a growing focus on developing green skills in the tourism industry. These skills are aimed at reducing the environmental impact of tourism and promoting sustainability. Green skills identified include Energy and Water Conservation; Water Management; Sustainable Agriculture; Renewable Energy Technologies; Eco-Friendly Transportation and Environmental education and Interpretation.

Skills Development in energy and water consumption in Tourism Businesses.

To start, Energy and Water Conservation skills relate to reducing energy and water consumption in tourism operations. This includes knowledge of energy-efficient technologies, water management, and sustainable practices. Waste Management skills are crucial for minimising the environmental impact of tourism. This involves knowledge of recycling, waste reduction strategies, and sustainable waste disposal methods. Sustainable Agriculture has become the growing interest in farm-to-table experiences and sustainable food practices. So, skills in sustainable agriculture are in high demand. This includes knowledge of organic farming, permaculture, and sustainable food production. Skills in Renewable Energy Technologies include knowledge of solar power, wind energy, and other renewable energy sources. Eco-friendly Transportation skills are those related to eco-friendly transportation alternatives, such as electric vehicles and cycling infrastructure. These include knowledge of sustainable transportation planning and promotion. Environmental Education and understanding are valuable for promoting sustainable tourism practices. This involves educating tourists about the local environment, biodiversity, and conservation practices. In terms of the development of these green skills in 2030, it is expected that they will continue to evolve and become even more important in the tourism industry; especially since there seems to be some correlation with the notion of climate change.

Depending on the organisation of the respondent, there were various answers given. For example, a respondent from an airline company thought eco-friendly transportation and environmental education were very important. A respondent from the accommodation sector stated that "There is increasing interest in farm-to-table experiences and sustainable food practices among young people", and so skills in sustainable agriculture are in high demand. DMOs are keen on educating tourists about the local environment which they intend to visit. Hotel operators and visitor attraction operators are also very interested in energy and water conservation, as well as waste management.

Staff Recruitment and Retention in Tourism Operations

Many expect that there will be changes regarding the necessity of finding and hiring staff with green skills in the coming seven years. A consensus is that things need to change as there is evidence that our climate is changing. The current staff lack the skills and knowledge to effectively manage these roles and that is why there is a need for skills development or a re-skilling, upskilling drive to transform present staff.

Training Provision in Tourism Operations

Most of the organisations interviewed provide training or education in the skills most relevant for their own organisation. Training is usually done in-house, though preference is given to external training providers. "*Our staff prefers someone from outside the organisation to provide the training as this is more 'credible'. We want an 'official' certificate: preferably from a well-known training provider*". According to one respondent, online courses are preferred (MOOCs), because these are more convenient and less costly. Certification is not always necessary, especially seeing availability of staff is scarce. "*We prefer to train staff ourselves, as our service needs to be in line with our company. Digital skills, for example, change very often, and these skills usually need to be updated on a regular basis, so we prefer to do our own staff training in this case,*" claimed one tour operator.

Some respondents are not very positive regarding eco-labels. Some claim there are many cases of "greenwashing". Only two respondents subscribe to eco-labels.

According to one DMO, "*Travellers are becoming increasingly interested in sustainable destinations and practices. So, we need to show that we are taking these issues seriously. Therefore, having certification in sustainability, such as Travellife or GreenKey, is becoming vital*". Certifications like Travellife or GreenKey are also becoming more important for tourism businesses. These certifications indicate a commitment to sustainability and are attractive to environmentally conscious tourists.

However, there are others who refer to eco-labels as "greenwashing". They claim that many tourism businesses say they are acting responsibly by not travelling by plane, for example, but corporate executives themselves are flying all over the world. In other words: they are not 'practising what they preach'! One accommodation provider stated that there is an increasing awareness for young travellers regarding sustainability: they demand 'green products '.

Many have adopted 'healthier' food choices. They tend to "*travel with companies that have eco-labels in their DNA*" according to one respondent. Travellers are becoming more "*environmentally conscious*" and are looking for authenticity in their holiday destinations. They want a "local" experience and are going 'off the beaten track' to experience this.

Hence, education plays a crucial role in teaching individuals to instruct their clients and others about adopting sustainable behaviour. This indicates that green skills, including knowledge of sustainable practices and the ability to promote and implement them, will be essential for future tourism professionals.

In conclusion, the Dutch tourism industry is transitioning towards a sustainable future, and green skills are at the forefront of this transition. Professionals will need to acquire and develop these skills to meet the demands of environmentally conscious travellers and contribute to the long-term sustainability of the industry. Educational institutions and training providers are expected to play a key role in facilitating environmental skills development.

4.4 SOCIAL-CULTURAL SKILLS

4.4.1 INTRODUCTION

Social-cultural skills can be divided into personal skills, communication/cultural skills, and diversity skills. These skills are related to behavioural and practical attitudinal competencies in teamwork, interpersonal communication, cross-cultural understanding, and customer service orientation. Particularly related to working in the tourism sector are competences towards managing personal relationships, understanding the needs and feelings of others, cooperating with others, showing a positive attitude, showing respect, making appropriate contact and active listening. Furthermore, social/cultural skills deal with competencies that promote social progress which recognizes the needs of everyone; accessible tourism provision for those with disabilities; gender equality. These skills are expected to be of major importance for the tourism sector, to match the needs of a **"high tech" society with a "human touch"** needed in personal and human interactions in the tourism sector.

This section provides an overview of the social/cultural skills (i.e., personal-, communication/cultural-, and diversity skills) that the interview participants rate as the most important in seven years' time.

Questions that have been discussed with participants were the following:

- What do you consider the most relevant and important social and cultural skills for people working in the tourism sector?
- How important will these skills be around 2030? Which ones will be most important?
- Can you think of more or other social/cultural skills that might be important around 2030?
- What changes do you expect for your organisation with regard to necessary social/cultural skills in the future (2030) compared to today?
- Does your company provide training or education for these social/cultural skills? If so: which ones; if not: why not?
- Do you use an external organisation to help train your staff in social/cultural skills? If so, which ones and what kind of training do they provide?

- What would be the most effective training method in social/cultural skill development for employees?

4.4.2 RESULTS FROM THE INTERVIEWS

The Results on Social and Cultural Skills Development from the Interviews

The results of the section on social and cultural skills are outlined in the following paragraphs. The structure is in line with the questions that were asked during the interviews.

The results from the interviews on social and cultural skills development in the Dutch tourism industry uncovered the critical role these skills have in the sector.

First of all, the significance of effective communication, cultural awareness, empathy, and inclusivity are emphasised as essential for providing exceptional guest experiences and furthering positive relationships with diverse tourists.

Effective communication is vital: personal and cross-cultural

Particularly in a post- Covid society in which people had less contact with each other, the need for inter- and cross-cultural communication is pressing. People travel more especially for social and cultural exchange. One respondent referred to this as "revenge travel". There is a fresh need for human contact, and therefore intercultural exchanges are driving this change.

Cross-cultural awareness

There is also a need for an exchange of cultural experiences. One respondent remarked that this is particularly true for domestic travels. During the pandemic, domestic tourism increased significantly. This saw an increase of interest in the local population in the Netherlands. "*There is more interest in buying from local farmers, visiting museums nearby, and even going to local events to meet local people…*" personal well-being, healthy eating habits, walking tours etc. have signalled the growth in social-cultural awareness for the Dutch tourism industry, according to most interviewees.

Empathy and Inclusivity

Skills in empathy and inclusivity are profound in the current tourism sector. Tourism workers need to be able to emphathise with and identify ways of carefully applying these skills. By understanding the needs and wishes of the consumer, the tourism provider is then able to engage with and help to create meaningful experiences for the tourist..

Looking ahead to 2030, these skills are anticipated to become even more vital. Travellers seek authentic, personalised, and responsible tourism experiences, necessitating a workforce proficient in socio-cultural sensitivity, cross-cultural communication, and sustainability practices. Organisations are expected to respond by prioritising training and education, imparting a culture of innovation, inclusivity, and diversity. Furthermore, the tourism sector will likely witness an integration of ethical considerations and crisis management readiness. Collaboration between industry and educational institutions will be key to preparing future professionals.

Additional social and cultural skills

Other relevant social and cultural skills for tourism workers in the Netherlands include effective communication, cultural awareness, empathy, interpersonal skills, and a commitment to diversity, inclusion, and adaptability. These skills are essential for providing exceptional experiences, building positive relationships, and promoting cultural exchange within the industry.

Social and cultural skills in the Dutch tourism sector around 2030 will be very important. Skills related to cultural awareness, cross-cultural communication, empathy, and inclusivity will be particularly crucial as tourists seek more diverse and authentic experiences in this dynamic industry. Professionals who excel in these areas will be well positioned to meet the changing demands of tourists and provide exceptional service. In addition to the social and cultural skills mentioned by participants, several other social and cultural skills may also become important in 2030. These include:

Conflict Resolution: to mediate and find amicable solutions to enhance guest satisfaction. Crisis Management: to handle unexpected situations, such as natural

disasters, public health emergencies, or safety concerns. Cultural Sensitivity Training: to design and deliver training programs that promote cultural understanding and respectful behaviour. Ethical Tourism Practices, to navigate the complex ethical landscape of tourism, including issues related to cultural appropriation, exploitation, and ethical sourcing. Crisis Communication: to communicate and manage public relations and maintain trust during challenging situations.

Resilience and Stress Management: to maintain mental and emotional well-being while providing quality service. Cultural Diplomacy: to understand the role of tourism in cultural diplomacy and foster positive interactions between tourists and local communities.

Therefore, while the core social and cultural skills mentioned in the interviews remain crucial in the tourism sector in 2030, these additional skills will become increasingly important to meet travellers' evolving needs and expectations, ensuring a positive and responsible tourism experience.

From the interviews, it can be concluded that organisational changes in the Dutch tourism industry are likely to adapt and evolve to meet the changing demands and trends in social and cultural skills development. By investing in training, diversity and inclusion initiatives, sustainability practices, and guest-centric approaches, they ensure that their employees are well-prepared to provide exceptional and culturally sensitive experiences to travellers in 2030 and beyond.

Organisations will focus on the following changes:

- **Increased Emphasis on Training and Education:** training and education programs to develop social and cultural skills among their employees, focusing on effective communication, cultural awareness, empathy, diversity, and inclusion.
- **Cultural Sensitivity and Inclusivity Training:** introducing cultural sensitivity and inclusivity training as standard practice, to help employees better understand and respect diverse cultures, adapt their services accordingly, and create inclusive environments for guests.

- **Crisis Management Protocols:** developing and refining crisis management protocols and procedures to address unexpected situations effectively; training in crisis communication, conflict resolution, and stress management.
- **Guest-Centric Approaches:** adopting more guest-centric approaches, emphasising the importance of effective communication and empathy in enhancing guest experiences; providing personalised and emotionally meaningful experiences.
- **Innovation and Creativity:** encouraging innovation and creativity among their employees; fostering problem-solving skills and encouraging the development of new and unique tourism products.
- **Collaboration with Educational Institutions:** establishing partnerships to stimulate innovation, encourage curiosity, and stimulate critical thinking among students, providing them with the necessary social and cultural skills.
- **Continuous Learning and Professional Development:** skills development of staff, staying informed about industry trends, and adapting to changing guest preferences.
- **Adoption of Ethical Practices:** ensuring that employees understand ethical implications of their contribution to responsible tourism.

Training Provision in social and Cultural Skills

Most organisations provide training for their staff. This is usually followed online, depending on the needs identified. There are instruments to assess training needs, but each staff member has to identify where the gaps / priorities lie. There is a formal mechanism for such training need(s), and this is examined in collaboration with a department head / manager. Due to the nature of the industry, social and cultural skills development is mandatory. Most trainings are provided in-house, though some staff members prefer external training. *"They prefer the use of external training providers. It shows that a company values you as a worker."* according to one accommodation provider. They believe that this should be an investment by the organisation. Workshops and practical solutions

are the best options suggested by most of the interviewees. There are many online training programs which are recommended.

In conclusion, the results of the interviews on social and cultural skills development in the Dutch tourism industry reveal a clear recognition of the critical role these skills play in the sector. The importance of effective communication, cultural awareness, empathy, and inclusivity are emphasised as essential for providing exceptional guest experiences and fostering positive relationships with diverse tourists.

In 2030, these skills will become even more vital as tourists seek authentic, personalised, and responsible tourism experiences, necessitating a workforce proficient in cultural sensitivity, cross-cultural communication, and sustainability practices. Organisations are expected to respond by prioritising training / education, and introducing a culture of innovation, inclusivity, and diversity. Furthermore, the tourism sector is witnessing an integration of ethical considerations, crisis management readiness, and a heightened focus on environmental sustainability. Collaboration between industry and education is crucial in preparing future tourism professionals. In sum, social and cultural skills are the cornerstone of a flourishing Dutch tourism industry in 2030, facilitating unforgettable experiences, promoting inclusivity, and contributing to responsible tourism practices.

5. BEST PRACTICES

UPSKILLING AND RESKILLING

In each country that is represented in the Pantour consortium, partners have each selected, analysed and interviewed **5 best practices** in upskilling, reskilling, attracting/retaining staff in the five tourism sub sectors. The goal of the analysis is to have an inventory of innovative initiatives, projects, programs, philosophies, tools, methods, ideas, solutions, and concepts in relation to upskilling, reskilling, attracting, and retaining staff in order to improve the knowledge on digital, social, and green skills development in tourism.

In short, a Best Practice in upskilling, reskilling, attracting staff has all or many of these characteristics:

1 It has a clear goal.

2 It purposely addresses the bridging of existing skills gaps and future skills needs in tourism.

3 The organisation and individual staff members have a set of core values that strengthen their dedication, morale, and resolve a shared sense of purpose for the work.

4 It looks at urgent skills development challenges and human capital in their context – on macro level (sustainable/digital transition in tourism), sector/subsector level or skills level (digital, social, green skills).

5 It targets the underlying causes in addition to the challenge in upskilling and reskilling, attracting/retaining.

In the following sections, a short overview and analysis will be provided of each of the Best Practices investigated in the frame of the PANTOUR project.

*CONSIDERABLE
EMPHASIS ON SOCIAL
RESPONSIBILITY*

5.1 BEST PRACTICE: PATHÉ

Pathé is a major film production and distribution company, owning a number of cinema chains through its subsidiary Pathé Cinémas and television networks across Europe. It operates cinemas in several European countries. Pathé is known for offering a premium movie-going experience with a wide selection of films, state-of-the-art technology, and a focus on customer comfort. The movie theatre is one of the visitor/leisure attractions on a destination, which makes it interesting to investigate. It contains F&B operations and this is why the best practice is chosen for this research.

5.1.1 Background information

Broadly speaking, the organisation presents a core set of learning materials to all employees. However, specific departments and certain roles require tailored learning modules. Some roles have distinct content requirements, leading to the need for customised learning structures. The crucial consideration is whether these variations are unique to the organisation or also extend to other branches. The decision-making process involves assessing whether they should develop these materials internally or seek external resources.

Should the need for external resources arise, it is worth noting that such training typically involves physical, in-person components, complemented by e-learning support.

For instance, roles like that of a mentor are traditionally conducted in a classroom setting but also incorporate self-study through e-learning modules. In such cases, the organisation procures external training solutions, ensuring that they remain informed about the content and methodology to be delivered.

5.1.2 Analysis and overview

The Pathé Academy has been made mandatory for all individuals commencing their roles within the theatre environment. The learning modules are progressively unlocked, allowing a two-week window to complete each set of learnings. This approach is designed to ensure that within a two-month period, all mandatory learning requirements are fulfilled, preventing an overwhelming initial workload for newcomers.

Key principles

The content of these modules focuses on providing comprehensive insights into Pathé's mission and vision. This includes a detailed exploration of the organisation's ethos, its origins, and its product offerings. This encompasses not only the exhibition of films but also a diverse range of other entertainment concepts, events, and target audiences. Furthermore, the curriculum addresses the various offerings such as 4DX and IMAX formats. Given the wide array of content, it becomes necessary to clarify Pathé's background, origins, and the unique characteristics of its operations.

In addition to these foundational topics, the Pathé Academy also introduces training previews pertaining to employee safety, aggression prevention, and other critical areas. Of significant importance is the explanation of the film rating system, emphasizing the stringent regulations associated with age restrictions. Ensuring that underage individuals are not admitted to films with age restrictions, such as those rated for viewers aged 16 and above, is a vital aspect of our operations. This training equips employees with tips and strategies to handle such situations before they commence their on-the-job training.

Examples and case studies

The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly accelerated the developments in automation. On one hand, the cinema industry faced greater challenges during the pandemic, and the industry has been actively strategizing to regain its audience. Simultaneously, the labour market has become increasingly competitive. Therefore, there is a strong emphasis on automating certain aspects of operations.

Two specific examples of this automation are the entrance and the food service areas. Traditionally, cinemas employed staff at entrances to check and tear tickets. However, an increasing number of cinemas are now installing automated gates, allowing patrons to scan their tickets independently and proceed. Similarly, the buffet-style service in the food and beverage areas, where customers queued to place orders for items like popcorn and beverages, is being phased out during renovations. In its place, cinemas are adopting a self-checkout system similar to those found in supermarkets, where customers can scan and pay for their selected items independently.

Note that these advancements do not signify the complete elimination of staff members. For instance, personnel will still be present at entrances to verify the age restrictions on certain films. Moreover, in both entrance and food service areas, the role of these staff members extends beyond verification tasks. They also serve as hosts and hostesses, ensuring a welcoming and pleasant experience for customers. The focus is shifting towards providing excellent hospitality and maintaining efficient operations, rather than traditional tasks like tearing tickets, which are increasingly regarded as outdated. The significant shift observed pertains to a transition from an emphasis on hard skills to soft skills.

Corporate social responsibility holds significant importance within Pathé. While it may not be the primary focus of training for service personnel, it remains a recurring and pertinent topic of discussion. For instance, in the past year, six of the cinemas have installed solar panels on their rooftops as part of the commitment to energy conservation. While this aspect is managed by the facility management department, they actively engage the team by sharing achievements like ISO 5001 certifications, providing clear explanations of the associated responsibilities, such as ensuring refrigeration units are not left open unnecessarily.

Specific training in environmental awareness may not be a primary component of the employee development strategy. However, there is considerable emphasis on social responsibility, particularly in catering to diverse customer groups' needs. For example, taking great care to accommodate individuals with mobility challenges by assisting, such as providing access to elevators. Additionally, they have introduced services for the hearing impaired and visually impaired, including features such as headphones for audio support and supplementary tablet-based subtitles for improved movie accessibility. Thus, the organisation actively strives to better serve these specific customer segments, requiring employees to be aware of and knowledgeable about these offerings to provide exceptional service.

Potential pitfalls and challenges

In terms of training delivery, both physical and digital training methods are employed, with a growing trend toward digital training, often facilitated through virtual platforms such as Teams. Digital training is typically more suitable for specific target audiences. Nevertheless, it presents challenges as it tends to be more one-size-fits-all, making it less adaptable to individual or group dynamics and specific preferences. Additionally, when modifications are necessary, digital training lacks the flexibility to cater to the unique characteristics of different theatres, each with distinct demographics and operational differences.

Consequently, adjustments must be implemented consistently across all theatres if they affect the training library, irrespective of whether they are universally applicable. In this regard, digital training exhibits a degree of inflexibility, with both advantages and disadvantages inherent to its use.

Benefits and outcomes

The academy can be accessed through the organisation's Intranet platform, known as Pathé Talks or Speakapp, which is administered by a company associated with the Intranet services. This Intranet platform exhibits features reminiscent of Facebook, enabling HR to post updates and announcements, including notifications regarding new e-learning modules.

To ensure comprehensive communication, notifications about new e-learning opportunities are not limited to the Intranet alone; they are also disseminated via email to theatre managers and service managers within the theatres. This multi-channel approach aims to inspire employees to engage with new learning initiatives and to ensure that all personnel within a given theatre have participated in the prescribed learning activities.

The organisation has also shifted towards more Agile working practices, particularly in response to the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Agile methodologies have been embraced, leading to increased collaboration through project groups. These groups facilitate mutual learning and often comprise cross-functional teams, bringing together individuals with diverse areas of expertise. This approach is more prevalent at the corporate headquarters and is less emphasised for service employees.

Numerous initiatives have been introduced to foster learning and development, especially at the corporate level. One notable practice involves knowledge-sharing sessions. For instance, the HR department conducts digital sessions with theatre managers, where topics such as managing absenteeism, leaves of absence, and terminations are covered. These sessions empower theatre managers to effectively manage these aspects within their respective theatres.

Several departments within the organisation offer similar knowledge-sharing opportunities.

Additionally, the organisation has a valuable tool in place called GoodHabitz, which is widely appreciated. GoodHabitz offers a diverse range of courses, encompassing subjects like mindfulness, language acquisition, and Office software proficiency. Despite its extensive offerings and benefits, the utilisation of GoodHabitz has faced challenges, mainly due to its voluntary nature. The organisation views it as a service extended to employees, akin to a secondary employment benefit. Efforts are being made to encourage greater adoption of this valuable resource.

Furthermore, there exists an educational calendar that primarily serves external entities offering training programs. These programs are especially beneficial for the manager service segment. In addition to these, there are obligatory training sessions in place for service employees, including training on social responsibility and first aid (BHV), which are conducted annually in a physical format.

Responsibilities and Accountability

Within the theatre, there is typically a manager assigned to HR responsibilities, and this manager is primarily accountable for overseeing various training initiatives. It is worth noting that these managers often have additional responsibilities, such as managing workplace safety and compliance with occupational health and safety regulations. Consequently, they may take the lead in organising training sessions related to topics like workplace safety, emergency response, or evacuation procedures.

Moreover, in each theatre, the employee roster is distributed among multiple managers, and there are coaching groups established. Each manager oversees a coaching group, with the group's size varying depending on the theatre's scale but typically comprising around 15 to 30 employees. These coaching groups play a pivotal role in providing individualised guidance and support to employees.

This includes conducting performance appraisal discussions and fostering the professional development of team members.

The organization holds firm expectations from its employees in terms of completing the training requirements. Failure to adhere to these expectations may result in consequences. Upon joining the company, employees receive a movie card, entitling them to complimentary cinema visits. Some theatres stipulate that employees only receive their movie cards after successfully completing the onboarding process. From a human resources perspective, it is not necessarily favoured, as this benefit is regarded as a secondary employment condition that should ideally be granted upon employment commencement. However, it has proven effective in those theatres where it is implemented, and no objections are raised.

References and External Resources
Werken bij Pathé: www.werkenbijpathe.nl

HYBRID TRAINING

TAILORED PROGRAMS

E-LEARNING

Conclusion

The organisation subscribes to a hybrid training approach, recognising the Pathé Academy as a digital platform designed to complement the knowledge and skills imparted to employees through on-the-job experiences, physical training sessions, and coaching.

Additionally, the organisation collaborates with external agencies to facilitate certain physical training sessions, which may include preparatory e-learning assignments or post-training follow-up assessments conducted through e-learning modules.

5.2 BEST PRACTICE: VAN DER VALK

HOTELS

Van der Valk is a holding company that includes several hotels in the Netherlands and abroad. The holding company includes 9 Dutch hotels, a number of German hotels, 1 in Belgium, 1 in Spain and 1 on the island of Bonaire.

5.2.1 Background information

Internally, the organisation's approach to training and development is highly responsive to specific queries and needs. A notable aspect of their internal training initiatives includes cross-training, wherein employees, such as those originally in service roles, have been successfully retrained or upskilled to perform support functions at the reception desk and vice versa. This practice has enabled the organisation to internally train employees to serve in diverse roles across different departments.

Furthermore, if an employee expresses ambitions to transition to a different role within the organisation, these aspirations are actively supported. The organisation provides opportunities for retraining or upskilling to facilitate this internal mobility, fostering career development and growth among its personnel.

The organisation has observed, particularly during specific periods, such as the pandemic, instances where certain departments experienced a lull in activity. Meanwhile, there was an active desire among the staff to remain engaged, while other departments faced staffing shortages. In response to these dynamics, the organisation undertook initiatives to retrain employees, enabling them to assist in departments facing increased demand when necessary.

Additionally, the organisation supports employees who aspire to transition into distinct roles within the company. For instance, employees who initially began their careers at the reception desk but have ambitions in sales and banqueting receive tailored training and skill development to prepare them for roles in these areas. Over time, these employees transition into their desired roles. Similarly, situations arise where an employee may have started their career in the kitchen but harbours alternative aspirations. In such cases, the organisation provides training and facilitates their transition to other departments to align with their evolving career goals.

5.2.2 Analysis and overview

Key principles

The organisation previously utilised Learning Online, an e-learning platform encompassing topics such as food service, organisational structure, and employee regulations. However, due to its significant obsolescence, it became challenging to maintain and develop new e-learning modules within this system. Although it remains operational, the organisation opted to halt its active use. Currently, there is an ongoing effort to evaluate potential replacement systems.

Furthermore, in December 2022, the organisation introduced a "Fan Factory" app designed for onboarding and e-learning components. While still in its initial stages, this app presents a promising avenue for hosting various training programs, spanning from hospitality and service to kitchen operations, as well as essential skills such as emergency response (BHV). Additionally, the organisation

plans to incorporate specialised onboarding modules tailored to specific departments, including reception.

This innovative approach aligns well with contemporary preferences, given its mobile accessibility. The platform is accessible through laptops, PCs, and mobile devices, with the latter being particularly prevalent, as approximately 90% of employees possess mobile devices. The platform's versatility allows for the straightforward creation and execution of e-learning modules, making it a prime candidate for modernisation efforts.

Currently, the organisation offers an online Wine course, available in two versions: an extensive wine menu and a simplified one. This course aims to provide comprehensive knowledge about various wines through video-based instruction. While the organisation actively maintains this course, there is a strong commitment to modernising the overall e-learning experience, enhancing both the backend system and the user interface. Ensuring simplicity in e-learning module creation, even by non-technical staff members, is a paramount objective.

The e-learning framework encompasses both standard training modules, such as those focusing on hospitality and conflict management, which serve as foundational e-learning resources readily available for use. In addition to these, the organisation has developed specific e-learning modules tailored for internal use.

For instance, consider the training needs of the reception staff. Given the distinctive nature of the hotel, which deviates significantly from conventional hotel formats, a unique approach to training is imperative. While certain foundational elements are applicable, such as the principles of hospitality, the sheer diversity of accommodations, with approximately 60 different room types, requires training that addresses these unique features. As a result, the organisation is actively engaged in the creation of new e-learning modules to cater to these specific requirements, adapting to the evolving demands of the business.

The skills needed in the future were also discussed within the team, and the extent of this phenomenon varies significantly depending on the department in

which an individual is employed. For instance, digital skills are less recalled in roles related to food service operations, where the impact of digital transformation is limited. However, when one shifts their focus to roles within the sales and marketing domain, the influence of digitalisation becomes more evident.

In the context of sales and marketing, the processes are digitised, encompassing online marketing strategies, digital sales channels, and even online room check-ins. Presently, sustainability and eco-conscious practices have gained substantial traction as prominent industry trends. Within the hotels, there is a concerted effort to align with these trends, driven by market demand for sustainable initiatives.

This heightened awareness of sustainable skills extends to even the smallest details, such as the choice of materials used during meetings. In response to this, the organisation has transitioned away from disposable plastic cups, opting instead for environmentally friendly alternatives, such as biodegradable cardboard cups and wooden stirring sticks, reflecting a commitment to sustainability.

Examples and Case Studies

The organisation's core message, encapsulated in its tagline "Valk Exclusief, where you can truly learn something," succinctly conveys its overarching philosophy. This philosophy is consistently reflected in the organisation's advertising campaigns, emphasising the commitment to not only providing operational roles but also actively investing in the development and advancement of its employees.

For instance, within the managerial ranks, the organisation offers comprehensive classroom-based management training. These sessions cover a spectrum of topics, ranging from effective personnel management to various leadership approaches. This structured training program is complemented by e-learning modules, which serve as valuable supplementary resources to support and reinforce the learning process. This multifaceted approach aligns seamlessly with the organisation's vision for its workforce, fostering a culture of continuous growth and development.

The approach employed by the organisation aims to maximise visual engagement, effectively capturing the attention of individuals rather than merely presenting them with text. This strategy emphasises brevity and incorporates various interactive elements, including quizzes, throughout the e-learning modules. It is noteworthy that most e-learnings culminate in quiz assessments. Moreover, incentives such as rewards are occasionally offered to participants, such as a bottle of wine, lunch, dinner, or even an overnight stay for the highest scorers. This incentivizes participation and adds an active dimension to the learning experience.

Additionally, the organisation has incorporated a recurring storyline within its application, featuring a series of questions related to the hotel, offering participants opportunities to win prizes. These gamification elements within the platform enhance its effectiveness.

In response to a query regarding accessibility, e-learning content is made available both for desktop and mobile usage. It is accessible through a dedicated app and can also be accessed via a web interface, a recent addition that complements the importance of the app within the organisation's training framework.

Broadly speaking, the organisation presents a core set of learning materials to all employees. However, specific departments and certain roles require tailored learning modules. Some roles have distinct content requirements, leading to the need for customised learning structures. The decision-making process involves assessing whether we should develop these materials internally or seek external resources.

Should the need for external resources arise, it is worth noting that such training typically involves physical, in-person components, complemented by e-learning support. For instance, roles like that of a mentor are traditionally conducted in a classroom setting but also incorporate self-study through e-learning modules. In such cases, the organisation procures external training solutions, ensuring that we remain informed about the content and methodology to be delivered.

Potential Pitfalls and Challenges

Furthermore, language proficiency plays a pivotal role in this evolving landscape. The utilisation of the Dutch language alone is no longer sufficient. Proficiency in other languages, notably English, is now a prerequisite. It is noteworthy that the hotels presently employ service personnel who exclusively communicate in English. Therefore, managers and colleagues alike must equip themselves with proficiency in the English language. These transformations exert a notable influence across all departments.

Benefits and Outcomes

With the previous e-learning tool, a cost analysis was conducted at the time of its implementation. The primary cost-saving aspect was evident in individuals' ability to acquire specific information through the tool without requiring a trainer. This approach allowed the organisation to allocate its personnel to other tasks, thereby reducing the workload for many individuals, including supervisors. It enabled a directive where employees could independently study the material and subsequently assess their comprehension.

In response to an inquiry regarding employee feedback and experiences with the former e-learning system, it was noted that the tool served as a valuable reference point. Employees can revisit their training history and reference materials when they encounter the need to refresh their knowledge. Consequently, the e-learning platform has been well received, with positive feedback from the workforce.

Furthermore, the organisation implements a rewards system as an incentive to motivate and encourage participation in e-learning modules. This strategy combines the intrinsic benefits of personal development with extrinsic rewards, recognizing that individuals are more inclined to engage actively when incentives are offered. Consequently, a balanced approach is maintained, emphasising both engagement and recognition of participants' efforts.

Measuring Success

In summary, the organisation places a considerable emphasis on fostering engagement, as evident in our utilisation of such a communication platform. The organisation believes that effective communication with staff members is one of the cornerstones of success. It is noteworthy that they operate within a diverse generational context, spanning from individuals aged 16 to those over 60. This generational diversity requires finding communication methods that resonate with all age groups, considering varying preferences, from SMS to Instagram. Our commitment to inclusivity and engagement remains a top priority in our communication strategy.

It may also be of interest to mention the internal communication application, known as the Factory app. The primary objective of this app is to cultivate a sense of enthusiasm and loyalty among our staff members. It operates within a social media-like environment where both our team and employees can share enjoyable moments and stay updated on hotel-related news. This platform also facilitates interactions across various departments and offers access to educational videos, including e-learning modules. In this way, we make a concerted effort to disseminate information effectively.

This approach extends to addressing challenges that may arise, such as issues with app installations, for example. When such hurdles are efficiently tackled, the overall success of the app becomes more evident. It is worth noting that active involvement and input from both frontline supervisors and individuals themselves play a significant role in this process.

Responsibilities and Accountability

Within the Fan Factory app, an onboarding process is systematically established. New employees are provided with information in digestible segments as they enter the organisation. They are initially introduced to an interactive orientation session, where the rules, often referred to as house rules, are explained. This process occasionally entails mandatory participation, particularly for individuals within a work trajectory or probationary period who have agreed to specific terms. In such cases, reviewing the material is compulsory.

However, when an employee is advised to do so, the requirement may vary, with some opting for voluntary participation.

Regarding the tracking of course completion, the organisation monitors this aspect. It is integrated into discussions between employees and their respective managers. We also verify participation when inviting individuals to engage in e-learning activities, such as wine training, to assess their commitment to investing time in these initiatives. This information is subsequently conveyed to the managers, who are encouraged to promote the training's significance and make it appealing to the workforce.

As for the implementation of e-learning within the organisation, it is an ongoing process. The intention is to incorporate it as an integral feature within the app, where onboarding procedures and training modules can be seamlessly developed and integrated. The organisation is actively working to establish structured onboarding processes and evaluation mechanisms to assess the acquisition of skills and knowledge by employees.

Regarding the concept of lifelong learning, it forms an integral component of the organisation's comprehensive approach. Reskilling and upskilling are actively discussed during performance appraisals and work meetings. The organisation assesses the present situation and explores opportunities for further development. If an employee expresses a desire to enhance their skills and knowledge, such aspirations are duly considered. Subsequently, a personal development plan, commonly referred to as a "POP" (Personalized Objectives Plan), is established to formalize this process.

As for personalized guidance in reskilling and upskilling, the organisation is appointing dedicated individuals within the HR department for this purpose. However, the preference is for these initiatives to be primarily overseen by managers themselves. This approach fosters stronger relationships and communication with employees. Nevertheless, in cases requiring specialized attention, employees can engage with the HR department, and collaborative efforts are undertaken with input from department heads and supervisors to address specific needs.

References and External Resources

Van der Valk Opleidingen: www.valkopleidingen.nl

USER FRIENDLY

E-LEARNING

EMBRACED BY ALL

Conclusion

In conclusion, it is believed that when implementing such a solution as e-learning, it is imperative to carefully consider how to generate internal support. Ensuring accessibility and user-friendliness should be a priority, evolving into a tool that can be readily embraced by all. This naturally leads organisations towards the development of a mobile application. Additionally, one must also explore the incorporation of e-learning as an integral part of the process. This summarises the key considerations for successful implementation.

5.3 BEST PRACTICE: CORENDON

Corendon (Corendon Airlines, founded in 2004 with flight operations starting in April 2005, is an international airline transporting approximately 6 million travellers each year. It operates charter and scheduled flights primarily to and from holiday destinations in Europe and beyond. It is part of the Corendon Tourism Group, a leading travel company that offers various travel-related services, including hotels, tours, and cruise packages.

5.3.1 Background information

The organisation utilises an online learning platform provided by Skills Town, commonly referred to as the Corendon College. This platform is accessible to all employees and serves as a comprehensive resource for diverse learning needs. Core content on this platform primarily consists of videos, webinars, and Essentials – brief, informative video clips spanning various subjects. Topics covered range from nutrition and mindfulness to language courses such as French and English, offering a selection of approximately 1400 courses.

Additionally, the platform offers we-learnings, a collaborative approach where teams can work together to attain certification. This mode of learning entails more in-depth e-learning experiences, encompassing assessments and quizzes. The platform also features podcasts, which provide self-paced learning opportunities. Webinars, like Essentials, delve into detailed topics and offer a more extended exploration of subject matter.

A noteworthy aspect is the ability to combine various learning elements to create learning paths or categories. These paths can include a blend of webinars, e-learning modules, and podcasts, forming a comprehensive curriculum on a specific subject. Corendon has established specific mandatory learning paths, especially pertaining to topics like work-related stress and the organisation's core values. These mandatory learning paths ensure that every employee gains a clear understanding of Corendon's values and principles.

For certain segments of the workforce, such as airline personnel (comprising cockpit and cabin crew), specific training requirements are mandatory to maintain current certifications and skills. These mandatory training programs are hosted on the Corendon College platform.

5.3.2 Analysis and overview

Key principles

The organisation provides its employees with access to an intranet platform known as Corendon Connect. Within this platform, there is a dedicated section for Corendon College, which is accessible both within the workplace and remotely from home. Corendon College offers a wide array of learning resources, including courses, meditations, and various other educational materials. Employees have the flexibility to engage with these resources not only for professional development but also for personal enrichment.

Corendon College's course offerings cover a diverse range of topics, from financial wellness and health-related subjects like nutrition and exercise to practical workplace skills, such as customer service and conflict resolution. The platform aims to cater to a broad spectrum of learning needs.

Regarding accessibility, employees can access these training materials via laptop or mobile devices. While webinars can be conveniently accessed on mobile devices, e-learning modules are more optimally experienced on laptops due to their interactive nature and content format. The platform is seamlessly integrated into the organisation's intranet, providing users with easy access to these resources, whether they choose to engage with them on a laptop or a mobile device.

The academy can play a pivotal role in equipping employees with the skills required for evolving digital tools and practices. For example, Corendon could consider utilising the platform to introduce and promote digital solutions for tasks that are still performed manually, such as contract signing. Online courses could guide employees through the adoption of these digital tools. However, this approach has been primarily implemented for specific groups, like cabin and cockpit personnel, who undergo comprehensive and ongoing training, resulting in certifications that require periodic renewal.

While the potential of the platform to support a broader digital transformation is acknowledged, its current implementation remains focused on targeted groups. Expanding its scope to encompass a wider employee base would require a strategic shift in how the platform is utilised within the organisation.

The company is actively addressing important topics such as sustainability, diversity, and inclusion, aligning these initiatives with its core values. Corendon adheres to a set of five core values: customer-centricity, respect, collaboration, flexibility, and entrepreneurship, all of which hold significant importance within the organisation.

Efforts are underway to educate and involve colleagues in these crucial areas. For instance, in the realm of customer-centricity, a dedicated training course is being developed. In parallel, the Human Resources department has been particularly focused on fostering respect within the organisation, emphasising promoting diversity and combating discrimination.

HR has undertaken a diversity training program designed to enhance recruitment and selection processes, with a focus on achieving greater diversity in the workforce. Additionally, webinars and similar resources have been leveraged to address issues related to unwanted interpersonal conduct.

Furthermore, HR has introduced training modules aimed at ensuring the proper handling of essential documents and processes. These HR initiatives are now being extended throughout the organisation via the Corendon College platform, with the objective of imparting these valuable learnings to the entire staff. This

comprehensive approach underscores the organisation's commitment to addressing these vital subjects effectively.

Examples and Case Studies

During performance appraisal discussions, the question of an employee's desired developmental path for the upcoming year is consistently addressed. They inquire about their aspirations and any internal interests, such as exploring other departments for learning opportunities. This topic is routinely broached in annual performance appraisal conversations. Moreover, Corendon aims to introduce more frequent discussions on this matter.

Although there are ongoing interactions between managers and employees, they currently lack a structured approach. From the HR perspective, they are planning to establish a quarterly cycle where certain predetermined topics, with development being a prominent one, will be systematically addressed.

As for the guidance and facilitation of employee development, the impetus generally originates with the employees themselves, often in collaboration with HR. If, for instance, a manager approaches HR and expresses that a specific team member wishes to pursue development in a particular area, the employee and HR can jointly coordinate the details. They coordinate to establish the suitable time frames and schedules for undertaking the development activities. Typically, it is less common for a manager to proactively suggest certain courses or training unless a performance issue is identified or if there is a clear need for skill enhancement. Thus, most developmental initiatives are driven by employees who have identified specific learning needs. In such cases, they engage in conversations with their supervisors or HR to explore suitable pathways for advancement.

Potential Pitfalls and Challenges

It is evident that reaching and motivating every employee to actively engage with these resources can be quite challenging. The demands of daily work routines and varying individual needs often hinder full participation. Currently, it appears that approximately 20% to 30% of Corendon College's offerings are being utilized

by colleagues. While this level of engagement is commendable, it does not yet meet the organisation's aspiration for universal utilisation.

The primary challenge lies in achieving widespread engagement with the online learning platform. Unlike mandatory physical training sessions that require a more significant commitment, the voluntary nature of online learning means that individuals can choose to participate at their convenience. Consequently, this flexibility can lead to the platform taking a back seat in the minds of colleagues, with some rarely, if ever, utilising its resources.

It is worth noting that this variance in engagement can be attributed to varying levels of personal development needs and preferences among colleagues. While some may not feel the need to engage in online learning, others might harbour reservations or simply not find it appealing. Hence, the task of effectively reaching and involving all colleagues remains a formidable challenge for the online learning platform.

Benefits and Outcomes
Flexibility plays a pivotal role in Corendon's approach to training and development. One significant advantage lies in the flexibility of scheduling. Unlike traditional in-person training sessions, which often consume an entire workday and necessitate synchronised availability, colleagues can opt to engage with training content during their own time or during breaks, allowing them to tailor their learning experiences to their individual schedules. Furthermore, Corendon College offers an extensive array of training modules, spanning topics that individuals may not have considered exploring otherwise. The platform serves as a valuable resource for discovering and delving deeper into various subjects. For instance, individuals who may not have initially considered participating in a full-day meditation workshop can access Corendon College to gain insights into the practice at their convenience.

One of the platform's notable features is its diverse content format, incorporating visual elements and interactive components that enhance knowledge retention.

Whether through images, videos, or other multimedia resources, Corendon College ensures that information is presented in an engaging and memorable manner.

Moreover, the platform accommodates different learning styles by offering options such as podcasts and short videos, enabling individuals to revisit and reinforce their learning while on the go. These advantages collectively contribute to the effectiveness and accessibility of Corendon College's training offerings.

Measuring Success

Specific feedback regarding Corendon College's performance and user experiences hasn't been systematically gathered from colleagues. Nevertheless, informal feedback has generally been positive, highlighting the platform's user-friendly nature and ease of comprehension. However, they have not conducted a formal survey or questionnaire to solicit detailed feedback specifically about Corendon College.

In terms of tracking course or e-learning completion, Corendon has back-end access that allows it to monitor who has engaged with which courses. Managers also possess the capability to view the learning progress of their team members. Consequently, in cases where a manager deems a specific course as necessary, Corendon can exert control and oversight to verify whether an individual has successfully completed it, including the attainment of certificates when applicable. This ensures a degree of accountability and tracking within the system.

Responsibilities and Accountability

The company maintains a culture of open communication and close collaboration, which extends to the Human Resources department. Regular monthly meetings are held between HR and the managers they support, fostering a productive exchange of information. Managers often possess valuable insights into their team members' career aspirations and areas where they require assistance. This collaborative approach allows for proactive identification

of developmental needs, either from the employees themselves or prompted by managerial observations.

The organisation aims to ensure that all employees adhere to the core values, particularly in the context of crucial topics such as workplace etiquette and addressing unwanted behaviors. The responsibility for this largely falls upon the managers. It is important to note that this approach operates based on trust. Unlike the case of airline personnel, there is no stringent verification process in place to confirm whether individuals have completed the required courses. Consequently, it relies more on mutual trust rather than strict oversight.

In line with HR's commitment to accessibility, employees are encouraged to approach the department with their development inquiries. They have the freedom to seek guidance on pursuing specific training or learning opportunities. Additionally, at times, the impetus for skill enhancement may originate from a manager who recognizes a gap in an employee's abilities essential for their role. In such cases, HR may initiate a request for the employee to participate in relevant training, such as a flawless Dutch writing course.

Furthermore, the organization conducts an annual employee satisfaction survey, which was recently conducted, and the results are pending. This survey includes inquiries regarding career development interests and needs. Subsequent discussions with various departments will be guided by the expressed needs and preferences of the workforce. However, it is acknowledged that accommodating every request may not always be feasible, and decisions must be made judiciously, prioritizing the organisation's overall objectives while striving to meet the diverse needs of its personnel.

References and External Resources
Van Travel College naar een heel eigen Corendon College: wat zijn de ervaringen? (reiswerk.nl)

COLLEGE
PLATFORM

ACTIVE
PARTICIPATION

STIMULATE
COLLEAGUES

Conclusion

In conclusion, the experience with Corendon College has been largely positive. The ability to offer such a platform for employee development is undoubtedly beneficial. Consequently, Corendon would wholeheartedly recommend it to other organisations. However, it is essential to recognize that it requires a concerted effort to maintain visibility and encourage active participation, primarily due to its user-friendly nature. Thus, the main challenge lies in making the platform as appealing as possible to colleagues to stimulate their utilization.

5.4 BEST PRACTICE: LANDAL GREENPARKS

Landal GreenParks is a well-known holiday park and resort operator in the Netherlands and the European market leader in terms of self-catered holidays. Founded in 1954, Landal has become a prominent name in the Dutch tourism and hospitality industry, offering a wide range of accommodation options in picturesque natural settings. The company's focus is on providing guests with memorable and relaxing vacations in harmony with nature. Landal GreenParks is part of Awaze, Europe's leading provider of holiday parks and accommodation.

5.4.1 Background information

At Landal GreenParks, learning and development constitute crucial subjects. The organisation places significant emphasis on self-initiative and self-development among its members. This is accomplished through personal interactions and complemented by training and educational opportunities. Through the utilization of their online learning platform, Learnit!, individuals gain access to an extensive array of over 150 online and offline learning resources. While some of these resources may be directly related to one's current role, the majority are designed to improve both professional and personal growth.

Learnit serves as the central hub where all Landal GreenParks employees can explore the wealth of learning opportunities available, ranging from e-learning modules to enrolling in classroom training sessions and requesting 360-degree feedback assessments. Learnit also offers resources tailored to team and departmental development, encompassing subjects such as Practice Supervision, Coaching Leadership, Social Hygiene, various languages, and practical skills such as barista training, Allergies management, and Mise-en-Place techniques.

5.4.2 Analysis and overview

Learnit! is the primary hub where all Landal GreenParks employees can explore the available learning opportunities.

Key principles

The online academy was established in 2018 and further developed in 2019, in collaboration with Noordhoff, the largest educational publisher in the Netherlands. This choice was made primarily because of the organisation's unique characteristics. Landal employs about 4,000 people, and the workforce mobility is high.

Within the company, various departments operate with distinct schedules. For instance, the reception team experiences its peak workload on Mondays and Fridays, while the animation team faces increased demand on different days. Office staff predominantly work during standard business hours throughout the week. Furthermore, tasks are performed at our parks during weekends and evenings. Consequently, Landal operate as a continuous enterprise, making it logistically challenging to coordinate in-person training sessions that suit everyone's availability.

Landal decided to transition numerous training activities to online platforms, allowing participants the flexibility to engage at their convenience. This enables individuals to access training material from various devices, including laptops,

desktop computers, tablets, and iPhones. Such a shift toward online learning has greatly increased the mobility and accessibility of their training programs. This transformation has proven particularly beneficial during the COVID-19 pandemic, as it allowed their employees to continue working effectively, even when they were unable to access their usual workplace. In retrospect, this transition has been a significant development for the organisation.

In matters of content development, the organisation aligns its offerings with the specific needs and dynamics of the sector. Whether partnering with external providers like GoodHabitz or developing in-house resources such as Recreatie Hero, the focus remains industry-centric. Training content spans various topics, ranging from crafting promotional texts to managing social media for businesses or defining reception staff roles and responsibilities. An overview of all training content main topics:

- Office
- Digital skills
- Management and teamwork
- Safety and health
- Productivity
- Inspiring leadership
- Commercial skills/sales
- Language
- Communication
- Personal power
- Catering industry
- Recreation (hero)
- Landal

The significance of soft skills has grown considerably. From an exaggerated perspective, it can be stated that possessing a genuine passion for one's profession provides a solid foundation.

The reasoning behind this assertion lies in the organisation's capacity to impart specific technical skills, such as tray service or check-in/check-out procedures, through on-site training. Therefore, the emphasis primarily falls on the cultivation of soft skills.

Currently, there is a substantial demand for addressing generational differences within the workforce. The organisation accommodates individuals from various age groups, each possessing distinct work preferences. For instance, individuals from the baby boomer generation tend to favor traditional paper-based processes and may opt for telephonic methods to report sick leave. Conversely, Generation Z prefers digital communication channels, such as texting. This diversity in workstyles occasionally results in friction within the workplace and between managers and employees. Consequently, preparing individuals to navigate these generational variances becomes a pivotal focus for the forthcoming years, along with addressing absenteeism.

The contemporary work environment consists of individuals with a multitude of stimuli and demands, making it essential to equip them with strategies to manage and balance their commitments effectively. This includes preventing employees from being perpetually engrossed in their work or excessively distracted by unrelated matters. Therefore, this aspect holds significant importance in the organisation's strategic considerations.

Within the sustainability context, digital learning can be employed in multifaceted ways to address specific environmental concerns. For instance, the organisation has devised its own sustainability training program, tailored to its Green Key certification standards, which are prevalent across the organisation. The training encompasses essential aspects such as waste separation and energy conservation, reinforcing the organisation's commitment to sustainable practices. By ensuring that employees acquire these eco-friendly skills, the organisation not only contributes to its own sustainability goals but also empowers individuals to make environmentally conscious choices in their personal lives.

This extends to their ability to manage energy consumption, reducing their utility expenses. Thus, the integration of digital learning into sustainability initiatives serves as a strategic means to support both organisational and individual sustainability objectives.

Examples and Case Studies

In a broader context, the overarching vision is to minimize mandatory requirements and delegate as much responsibility as possible to the individual business units. This approach, succinctly described as fostering a dialogue between managers and employees, seeks to encourage organic inquiries and initiatives, whether initiated by the employee or the manager.

In practice, the focus is on facilitating motivation and inspiration in a supportive capacity. The aim is to ensure that a comprehensive array of resources is readily accessible for both employees and managers, enabling them to make informed choices and pursue relevant training opportunities. Efforts are made to guide individuals toward a structured framework, although the degree of adherence is not rigid.

For instance, specific training programs cater to reception personnel, equipping them with skills beneficial to their role and to potential leadership positions, all while nurturing motivation and inspiration. Furthermore, the organisation leverages its communication channels to disseminate industry updates and insights into personal development, thereby fostering knowledge sharing among colleagues. Nevertheless, the absence of a compulsory structure can be a point of contention. While some training programs may benefit from mandatory participation to enhance utilization and inspire a wider audience, the organisation grapples with the ongoing debate of whether to enforce such requirements or maintain a more hands-off approach, entrusting employees and managers with greater autonomy.

Given the organisation's diverse portfolio of over 100 vacation parks, an effort is made to maintain a general applicability to accommodate variations in operational procedures at different locations. Nevertheless, any significant deviations necessitate individualized discussions and solutions.

Key Characteristics:

1. Flexibility: One of the primary features of this approach is its flexibility. It allows individuals to create their own content, a highly advantageous attribute valued by many organisations.

2. Safe and Interactive Environment: Blended learning provides a secure and interactive learning environment. Unlike traditional training involving live actors, which can be intimidating, individuals can engage comfortably behind a screen. This environment encourages active participation through activities such as quizzes, creating a more engaging learning experience.

3. Privacy and Choice: Another notable characteristic is the privacy and freedom of choice it affords. In instances where not all details are disclosed to supervisors or managers, individuals can select and pursue training courses of their preference. This discretion is particularly relevant when opting for specialized training, such as job application training, without immediate scrutiny or judgement. It serves as a safe and accommodating learning environment.

4. Facilitating Internal Growth: The approach aligns well with the concept of internal career development. Individuals may choose to apply their learning to internal career opportunities within the organisation, such as applying for distinct roles, thereby fostering a culture of growth and development.

Potential Pitfalls and Challenges

In this market, employee retention poses a significant challenge, making it imperative to not only attract but also continuously engage and develop personnel. This is where the concept of digital learning plays a crucial role. It serves as a valuable tool to direct employees towards ongoing development and learning opportunities, thereby fostering their commitment to the organisation.

The technical aspect of the platform's accessibility is a crucial consideration. Accessibility can be achieved through a straightforward URL or, alternatively, via service portals.

Ideally, the system should enable users to log in conveniently from any location with user's login credentials. However, there lies a considerable challenge in this regard, inherent to technology.

Motivating individuals to engage with the platform is another significant challenge, particularly given a voluntary approach to participation rather than a mandatory one. Encouraging widespread adoption and utilization of the platform is essential. Once users become acquainted with the platform, they tend to fully explore and utilize its features. However, the initial hurdle of getting individuals to embrace the platform is a formidable task.

The tourism and leisure industry faces substantial staffing shortages, often compounded by seasonal work patterns. While the situation of Landal may currently be manageable, many other companies experience prolonged periods of seasonal employment. For these individuals, particularly those engaged from April to November, allocating time for voluntary e-learning courses may not be a top priority. Balancing work with personal lives, family commitments, and hobbies poses significant challenges. Consequently, it becomes a substantial barrier to showcasing the full array of learning opportunities to everyone.

Benefits and Outcomes
When individuals utilize the platform, they express their admiration and find it immensely beneficial. However, the expectation of success is not solely centered on digital resources. This perspective aligns with the rationale that certain skills require hands-on practice, and real-life interactions contribute significantly to the learning process. This observation is particularly relevant given the organisation's informal culture.

Within this context, participating in training alongside colleagues provides a valuable learning experience. It allows individuals to gain insights from their peers and discover innovative ideas specific to various locations. Notably, the organisation frequently conducts open location training sessions, enabling employees to gain exposure to other operational sites.

This practice is seen as an advantageous byproduct, as it stimulates mutual learning among team members—an element that is not readily achievable through digital means alone.

Measuring Success

Naturally, a certain degree of monitoring is maintained. Individuals who join the organisation are provided with automatic login credentials. There is a level of oversight to monitor the extent of engagement. This encompasses assessing the level of active participation among individuals, quantifying the volume of learning activities undertaken, and tracking the number of completed learning activities. These metrics are also reported to the Social Fund for Recreation, a practice that holds significance as they contribute to funding, particularly within the Dutch context.

Responsibilities and accountability

However, it should be noted that the organisation does not mandate employees to participate in a specific number of learning activities per year or conduct specific evaluations from the employees' perspective. Evaluations are conducted, of course, with suppliers but not as a part of an employee-centric approach.

Both employees and managers can seek assistance from the Human Resources department. In the organisational context of Landal, this typically involves engaging with an HR business partner or directly with the HR Director.

References and External Resources

Learnit! - Landal GreenParks www.jobs.landal.com/learnit

BLENDED LEARNING

PRACTICAL SCENARIOS

FELXIBILE AND RESOURCE SAVING

Conclusion

In conclusion, it is highly recommended that organisations explore the implementation of blended learning solutions whenever feasible. The belief firmly lies in the effectiveness of this approach. The concept involves acquiring theoretical knowledge at one's own convenience and subsequently applying it in practical scenarios. This approach not only offers flexibility but also yields considerable time and resource savings. By reducing the need to deliver theoretical content during traditional training sessions, organisations can allocate more time for practical exercises or even shorten the duration of training programs. Consequently, this minimizes disruptions to the workforce, which is especially vital in the current challenging business landscape.

5.5 BEST PRACTICE: D-REIZEN

D-reizen is a well-known travel agency and tour operator based in the Netherlands. Founded in 1966, D-reizen has become one of the largest and most recognizable travel companies in the country. The name "D-reizen" translates to "D-travel" in English, emphasising their primary focus on providing a wide range of travel services to Dutch travellers.

5.5.1 Background information

The program is currently in a continuous development phase, taking a blended approach to learning. It was initially inherited from D-Reizen, where it was utilized more extensively, particularly with a focus on system knowledge, webinars, and podcasts for in-store staff. However, given the different nature of customer interactions in the customer service department compared to physical stores, the content initially available on the learning platform did not align perfectly with the needs of the customer service team.

Therefore, a foundational e-learning program was developed to provide employees with essential knowledge about the travel industry, starting from the basics. This educational initiative aimed to ensure that all employees understood the fundamentals of the travel industry, including differentiating between a tour operator and a travel agency.

In addition to the e-learning component, the program places a significant emphasis on skill development through physical training sessions.

The objective is not just to impart knowledge but also to teach employees how to effectively communicate this information to customers. This dual focus on customer interaction is a key aspect of the program.

The platform's current design primarily relies on text-based content with accompanying images. However, efforts are underway to enhance its interactivity by incorporating more multimedia elements, such as interactive components, videos, and assessments within the learning modules. These updates aim to create a more engaging learning experience, catering to the preferences of a relatively young target audience.

Within the organisation, there is a clear commitment to sustainable business practices. Regarding digital skills and the travel industry, there is a complexity inherent to this field. The travel industry encompasses numerous interconnected layers, adding to its intricacy. In contrast to standard customer service scenarios where inquiries receive immediate responses, the travel industry often involves relaying queries to a network of approximately 600 suppliers, creating distinct challenges. Looking towards the future, there are significant opportunities lying in fostering more efficient communication and collaboration among these various stakeholders.

Regarding soft skills, there is an importance in incorporating them into physical training sessions. This particularly pertains to the art of selling an experience. As the organisation deals with intangible, experiential products rather than physical items, it is crucial to equip employees with the skills to navigate customer interactions effectively.

In this context, the goal is not to engage in debates over subjective matters, such as the crispiness of french fries, but rather to focus on how the customer perceives their experience. Addressing and resolving common customer complaints, often related to their perceived experience, is of paramount importance. Therefore, soft skills training should emphasize avoiding confrontations and instead fostering a customer-centric approach that involves active listening and empathy.

5.5.2 Analysis and overview

Key principles

The key consideration revolves around the optimal management of content within a learning platform. It is emphasized that overloading the platform with vast amounts of content can pose challenges, particularly when updates or adjustments are needed. In such cases, the necessity to modify entire training modules can be cumbersome. Therefore, the speaker believes that the long-term sustainability of a learning platform is achieved by prioritising an understanding of how individuals arrive at answers and solutions rather than merely inundating them with information.

Maintaining the platform's relevance and ensuring that it does not become quickly outdated is crucial. This implies periodically removing outdated or less pertinent content, a task that can be intricate due to factors such as archived podcasts. For instance, a podcast created five years ago about a specific destination may not accurately represent the current situation. While there might be a temptation to include such content, it is important to acknowledge the need for regular updates and maintenance.

Within the specific department in focus, practical relevance is emphasised as essential for sustained engagement. The most effective learning experiences are derived from practical, real-world situations. An example cited is an extensive Schmetterling Webinar that may not resonate with learners due to its lack of direct applicability. Instead, the preference is for shorter, focused learning interventions that address common, practical scenarios, such as how to handle a customer request for a flight change and the subsequent steps involved. The utilization of resources like the Guides, which serve as a knowledge repository for looking up specific information, is also highlighted.

Examples and Case Studies

The customer care department has successfully welcomed numerous individuals from the marketing sector who initiated their careers within the department.

This transition is widely regarded as advantageous, given the enhanced understanding of customer preferences that such individuals possess.

For many colleagues, their tenure within the department serves as a stepping stone to opportunities elsewhere within the organisation.

Furthermore, the department of customer care actively engages with interns, frequently accommodating students from various MBO programs in Den Bosch for their practical training. This initiative often culminates in these interns returning to join the department as full-time employees, representing a positive outcome and a testament to the department's appeal as a workplace.

The organisation actively fosters an environment conducive to personal growth and advancement, which is consistently encouraged. The department values and embraces the progression of its employees. Notably, with the recent acquisition of D-Reizen, an increasing number of individuals from the retail sector have expressed their interest in transitioning to roles within the headquarters, marking a significant trend.

This influx of personnel from retail backgrounds is highly welcomed, as it brings a wealth of experience accumulated over several decades in the retail sector, which complements the department's existing knowledge base. This phenomenon is observed frequently, and it greatly contributes to the department's continued development and expansion.

Potential Pitfalls and Challenges
Currently, there exists a disparity in the ease with which information can be accessed and processes can be executed across different platforms and suppliers. This complexity is particularly challenging for junior employees who are new to the travel industry, as each link in the chain adheres to distinct procedures.
It is suggested that the industry's progress can be realised by encouraging all individual components within the network to contribute in ways that benefit the entire travel sector.

The organisation has experienced rapid growth, a development that is readily apparent.

This expansion has led to the creation of roles related to HR, as the organisation has demonstrated its agility and adaptability to evolving circumstances. However, with growth comes the imperative for greater professionalism. Currently, there is no established framework for formal performance evaluations; the process is more fluid and responsive to individual needs. Still, there is a growing aspiration to introduce more structured performance appraisal procedures soon.

Benefits and Outcomes

A significant advantage of the e-learning platform lies in its remarkable flexibility. The organisation caters to diverse target groups, including those with high turnover rates and individuals who may still be pursuing their studies. Employees can complete these courses remotely, whether working from home or on-site within the department. This flexibility is deemed the most substantial benefit, enhancing efficiency significantly. Traditional training sessions may require pulling ten employees off their regular tasks, which can lead to knowledge decay over time. With e-learning, individuals have the autonomy to engage with the material when convenient, and they can revisit it for reinforcement if necessary.

However, there are also challenges and drawbacks associated with an online academy. One crucial consideration is continually assessing the intended purpose of e-learning. It is an oversimplification to assume that deploying e-learning is a one-size-fits-all solution to address individual performance issues, such as when an employee is not performing well. The primary goal should be to establish a foundation or provide support, but it does not complete the entire circle of development. For example, in managing flight modifications, a comprehensive approach involves a series of steps. It begins with an engaging workshop on efficient work practices, followed by an e-learning component that delves deeper into the subject, outlining key considerations and steps. Afterwards, it transitions to a coaching phase, where the focus shifts to assessing how well the learned concepts are being applied in practice.

This comprehensive approach ensures that the sense of urgency created in the workshop translates effectively into practical application, which is the most crucial aspect of the learning process. Therefore, it is imperative not to view e-learning as a standalone solution, but rather as one component within a broader developmental framework.

Measuring Success

It is seamlessly integrated into the onboarding process. The organisation can monitor the progress of employees as they advance through the different components of the training. The academy is essentially an optional feature for those who have an interest in following the podcasts, but it isn't obligatory.

Responsibilities and Accountability

Regular one-on-one meetings with supervisors serve as a fixed component within the organisational structure. These discussions invariably encompass an exploration of the employee's developmental aspirations. Notably, when employees express an interest in transitioning to roles beyond their current department, such intentions are actively supported and facilitated.

References and External Resources

D-academy | werken bij d-reizen: www.werkenbijd-reizen.nl/d-academy/

ENHANCED EFFICIENCY

INNOVATIVE DEVELOPMENT

TANGIBLE BENEFITS

Conclusion

In conclusion, the challenge lies in sustaining momentum and relevance over time. The inherent tension between the desire to invest and the practical constraints faced by organisations is a common hurdle. However, the true opportunity lies in a concerted effort to identify opportunities for enhanced efficiency. This may involve collaborative initiatives that address the evolving needs within the travel industry. The organisation remains open to innovative developments that demonstrate significant potential, as substantial investments in such initiatives can yield tangible benefits in both the short and long term.

SKILLS SYNTHESIS

a skilled workforce is essential for the sustainable growth competitiveness of the tourism sector

The findings presented in this report serve as a roadmap for policymakers, educators, and industry stakeholders to collaborate effectively in shaping the future of tourism workforce development.

In essence, the PANTOUR Country Skills Profile Reports serve as a call to action, urging stakeholders to prioritize skill enhancement initiatives and embrace innovative practices to ensure the continued success and resilience of the tourism industry in the years to come.

f   facebook.com/nexttourismgeneration

🐦   twitter.com/NTGAlliance

in   linkedin.com/company/pantour-pact-for-next-tourism -generation-skills/

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PANTOUR
PACT FOR NEXT TOURISM GENERATION SKILLS

https://nexttourismgeneration.eu/pantour/

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Appendix 1. Examples of Digital Training Providers in The Netherlands

Training provider name 1:   Breda University of Applied Sciences
Website: www.buas.nl
Type of provider: University of Applied Sciences
Covered skills - types: Breda University of Applied Sciences has created various courses on E-business and digital skills in its newly designed curriculum for its tourism students.   Some examples: *First year*   **E-business Fundamentals** - students are working on acquiring knowledge of technical possibilities of modern communication technology and evaluating how their importance (internet, mobile, datamining, big data) and on monitoring and analysing online consumer behaviour;   **E-Lab** - digital tools in tourism; students get acquainted with VR and using 360-degree cameras, AR, live-streaming, tourism related apps, social media, digital analytics tools, creating websites; they must complete several assignments in these fields to finish the module;   **Online Marketing & Communication 1** - the basics of writing marketing plans while considering the online marketing possibilities.

Second year

- **Online Consumer Behaviour Research -** the focus is on quantitative research tools for researching online consumer behaviour, both traditional (such as panel data from a survey) and modern tools (such as social media monitoring research); students work on competencies in online skills (online copywriting, Adwords, Google Analytics, Wordpress, Social Media Monitoring) as well as monitoring and analysing consumer behaviour online;
- **Online Marketing & Communication 2** - a deepening of the knowledge and skills gained during the first Module in year 1.

Third year

- **Business Intelligence**
  Students get a project-based opportunity to get hands-on experience in (big) data analysis and data

  visualization. Students will learn to prepare, analyse and present (big) data using software tools to create

  such business insights.

- **Social Media Research**
  Data processing; Social Media Monitoring; ethics of social media and the processing of data in combination

  with privacy; the relationship between digitization and the distinction between fake and true.

- **Digital Marketing Research I & II (also offered as minor fourth year)**
  The main objective of the marketing campaign is to firstly gain reach for the website through keyword

  research, initial website content, affiliate marketing, search engine marketing, social media marketing &

  influencer marketing. These form the basis for generating traffic and thereby filling the funnel. Secondly,

  the objective is to persuade website visitors to start acting upon your service/product offer on and off the

  website. The focus is on the further development of the website content, continued social media marketing,

  link building, Email marketing, and real time marketing.

Methods of delivery (i.e., online/class; modules/courses/trainings, certification):

Classes, online, modules, trainings, E-academy (students can be awarded the 'Thuiswinkel' certificate for experts in online marketing).

Training provider name 2

Reiswerk

Website:

Type of provider :

Trade association.

Reiswerk is the labour market foundation for the travel sector. Activities are geared towards attracting new talents and the retention of employees in the travel sector. Information about employment conditions and labour market developments in the travel sector are also provided. The website is the leading knowledge platform for everyone working in the travel sector. Travel College is Reiswork's online educational platform.

Covered skills-types:

Essentials: Artificial intelligence

E-learning: Excel, reviews, digital photography, cross border e-commerce, digital Innovation, omnichannel retail, content marketing strategy, conversion rate optimization, digital analytics, E-mailmarketing, online branding, psychology of conversion, SEO (+technical) , content for SEO, SEA, social media, introduction in AI for e-commerce, influencer marketing, data strategies in e-commerce, affiliate marketing, AB-testing, neuromarketing, remarketing, conversion attribution,

Webinars: masterclass Blockchain in Travel

Methods of delivery (i.e., online/class; modules/courses/trainings, certification):

Online education (e-learnings, webinars, podcasts, essentials, we-learnings)

Training provider name 3:

RecreatieHero

Website:

https://recreatiehero.nl/training/

Type of provider:

Trade association.

RECRON, FNV Recreation and CNV skilled workers have taken the initiative to make a wide range of online training courses available to the recreation sector. This assortment of courses consists of training from HorecaHero and GoodHabitz, which are offered within a learning management system designed for recreation. KIKK/SFR and the O&O foundation for accommodation and recreation provide financing for these associations.

Covered skills-types:

Social media (marketing) in the field of recreation; digital literacy (word, excel etc); Artificial intelligence; digital transformation;

Methods of delivery of this provider

Online training, masterclass

Training provider name 4

Nederlands Talen Instituut (NTI)

Website: https://NTI.nl

Type of provider:

Commercial training provider

Covered skills-types:

Online marketing, business intelligence

Methods of delivery

Online, classes, courses, certification

Training provider name 5

Frankwatching Academy

Website: https://www.frankwatching.com/academy/

Type of provider:
Commercial training provider
Covered skills-types:
Online marketing NIMA, data analytics (google ads, analytics, tag manager, SEO, SEA), marketing technology, social media (FB, Insta, TikTok, LinkedIn), UX research, usability testing, content creation
Methods of delivery :
Online, class, courses, training, certifications

Training provider name 6
Computrain
Website:
https://www.computrain.nl/
Type of provider
Commercial training provider
Covered skills-types
Digital security, Certified Information Privacy Professional Europe (CIPP/E), artificial intelligence, robotic process automation, data science, data analytics
Methods of delivery
Online, class, courses, training, masterclass, certifications

Training provider name 7
Various Universities of Applied Sciences in the Netherlands
Website: E.g., https://www.hu.nl , https://www.nhlstenden.com, https://www.hogeschoolrotterdam.nl
Type of provider Universities of applied sciences
Covered skills-types Online marketing & communication; big data analytics, artificial intelligence, virtual and augmented reality, mobile technologies, digital security, privacy and ethics.
Methods of delivery Online, class, training, modules, certifications

Appendix 2. Examples of 'Green' training providers in The Netherlands

Training provider name 1:   Breda University of Applied Sciences (BUas)
Website: www.buas.nl
Type of provider   University of Applied Sciences
Covered skills types   Bachelor: modules that incorporate obtaining green skills; focus on management   ● Environmental management   ● Sustainable communication   ● Conservation of biodiversity   Bachelor of science in Tourism (BTO) (offered by BUas and Wageningen University & research):   The BSc Tourism is the only academic bachelor's programme in the field of tourism in the Netherlands. It is a combination of economic, social and environmental sciences. Topics of research projects include sustainability, climate change, globalisation and health.
Methods of delivery :   Class, modules

Training provider name 2: MVO - Nederland	
Website: https://www.mvonederland.nl/mvo-opleidingsprogramma-voor-bedrijven/	
Type of provider Trade association	
Covered skills types: *Environmental management & Sustainable communication* The roles of a manager within corporate social responsibility; transitional thinking, organisational change, influencing behaviour, creating shared value, tools for monitoring sustainable goals, measurement of impact, moral compass.	
Methods of delivery Class, course, podcasts, certification	

Training provider name 3: Open University	
Website: https://www.ou.nl	
Type of provider Open University	
Covered skills types	

Environmental management & Sustainable communication
Climate change and transition to low carbon economy, conservation of biodiversity
Fundamentals & Policy Instruments, Common Pool Resource Management, Economic Valuation and Cost-Benefit Analysis, Economics of Forests and Ecosystems, new economic policy instruments such as REDD+, PES (Payments for Ecosystem Services), compensation and offsetting, The Green Economy and Green Growth, The economic perspective on the environment: assumptions and theoretical diversity

Methods of delivery
Online, certification, MOOCs and podcasts

Training provider name 4:
Wageningen University

Website:
https://www.wur.nl/

Type of provider
Research university

Covered skills types
Covered skills types: - Resource-efficiency   - Climate change and transition to low carbon economy   - Conservation of biodiversity   - Sustainability communication   - Environmental management   Environmental Sciences bachelor: see https://www.wur.nl/nl/onderwijs-opleidingen/bachelor/bsc-opleidingen/bachelor-environmental-sciences.htm   The Environmental Sciences master's programme in Wageningen has its roots in the natural, technological and social sciences. Students will gain insight into the socio-economic causes and the characteristics of pollution and degradation of the natural environment, including the effects on human beings, the atmosphere, ecosystems and

other organisms. This two-year programme is based on an interdisciplinary approach. Students learn to develop analytical tools and models, as well as technologies, socio-political arrangements and economic instruments to prevent and control the wicked environmental and sustainability issues like climate change, biodiversity loss and resource depletion. See: https://www.wur.nl/en/Education-Programmes/master/MSc-programmes/MSc-Environmental-Sciences.htm

The programme Environmental Sciences offers four specialisations and within these specialisations ten different theses tracks are offered.: Environmental Quality, Environmental Policy and Economics, Environmental Technology Human-Environmental Systems.

See: https://www.wur.nl/en/education-programmes/master/msc-programmes/msc-environmental-sciences/thesis-tracks-of-environmental-sciences.htm

Methods of delivery

Class, modules

Training provider name 5:

The Hague Academy forLocal Governance

Website:

https://thehagueacademy.com/

Type of provider

NGO

Covered skills types

- Resource-efficiency
- Sustainability communication
- Environmental management

Local climate vulnerabilities are assessed and climate change projections and scenarios for the future are discussed.

Policy implications of these climate change projections are explored in a case study. Furthermore, the course focuses

on the design and planning of sustainable development policies. Attention will be paid to the integration of smart solutions for food, water, energy and transport as well as to city-region relations. In a special module, we will zoom in on instruments for financing climate adaptation. See https://thehagueacademy.com/course/climate-adaptation-local-resilience/

Methods of delivery

Course

Training provider name 6:

Erasmus University Rotterdam

Website:

https://www.eur.nl/

Type of provider

University

Covered skills types:

- Resource-efficiency
- Climate change and transition to low carbon economy
- Conservation of biodiversity
- Environmental management

Global business and sustainability deals with understanding organisations embedded within sustainable socio-ecological systems. It is about learning tools and frameworks that enable applying knowledge to create sustainability solutions. The study is set up to challenge the current status- quo and to critically ask whether this is the way things should work.

Topics such as: Sustainability Leadership & Planetary Boundaries, Global Business Strategies, esearch methodology, Sustainability, and behavioural ethics, Personal Narrative, Communication and Career, Sustainability grand challenges, Managing NGOs, Corporations and Justice, Climate Change Strategy Role-play, GBS Research Project, Sustainable business models, Social Venture Creation, Cradle to cradle & circular economy are addressed.

See https://www.rsm.nl/education/master/msc-programmes/msc-global-business-sustainability/

Methods of delivery
Classes

Training provider name 7:   Travelife
Website: https://www.travelife.info/index_new.php?menu=training&lang=en
Type of provider   Travelife is a leading training, management and certification initiative for tourism companies committed to reaching sustainability.
Covered skills types   *Environmental management*   How to make and implement a sustainability mission statement, policy, and action plan;   How to improve your internal sustainability management (e.g., how to 'green' your office and how to treat employees fairly);   About the sustainability impacts of your accommodation, transport, and excursion providers;   Actions you can take to improve sustainability of your suppliers;   How to positively motivate your customers to make more sustainable choices during their holidays.
Methods of delivery (i.e., online/class; modules/courses/trainings, certification):   Online, certification

Appendix 3. Examples of Social-Cultural training providers in NL

Training provider name 1:   Breda University of Applied Sciences (BUas)
Website: https://www.buas.nl
Type of provider   University of Applied Sciences
Covered skills types: *Professional skills and attitude*   Communication skills, meetings, presentations, critical thinking, and research.   *Personal and Professional Development*   Personal and Professional Development is the central thread which runs through the curriculum, consisting of several compulsory modules in the first three years of the programme. When carrying out the (integral) tasks, the Tourism Professional demonstrates that he/she has a broad and international orientation, demonstrates a feeling for hospitality and social responsibility, processes, where possible, general, and technological trends, has good oral and

written (intercultural) communication skills, ethics, and critical ability (including self-critical ability) and shows personal leadership.

The Global Mind Monitor

The Global Mind Monitor (GMM) was developed in co-creation with Etil Research Group. The GMM is a measurement and reflection tool that is specifically designed to measure and map the development of intercultural competencies among students in higher education. The GMM allows students to visualise their intercultural competencies in various stages of their curriculum, based on internationally validated quantitative scaling instruments (Multicultural Personality, Cultural Intelligence, Ethnocentrism, and a broad set of individual background variables). Several higher education institutions in the Netherlands make use of this tool that currently contains more than 12,000 individual measurements. Students take part in one, two or even more measurement rounds.

See: https://www.zuyd.nl/binaries/content/assets/zuyd/onderzoek/inaugurele-redes/global-minds-ankie-hoefnagels_lectoralerede.pdf

Global competences have become increasingly important in the field of higher education. The OESO defines global competences as: local, global & intercultural thinking, understanding different perspectives and effective engagements with people from diverse cultures. Young people contribute to a sustainable world by their international competences. Moreover, an increasingly international study and work environment make international competences a necessity and therefore a crucial factor in employability. See https://gmm.international/gmm-home-en

Methods of delivery

Class, workshops, MOOCs

Training provider name 2:

Koninklijke Horeca Nederland (KHN)

Website:

https://www.khn.nl

Type of provider
Trade association
Covered skills types
KHN has been committed to the fight against illegal hotel prostitution and human trafficking for years. For example, KHN has previously made the information film 'Please Disturb' together with Accor Hotels and Van der Valk hotels, the Public Prosecution Service (OM) and the police, to make hotel staff aware of illegal hotel prostitution and human trafficking. KHN has also developed several safety cards together with the parties mentioned before. It contains clear pictograms on the front and tips on what to do in the event of possible human trafficking.
See https://www.khn.nl/cursus/online-training-no-place-for-sex-trafficking
Methods of delivery (i.e., online/class; modules/courses/trainings, certification):
Online, certificate when 60% of employees attend the online training.

Training provider name 3
Reiswerk
Website:
www.reiswerk.nl
Type of provider
Trade association
Covered skills-types
Essentials: coaching of a co-worker, career coaching, skills Assessment: Myhouseofskills
E-learning: mindfulness, lifelong learning, effective communication (LSD)
Webinars: vital leadership, vital and energetic life, resilience in work

Methods of delivery
Online education (e-learnings, webinars, podcasts, essentials, we-learnings)

Training provider name 4:
WeTravel2
Website: https://wetravel2.eu/actueel/trainingen/
Type of provider (see list above):   Tour operator
Covered skills types (see list in *General Introduction*):   An accessible office and supply   A valuable reception for people with disabilities
Methods of delivery (i.e., online/class; modules/courses/trainings, certification):   Training

Training provider name 5:
TUI Netherlands
Website: https://careers.tuigroup.com/our-dna/learning/
Type of provider (see list above):

Tour operator

Covered skills types (see list in *General Introduction*):
The HOW2 programme is designed to help all managers at TUI develop their people management skills.
How2 manages yourself through change' – focuses on building the capability of people leaders to personally navigate change and maximise their impact as a role model and champion for change. It is made up of three 'micro modules':
- HOW2 build Emotional Intelligence (EQ)   - HOW2 choose the right change leadership behaviours   - HOW2 develop a change mindset
The ability to manage the people side of change is a critical skill for all of us, the Hub has been developed to support everyone in a change process, here you will find:
- A 'Change@TUI Toolkit'. – overview of how to manage change and includes practical tips and techniques.   - A 'Manage Self through change' – learn more about yourself so you can be more effective at supporting others.   - A 'Manage Others through change' -designed to support leaders as they help their teams accept and adapt to change.

Methods of delivery (i.e., online/class; modules/courses/trainings, certification):
Online

Training provider name 6:
The Hague Academy for Local Governance

Website:
https://thehagueacademy.com/

Type of provider
NGO

Covered skills types
CITIZEN PARTICIPATION & INCLUSIVE GOVERNANCE

This course discusses strategies and approaches to promote citizen participation in local governance, analysing their benefits and limitations. We will examine different communication tools and consider the importance of managing the expectations of citizens, community organisations and other stakeholders. Special attention is given to ensuring all voices are heard, including women, youth and people with disabilities. Furthermore, we will explore how citizens can be empowered to voice their concerns and hold their governments accountable.

GENDER RESPONSIVE GOVERNANCE

This course discusses gender dynamics and focuses on the diverse needs and priorities of women, men, young girls, and boys. We will discuss gender-sensitive strategies and tools for gender analysis, mainstreaming gender, and gender-responsive budgeting in policies and programmes at the local level. Special attention is given to the involvement of marginalised groups (i.e., women and youth) in development initiatives. The course will also underline how best to engage men and discuss cross-cutting issues of applying a diverse gender perspective (intersectionality), especially in complex cultural, religious, or conflict-affected settings. |
| **Methods of delivery** (i.e., online/class; modules/courses/trainings, certification):

Course |

| **Training provider name 7**:

RecreatieHero |
| --- |
| **Website**:

https://recreatiehero.nl/training |
| **Type of provider** :

Trade association |
| **Covered skills types** |

Methods of delivery

Online training, masterclass