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COUNTRY
SKILLS
PROFILE
REPORT



PORTUGAL



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this Country Skills Profile Report is to provide a comprehensive overview of tourism employment and the current situation regarding the future competences needed by the Portuguese tourism sector in three areas: digital, environmental and social. The report also aims to draw up ideas about the future of tourism, forecast trends and new professional profiles.

Based on primary and secondary research, conclusions are drawn about the tourism sector in Portugal,



“Leading the tourism of the future” is how Portugal aims to be seen.

a very important sector for Portugal’s economy, as it represents a significant share of the country’s gross domestic product (GDP), employment, exports and investment.

In the past years, Portugal has strengthened its position as the world’s best destination when it comes to Tourism.

For the 6th time in the last seven years Portugal was considered “Europe’s Leading Destination” in the World Travel Awards 2023 (Worldtravelawards, 2023).

The Tourism Strategy 2027 (Turismo de Portugal, 2016) launched by the portuguese government in 2017, aims at positioning Portugal as one of the world's most competitive, safe and sustainable tourism destination, with the motto "Leading the tourism of the future". This means a cohesive territory, innovative and competitive, that values work and talent.

Portugal wants to be a destination to visit, to invest, to live and to study in, being an inclusive, open, and creative country that positions itself as a specialized hub for travel & tourism (Turismo de Portugal, 2024a):

To reach all the desired goals, tourism in Portugal must invest in:

- The digital transformation of the tourism sector, which requires the development of digital skills and competencies among the tourism workforce, as well as the adoption of new technologies and innovation by tourism businesses. The digitalization of tourism offers opportunities for marketing, product and destination development, as well as for improving the quality and efficiency of tourism services. However, there are still gaps and challenges in terms of digital infrastructure, access, literacy and skills in Portugal.
- The sustainability of the tourism sector, which involves balancing the economic, social and environmental impacts of tourism activities. The tourism sector faces challenges such as managing the carrying capacity of tourist destinations, reducing the seasonality and concentration of tourist flows, diversifying the tourist offer and markets, promoting social responsibility and inclusion, and mitigating the effects of climate change. The tourism sector needs to adopt a strategic vision and a coordinated approach to address these challenges and ensure its long-term competitiveness and resilience.
- The next tourism workforce generation, which need a boost in social-cultural skills training such as empathy, responsibility, critical thinking, and social-cultural background to achieve excellence in customer service.



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

The original publication from 2024 consists of an online survey and results within each country in the PANTOUR consortium, held among tourism professionals, HR managers and decision makers as well as an inventory of Best Practices The document can be found in the PANTOUR publications.

The publication at hand, consists of updated information as well as results from best practice interviews held in late 2025 for tourism professionals offering an 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 towards 2030.

1. GENERAL TOURISM CHARACTERISTICS, FACTS & FIGURES OF PORTUGAL

The primary aim of this chapter of the Country Skills Profile report is to elaborate on general information and give a summary of the tourism situation in Portugal. 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.

1.1. TOURISM FACTS & FIGURES

TOURISM GLOBALLY

The tourism industry is a vast and complex sector encompassing accommodation, transport, attractions, travel companies, and more. According to the UNWTO World Tourism Barometer, international tourism has made a nearly full recovery.

An estimated 1.4 billion international tourist arrivals were recorded globally in 2024, representing 99% of pre-pandemic levels — a remarkable increase of 11% compared to 2023 (UN Tourism, n.d.).

In the first three quarters of 2025, over 1.1 billion overnight international arrivals were registered—approximately 50 million more than in the same period in 2024, marking a 5% year-on-year increase, and 3% above the corresponding period in 2019 (UN Tourism, n.d.)

While exact global economic contribution figures for tourism in 2024/2025 are not detailed in this latest report, those 2024 results align closely with pre-pandemic economic impact trends. Previously, tourism's total contribution to global GDP

was estimated at \$7.71 trillion in 2022, reflecting a 7.6 % share of global GDP — still about 5% below pre-pandemic levels (World Tourism Organization, 2025).

1.1.1 CONTRIBUTION OF TRAVEL & TOURISM TO GDP IN PORTUGAL

In 2024, the total contribution of tourism (including direct, indirect, and induced effects) to Portugal's GDP reached €34 billion, equivalent to 11.9% of GDP, compared to 12.0% in 2023 and 11.2% in 2022.

The Gross Value Added by Tourism (direct effect) amounted to €20.1 billion — accounting for 8.1% of national GVA — while tourism consumption represented 16.6% of GDP, maintaining record-high levels.

The tourism sector contributed 0.3 percentage points to Portugal's real GDP growth of 1.9% in 2024.

Total international tourism receipts in Portugal reached €27.2 billion in 2024, corresponding to a strong 8.8% increase compared to 2023 (Instituto Nacional de Estatística, 2025; Turismo de Portugal, 2025b).

These figures, sourced exclusively from the INE and Turismo de Portugal, confirm that tourism remains a vital and resilient pillar of the Portuguese economy

1.1.2. SIZE AND RELEVANCE OF THE SUBSECTORS

The UNWTO World Tourism Barometer reports a record 1.4 billion international tourist arrivals in 2024, representing 99% of pre-pandemic levels and an 11% increase over 2023.

On employment, the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) projects that the travel and tourism sector will support 348 million jobs worldwide in 2024, marking a notable increase since 2019. Complementing this, ILOSTAT estimates more than 270 million workers are currently employed in the sector globally, accounting for around 8.2% of the total workforce (Travel And Tour World, 2024).

These updated figures contrast with earlier Statista figures, which reported 963 million international arrivals and 295 million jobs in 2022, rising to a projected

320 million in 2023 and 430 million by 2033. The newer data shows the sector has nearly regained its full pre-pandemic strength (Learn Tourism, 2025).

| Size and relevance of sub-sectors in 2019 | Accommodation | Restaurants | Transportation | Tour operators | Cultural services | Recreation and other entertainment services | Other tourism services | Connected products | Non-specific products |
|---|---------------|-------------|----------------|----------------|-------------------|---|------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| Tourism consumption on the economic territory | 8 605 382 | 8 009 991 | 5 815 276 | 832 935 | 395 978 | 952 013 | 786 550 | 2 053 265 | 5 454 488 |
| Total tourism consumption on the economic territory | 32 905 878 | 32 905 878 | 32 905 878 | 32 905 878 | 32 905 878 | 32 905 878 | 32 905 878 | 32 905 878 | 32 905 878 |
| % share | 26,2% | 24,3% | 17,7% | 2,5% | 1,2% | 2,9% | 2,4% | 6,2% | 16,6% |

1.1.3. INCOMING AND OUTGOING TOURISTS

In 2024:

- Number of guests in tourist accommodation: 31 600 000
Source: Statistics Portugal (INE)

Tourism Statistics 2024: Tourist activity maintains upward trajectory (Press Release, 9 July 2025) (INE, n.d.)

Statistics Portugal (INE) indicates that, in 2024, the total of tourist accommodation establishments recorded 31.6 million guests, corresponding to an increase of about 5.2% compared with 2023.

- Number of trips abroad by Portuguese residents: 3 400 000
Source: Statistics Portugal (INE) – *Tourism Statistics 2024 / Tourism Demand of Residents* (Press Release, 9 July 2025) (INE, n.d.)

Trips abroad made by residents in Portugal increased by 6.2% in 2024, reaching a historic high.

1.1.4. SHARE OF DIFFERENT TRANSPORTATION MODES IN TOURISM

Passengers disembarking at national airports continued to increase, reaching 70.4 million passengers in 2024, which corresponds to a year-on-year growth of 4.3%. This growth followed the strong post-pandemic recovery observed in previous years, although at a more moderate pace than in 2023. Lisbon Airport concentrated nearly half of total passenger movements, while Porto and Faro airports together accounted for more than one third of national air traffic. International traffic remained dominant, with passengers arriving from abroad representing more than 80% of total disembarkations, mainly originating from European countries.

Air transport continues to be the main gateway for international tourism to Portugal. In 2024, the United Kingdom remained the leading country of origin and destination for air passengers, followed by France and Spain, despite a slight contraction in French passenger flows. These trends are consistent with the broader international tourism recovery observed across Europe, where air connectivity played a central role in sustaining tourism growth.

At the international level, UN Tourism confirms that global tourism in 2024 nearly returned to pre-pandemic levels, with Europe consolidating its position as the world's leading destination region, supported by strong intra-European air travel. This context reinforces the ongoing importance of air transport as the preferred mode of travel for international visitors to Portugal (Instituto Nacional de Estatística, 2024, Turismo de Portugal, 2024, UN Tourism, 2024).

1.1.5. ARRIVALS OF INTERNATIONAL VERSUS NATIONAL TOURISTS

In 2024, there were approximately 19.4 million international arrivals at hotels and similar tourist accommodation establishments in Portugal. In the same year, around 12.2 million domestic arrivals (residents) were recorded in hotels and similar establishments.

Overall, tourist accommodation establishments registered a total of 31.6 million guests, confirming a new historical peak and reinforcing the strong weight of

international demand, which accounted for about 61% of total arrivals (Instituto Nacional de Estatística, 2025; Turismo de Portugal, 2024).

TOP 5 INTERNATIONAL MARKETS | OVERNIGHT STAYS (2024)

Based on overnight stays by non-resident tourists, the top five international source markets in 2024 were:

1. United Kingdom
2. Germany
3. Spain
4. United States of America
5. France

These markets together accounted for the majority of overnight stays by international visitors, with the UK remaining the leading market, while the United States continued to show strong growth, consolidating its position among the top five (Instituto Nacional de Estatística, 2024; Turismo de Portugal, 2024).

1.1.6. TYPE OF TRAVEL: BUSINESS TRAVEL, CONSUMERS/ LEISURE TRAVEL

In 2024, the European Travel Commission (ETC) continued the project Monitoring Sentiment for Domestic and Intra European Travel, launched in September 2020, which assesses travel intentions across ten high volume European source markets. The latest waves (Wave 19 and Wave 20) confirm that travel intentions in Europe remain consistently high, with 73–76% of Europeans planning to travel within the following six months, predominantly within Europe. This monitoring framework, initially developed in the context of the pandemic, now reflects a consolidated post pandemic travel environment.

Portugal continues to rank among the Top 10 European destinations preferred for the next international trip by European travellers. According to the ETC Monitoring Sentiment – Wave 20, Portugal is positioned 10th among European destinations for travel during the autumn and winter period of 2024/2025,

maintaining its presence in the Top 10 despite increasing competition from other European destinations. This positioning reflects sustained destination appeal rather than short term recovery effects.

Leisure travel clearly dominates travel motivations across Europe. In 2024, around 68–74% of Europeans travelling in the following six months planned a leisure trip, while visits to friends and relatives accounted for approximately 14–15%, and business travel remained structurally low at around 6–8%. This confirms that business travel has not returned to pre pandemic levels and that tourism growth continues to be driven primarily by leisure demand.

Among Europeans planning to travel to Portugal, city breaks and culture & heritage experiences are the leading motivations. Nearly one quarter of potential visitors associate Portugal with city break travel, while cultural and heritage tourism accounts for close to one fifth of stated motivations. These preferences are particularly strong outside the peak summer season, reinforcing Portugal's positioning as a year-round destination.

Despite this diversification, sun and beach tourism remains a relevant motivation. In 2024, sun and beach holidays accounted for approximately 14–16% of European travel intentions, while coast and sea related tourism represented around 11–12%, confirming the continued importance of Portugal's coastal assets, even as demand becomes more experienced driven and less seasonal.

The top travel experiences sought by Europeans when travelling to Portugal are strongly aligned with experiential tourism trends identified by both ETC and UN Tourism. The leading motivations include tasting local cuisine, experiencing local culture, and enjoying natural landscapes and scenic views. These preferences reflect a broader European shift towards authentic, culture based and nature-oriented experiences, which UN Tourism identifies as a defining characteristic of global tourism demand in 2024 (European Travel Commission, 2024; Turismo de Portugal, 2024; UN Tourism, 2024).

1.1.7. COMPANY SIZES

In 2024, tourism-related activities in Portugal (accommodation, restaurants and similar) were overwhelmingly composed of SME´s, which represented over 99% of enterprises, while large companies accounted for less than 1% of the sector (Instituto Nacional de Estatística, 2024; Turismo de Portugal, 2024).

1.2. TRAVEL AND TOURISM'S CONTRIBUTION TO EMPLOYMENT

In 2024, activities related to Accommodation, Restaurants and Similar Establishments employed 318.0 thousand individuals in Portugal, representing a decrease of 17.2 thousand employees compared to 2023 (-5.1%), following the exceptionally strong post-pandemic labour expansion observed in the previous year.

The population employed in the Accommodation, Restaurants and Similar Establishments sectors represented 6.2% of total employment in the Portuguese economy in 2024, a slight reduction of 0.4 percentage points compared to 2023, but still above the levels observed during the pandemic period and clearly above the share recorded in 2021.

Despite this moderate contraction, tourism-related employment remained structurally significant within the national labour market, reflecting the central role of tourism as one of Portugal's most labour-intensive economic sectors (Instituto Nacional de Estatística, 2025; Turismo de Portugal, 2024).

1.3. DIRECT AND TOTAL CONTRIBUTION OF TOURISM TO GDP IN 10 YEARS' TIME

The travel and tourism sector in Portugal reached a new historical peak in 2024, contributing approximately €60.6 billion to GDP, equivalent to 21.3% of the

national economy, clearly surpassing both the 2019 pre-pandemic record and the levels projected for 2023. This performance confirms tourism as one of the main pillars of economic growth in Portugal, according to the World Travel and Tourism Council (World Travel & Tourism Council, 2025a).

Looking ahead, the WTTC projects that travel and tourism will continue to strengthen its role in the Portuguese economy, with the sector's contribution to GDP expected to reach around €74.6 billion by 2035, representing more than 22% of national GDP, driven by sustained international demand, growing domestic tourism and continued investment in the sector (WTTC, 2025)

Contribution of tourism to GDP — update through 2024

| | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 |
|--------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Tourism Receipts | 8 606 | 9 157 | 10 284 | 11 605 | 12 811 | 15 550 | 17 054 | 18 291 | 7 716 | 10 064 | 21 141 |
| GDP | 168 296 | 170 492 | 173 054 | 179 713 | 186 490 | 195 947 | 205 184 | 214 375 | 200 519 | 216 053 | 242 341 |
| Contribution of Tourism in GDP | 5,1% | 5,4% | 5,9% | 6,5% | 6,9% | 7,9% | 8,3% | 8,5% | 3,8% | 4,7% | 8,7% |

- 2023: Tourism receipts reached €25.1 bn, equal to ~9.5% of GDP (preliminary figure reported by Turismo de Portugal, sourced to Banco de Portugal). (Turismo de Portugal, 2024b)
- 2024: Tourism receipts rose to €27.7 bn, equivalent to 9.7% of GDP (final/updated figure reported by TravelBI based on Banco de Portugal). (Turismo de Portugal, 2025a, 2025b; Banco de Portugal, 2024a, 2024b; Instituto Nacional de Estatística, 2024).

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

Employment in tourism (Accommodation and Restaurant sectors) from 2012 to 2022 represented a variable but structurally significant share of total employment in Portugal, reflecting the sector's sensitivity to economic cycles and its strong recovery capacity (Instituto Nacional de Estatística, 2022).

| | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022* |
|------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Employment (thousands) | 277 | 289 | 276 | 259 | 279 | 323 | 328 | 321 | 296 | 252 | 293 |
| % share on total employment | 6,1% | 6,5% | 6,1% | 5,9% | 6,3% | 7,0% | 7,0% | 6,7% | 6,3% | 5,3% | 6,0% |

Looking ahead, the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) projects that, over the next decade, travel and tourism in Portugal will support around 1.4 million jobs by 2035, corresponding to approximately 24–25% of total national employment. This growth is expected to be driven by sustained international demand, continued expansion of domestic tourism, and the consolidation of tourism as one of the country’s most labour-intensive economic sectors. These projections indicate that nearly one in four jobs in Portugal could be linked directly or indirectly to tourism within ten years (World Travel & Tourism Council, 2025a, 2025b; Instituto Nacional de Estatística, 2022).

1.5. MAIN FOCUS OF NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR TOURISM

1.5.1. PORTUGUESE STRATEGY FOR TOURISM

Operating under the auspices of the Ministry of the Economy and Territorial Cohesion and the Secretary of State for Tourism, Turismo de Portugal is Portuguese national tourism authority.

Turismo de Portugal is responsible for the development of tourism policy, promotion of Portugal as a tourism destination, development of updated research on tourism as well as training the tourism workforce.

It brings together all the institutional competences involved in making tourism more dynamic, from supply to demand.

In 2017 the Portuguese Government launched Tourism Strategy 2027 (Turismo de Portugal, 2016) as the reference for the development of public policies and business strategies in the tourism sector for the decade. It aims at positioning

Portugal as one of the world’s most competitive and sustainable tourism destination, with the motto “Leading the tourism of the future”. This means a cohesive territory, innovative and competitive, that values work and talent.

In 2021, framed by the Portugal 2030 Strategy and in view of the devastating effects caused by the pandemic, the Government designed a Plan of Resilience and Recovery based on the European Commission’s Recovery and Resilience Mechanism, that can put the sector back on the pre-COVID-19 path of growth, at the same time equipping it with mechanisms to make it more sustainable, more responsible, more competitive and even more resilient, which will enable it to overcome the objectives and targets set out in the Tourism Strategy 2027, approved by the Council of Ministers Resolution No. 134/2017 of September 27th (ET27), projecting it into the future.

The four pillars that sustain this strategy are as follows, and they highlight Portugal’s main concerns and goals.

PORTUGAL 2030 STRATEGY AGENDAS

The Portugal 2030 Strategy is structured around four thematic agendas central to the development of the economy, society and territory of Portugal by 2030.

| Agenda 1 | Agenda 2 | Agenda 3 | Agenda 4 |
|--|--|---|---|
| People First: a better demographic balance, greater inclusion, less inequalities | Digitalization, Innovation and Qualifications as development drivers | Climate Transition and Resources Sustainability | An externally competitive and internally cohesive country |
| 1.1 Demographic sustainability 1.2 Promotion of inclusion and fight against exclusion 1.3 Resilience of the health system 1.4 Fight against inequalities and discrimination | 2.1 Promotion of a knowledge society 2.2 Business innovation 2.3 Qualification of human resources 2.4 Qualification of the institutions | 3.1 Less carbon emissions and promotion of the energy transition 3.2 Promote a circular economy 3.3 Reduce the risks and value the environmental assets 3.4 Sustainable agriculture and forests 3.5 Sustainable sea economy | 4.1 Competitiveness of urban networks 4.2 Competitiveness and cohesion in low density areas 4.3 Projection of the Atlantic strip 4.4 Territorial insertion in the Iberian market |

Figure 1 - Reactivate Tourism | Build the Future Action Plan

Tourism Strategy 2035, which succeeds Tourism Strategy 2027 and is currently under development, aims to establish a new strategic framework for tourism in

Portugal. Its purpose is to address emerging challenges facing the country, Europe, and the world, ensuring that the sector remains competitive, sustainable, and resilient in a rapidly changing global context.

1.5.2. SUSTAINABILITY AND SOCIAL IMPACT OF TOURISM

Portugal has positioned sustainability as a strategic pillar of its tourism development, aligning with the United Nations 2030 Agenda and the European Green Deal. The Tourism Strategy 2027 (Turismo de Portugal, 2016) and the +Sustainable Tourism Plan 20-23 (Turismo de Portugal, 2021c) set ambitious goals across environmental, social, and economic dimensions, aiming to make Portugal one of the most competitive and sustainable destinations globally.

The implementation of the Sustainable Tourism Plan 20-23 achieved a 97% execution rate, with 100 out of 119 actions completed and 15 ongoing (Turismo de Portugal, 2024). The plan mobilized a wide range of stakeholders across the tourism value chain and focused on four strategic pillars: structuring a more sustainable offer, qualifying sector agents, promoting Portugal as a sustainable destination, and monitoring sustainability metrics. Notable results include the integration of sustainability criteria in public policies and business support programs, the creation of technical guides (Turismo de Portugal, 2023b, 2023d, 2023c, 2023a) and certifications (such as AQUA+ for water efficiency), and the launch of campaigns and tools to promote responsible tourism and circular economy practices.

The plan also had a significant impact on capacity building, with over 57,000 professionals trained in sustainability, and contributed to the international recognition of Portugal as a sustainable tourism destination, surpassing the target for international references. While some quantitative targets—such as the percentage of tourism enterprises with energy, water, and waste efficiency systems - fell slightly short, the sector demonstrated clear progress and commitment. The collaborative governance model, involving more than 50 partner entities, fostered shared responsibility and continuous improvement, setting a strong foundation for future sustainability strategies in Portuguese tourism.

Also, through its participation in the Portuguese Plastics Pact, which is part of the Ellen MacArthur Foundation's Plastics Pacts Network, Turismo de Portugal is actively supporting sector-wide efforts to foster a circular economy for plastics. By collaborating with industry partners, the organization is helping to drive progress in sustainable plastics management and encouraging more effective waste management practices throughout the tourism sector.

The 360° Tourism Companies Programme (Turismo de Portugal, 2023e), launched by Turismo de Portugal in 2021, as part of pillar 4 - Sustainability in Companies and Destinations - of the Reactivate Tourism | Build the Future Action Plan, is a measure that aims to place companies at the heart of the sector's sustainable transformation process. It is an innovative initiative that puts tourism companies at the heart of the sector's sustainable transformation process, challenging them to report on their ESG - Environmental, Social and Governance - performance.

To report ESG performance, Turismo de Portugal provides companies with access to analytics and reporting tool through FOREST - a Tourism Sustainability Organizational and Reporting Tool - which allows them to automate the collection, management and reporting of data associated with ESG metrics and obtain their annual sustainability report (Turismo de Portugal, 2023e). The program, as an innovative example of accelerating ESG adoption in tourism, was awarded an honourable mention by the European Commission as part of the European Enterprise Promotion Awards (EEPA), an initiative that recognises good practices in business promotion based on their contribution to the economic development and employment of the regions. In December 2025, Turismo de Portugal awarded the "Sustainability Engaged" seal to 248 tourism companies, recognizing their demonstrated commitment to adopting sustainable practices.

On 18 December 2024, it was presented the Integrate for Tourism Programme, an initiative that results from a partnership between Turismo de Portugal, through its network of 12 Hotel and Tourism Schools, the Migration and Asylum Integration Agency (AIMA) and the Portuguese Tourism Confederation (CTP). This programme aims to develop training/employment programmes to welcome, qualify and professionally integrate migrants and beneficiaries of international protection living in Portugal.

The qualification of participants to develop the basic skills required for professional activity in the fields of tourism, hotels and catering is carried out through technical and practical training which, when combined, contribute to the integration of participants:

- Technical training takes place in the network of Hotel and Tourism Schools. It lasts 360 hours, about 3 months, is very technical and based on learning-by-doing methods and covers technical/operational and socio-cultural areas. It also includes learning the Portuguese language and culture as well as soft skills adapted to the national context.
- Practical training through an internship in a tourism, hotel and catering company, providing on-the-job learning for 160 hours, about 1 month.

The programme also includes training initiatives for tutors and mentors from the participating companies, contributing to the professional and personal fulfilment of the participants during their internship.

1.5.3. REGIONAL SUSTAINABILITY OBSERVATORIES

The sustainability of tourist destinations is an absolute priority of tourism policy in Portugal. Turismo de Portugal has established a Network of Regional Sustainability Observatories to promote the systematic monitoring of sustainability within the country's tourism sector. This initiative makes Portugal the first country to have sustainability observatories covering all its tourism regions, thereby reinforcing the mission to position Portugal as one of the most competitive tourist destinations globally.

In this sense and in pursuit of affirming Portugal as an international leader in sustainability, four observatories in Portugal have joined the UNWTO's international network of observatories (UN Tourism, 2004):

- Alentejo Sustainable Tourism Observatory (ASTO)
- Azores Tourism Observatory (OTA)
- Algarve Sustainable Tourism Observatory (AlgSTO)
- Centro de Portugal Sustainable Tourism Observatory (OTSCP)

1.5.4. TOURISM AND DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION IN PORTUGAL

Digital transformation is rapidly reshaping the tourism sector in Portugal, driven by a national commitment to innovation and competitiveness.

Undertaken at the request of Portugal, the OECD developed a report that examines and assesses current policy approaches to support digital skills and workforce development in the sector and presents a selection of policy considerations (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2021):

- i) to address digital transformation gaps, shortages and opportunities for workforce organization and skills development, and
- ii) to enhance governance mechanisms to support the digital skills transformation of the tourism workforce.

Besides the role of Turismo de Portugal in training the tourism workforce, the main responses to digital skills gaps and shortages in tourism sector are supported by NEST - Tourism Innovation Center, which is an official Tourism Cluster in Portugal focused on promoting digital technologies for tourism companies to develop their businesses by introducing new digital services or products (NEST, 2023).

- NEST is a private non-profit association founded in 2019 by 8 entities, Turismo de Portugal, ANA Airports, Brisa Via Verde, Google, Microsoft, Millennium BCP, NOS and BPI.
- NEST, as a multi-partner, public-private that aims to promote digitalisation and skills development in the sector, has a wide range of activities focusing on knowledge creation and transfer, in key areas such as Artificial Intelligence or Data Analytics. Additionally, NEST has competences in other areas such as Cybersecurity, Advanced Digital Skills, Digital Solutions/Interoperability to Public Sector, IoT, Science and Big Data, Simulation, Cloud Computing, Mobility and Connectivity.
- NEST is focused on the development of the InnovTourism Digital Innovation Hub (DIH), a one-stop-shop that helps companies become more competitive regarding their businesses, production and commercialization

of products or services, using digital technologies. Therefore, this Hub will provide access to technical expertise and experimentation, provide training on skills, create experimental labs / free zones for innovation, so that companies can “test before invest”, develop inexistent solutions and it will also offer support on areas such as financial advice. The hub positions itself as a gateway for innovation that will strengthen the ecosystem of tourism, being capable of step changing developments and enabling technology adoption in the industry.

- NEST is also the anchor project of the Tourism 4.0 initiative (NEST, 2023) and aims to help boost Portugal as a global hub for tourism innovation. Tourism 4.0 is a specific joint initiative of the Ministry of Economy and Territorial Cohesion, the Secretary of State for Tourism and Turismo de Portugal to promote the transition of tourism activity to the digital economy. It aims to promote entrepreneurship, support tourism start-ups and foster innovation in tourism in Portugal.

The National Training Commission for Tourism (National Training Commission for Tourism, 2023) is worth mentioning as well, since it provides a focus for cross-stakeholder dialogue and advice to Turismo de Portugal on skills and training development issues for the sector.

- The National Training Commission for Tourism was created (2019) as an informal body that brings together stakeholders related to education and training in tourism, constituting itself as a strategic forum for analysing the future challenges of qualifying human resources for tourism.
- The relevant issues identified are the dignification of professions, the identification of fundamental competences and the interrelationship between school/company, the diagnosis of training needs and the corresponding adaptation to the needs and challenges of the sector; promoting the sharing of information on the evolution of employment, skills, qualifications, and training, through prospective studies; among others.

Betting on innovation is fundamental - not only to increase the visibility of the destination, but also to maximise the tourist experience. In this area, the FIT Programme - Fostering Innovation in Tourism - stands out (Turismo de Portugal, 2023).

- Created in 2016, FIT is a Turismo de Portugal programme in partnership with a network of incubators aimed at promoting entrepreneurship and innovation in the tourism sector, developing strategies to rejuvenate the business fabric and developing new ideas and business models in tourism.
- Between 2017 and 2024, Turismo de Portugal supported 82 programmes – 13 ideation programmes, 50 acceleration programmes and 19 open innovation programmes – with over 1,600 participations of Portuguese and international startups and projects. 190 Companies participate in these programmes, such as hotel groups, airports, airlines, tour operators, travel agencies, DMOs, telco companies, mobility partners, insurance companies, technology providers, energy companies, amongst others.

1.6. COUNTRY-SPECIFIC CHALLENGES AND DEVELOPMENTS IN TOURISM

Portugal's tourism sector is booming, but this growth brings a range of interconnected challenges that affect its sustainability, competitiveness, and long-term growth. These challenges can be grouped into three main categories:

1. Direct Challenges

Tourism professionals often experience low salaries and limited access to complementary benefits such as health insurance, perks, and flexible working arrangements. Extended working hours and difficulties in achieving work-life balance further reduce the attractiveness of careers in this sector.

2. Indirect Challenges

Overtourism: Destinations such as Lisbon, Porto, and the Algarve suffer from seasonal overcrowding, placing significant pressure on infrastructure and local communities.

Environmental concerns: Issues such as coastal erosion, waste management, and water scarcity in sensitive areas threaten the sustainability of tourism.

Housing pressures: The rise of short-term rentals and property speculation has driven up housing costs, leading to gentrification and displacement of residents in major cities.

Market dependence: Heavy reliance on key markets (UK, Germany, France, and Spain) makes the sector vulnerable to external shocks, underscoring the need for diversification.

Public services: Limitations in public transport and insufficient social support infrastructure (nurseries, schools, and care facilities) hinder balanced regional development.

3. Structural Issues

The sector faces low digital maturity among professionals, persistent workforce shortages, and a lack of recognition for tourism-related occupations. Many managers and entrepreneurs lack adequate qualifications. Many small operators and rural businesses in Portugal lag in adopting digital tools, limiting their competitiveness in an increasingly technology-driven global tourism market.

Additionally, the naming of tourism roles often fails to attract talent, indicating a need for more appealing and modern job titles.

The most significant areas of skill development identified for the workforce in Portuguese tourism include the necessity for new training programs focusing on digital skills, innovation capabilities, social-cultural skills, green skills, sustainable finances, Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) factors, and the EU taxonomy for sustainable activities.

Turismo de Portugal's schools network develops vocational training in tourism in different areas: Hospitality Operations Management, Tourism Management, Food

and Beverage Management, Culinary Arts, Pastry Production Management, Cultural & Patrimony Tourism, Adventure & Nature Tourism.

Concerning the role of training for the qualification of human resources, Turismo de Portugal launched, in 2020, Academia Digital (Academia Digital Turismo de Portugal, 2023), an online training platform which provides accessible, diverse, and certified training opportunities (synchronous and asynchronous) that contribute to the upskilling and reskilling of tourism professionals.

The Academia Digital contributes to the upskilling and reskilling of tourism professionals in several ways:

- **Wide range of training contents:** The platform offers a variety of courses, workshops, and seminars. This allows professionals to choose the training that best suits their needs and interests.
- **Accessibility:** Most of the courses are offered online, making them accessible to professionals regardless of their location. This is particularly beneficial in the current context where remote learning has become increasingly important.
- **Focus on development:** The platform is designed to promote the development of people and the capacity building of companies. This focus on development helps professionals to enhance their skills and adapt to changing industry trends.
- **Certified training:** The platform has provided certified executive training to participants. This certification can enhance a professional's credentials and open up new career opportunities.
- **Free participation:** Most of the courses are free, although subject to registration. This makes professional development accessible to a wide range of professionals.

To address some of the national challenges related to the shortage of professionals in the tourism sector, Turismo de Portugal has launched some campaigns, designed to attract new talent, promote the value and diversity of tourism careers, and raise awareness of the essential role that tourism professionals play in delivering high-quality experiences to visitors. Through targeted communication and partnerships with its network of tourism schools,

Turismo de Portugal aims to inspire more individuals to pursue careers in tourism and to reinforce the sector's importance for the country's economy and cultural identity.

Cartão Atlas (Atlas Turismo de Portugal, 2023), a loyalty card for the sector, that aims to offer some benefits to the tourism professionals. This is a platform where the affiliated entities (companies, cultural organizations, public entities, among others) offer special benefits such as special programs, discounts, service upgrades, etc.). The main goal goes beyond these advantages – it tries to develop a sense of belonging to tourism sector, making professionals feel valued.

Cartão Atlas leverages a combination of exclusive benefits, personalization, professional development opportunities, and a focus on job satisfaction to attract and retain talent in the tourism industry:

- Exclusivity and personalization: it aims to offer exclusivity and personalization by placing tourism professionals at the center of the tourist experience. This approach recognizes the value of everyone's role in the tourism industry.
- Benefits for tourism professionals: it provides exclusive benefits to tourism professionals. These benefits can enhance job satisfaction, thereby helping to retain talent within the industry.
- Promotion of satisfaction and loyalty: it promotes satisfaction and loyalty among tourism professionals. By offering unique experiences and benefits, it encourages professionals to stay engaged and committed to their roles.
- Professional development: is part of a broader initiative to grow the sector in terms of qualifications, attractiveness of professions, and the number of professionals. This focus on professional development which can attract new talent and encourage existing talent to continue their career growth within the industry.

"Tourism is made of people" is the theme of Turismo de Portugal's campaign, which aims to highlight tourism professions through photographic representations of more than 20 roles, portrayed by students from its network of 12 tourism schools. The campaign seeks to honour the essential contribution of those who, every day, help make the experience of visiting Portugal truly memorable. On November 24, 2025, in Lisbon, Turismo de Portugal, in partnership with the Portuguese Association of Shopping Centres (APCC), launched the

traveling photographic exhibition. The exhibition will tour various shopping centres across Portugal and islands, showcasing and celebrating the essential role of tourism professionals through a series of photographic portraits.

2. CURRENT SKILLS TRAINING DELIVERY IN PORTUGAL

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

The types of training programs available in Portugal are varied and cover different areas and levels of qualification in the tourism sector. Some examples are vocational education and training (VET) programs in tourism and hospitality, which aim to prepare young people and adults for the exercise of professions related to the sector, through a theoretical and practical training that confers a double certification (academic and professional). These programs are offered by a network of 12 hotel and tourism schools managed by Turismo de Portugal, as well as by other public and private entities accredited by the National Agency for Qualification and Vocational Education.

There are also higher education programs in tourism, hospitality and management, which aim to train qualified staff for the sector, through a scientific, technical and cultural training that confers an academic degree (bachelor's, master's or doctorate). These programs are offered by various public and private higher education institutions, such as the University of Aveiro, University of Algarve, Universidade Católica Portuguesa, Universidade NOVA de Lisboa, Escola Superior de Hotelaria e Turismo do Estoril, among others.

Continuing education programs in tourism, which aim to update and develop the skills of professionals in the sector, through courses, workshops, seminars, conferences and other training actions. These programs are offered by various

public and private entities, such as Turismo de Portugal, the Porto Business School, the Association of Hospitality of Portugal, among others.

Portugal has a consistent set of initiatives underway aimed at promoting and improving the training provision in the tourism sector. These initiatives also aim to improve the quality and efficiency of tourism services, promote social responsibility and environmental sustainability in tourism, and increase the economic, social and territorial benefits of tourism.

For example, the +Sustainable Tourism Plan 20-23 (Turismo de Portugal, 2021b) includes actions such as creating new programmes, updating existing ones, and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for tourism education and training; developing digital platforms and tools for tourism innovation and management; supporting tourism investment and entrepreneurship; enhancing the attractiveness and diversity of tourist products and destinations; and fostering the co-ordination and co-operation among public and private stakeholders.

Another initiative carried out is the Agenda for the Tourism Professions (TdP, 2023), an initiative of the Portuguese Ministry of Economy and Maritime Affairs, consisting of 20 measures on increasing the attractiveness of tourism professions, the qualifications, and the number of professionals. The Agenda for the Tourism Professions aims to make Portugal the reference destination to study and work in the tourism sector.

The main key challenges in skills training in Portugal are: ensuring alignment between education/training and labour market needs; supporting low-skilled employers; promoting lifelong learning and enhancing greater alignment and involvement of all actors – companies, educational institutions and policy makers.

2.1. DIGITAL SKILLS

Portugal is focused on developing digital skills in both formal education system and lifelong learning provided by public authorities, universities, vocational and education schools, private companies and associations.

Aiming to converge with Europe in the digital domain, Portugal is going through its digital journey, speeding up the country's digital transformation so that no one is left behind, projecting Portugal to the world, towards becoming a digital nation. There is a need to develop Portuguese level of digital literacy (from the most basic digital skills to the most advanced ones).

Based on the tourism trends, the available tourism training and the feedback from the Portuguese tourism stakeholders, more training initiatives are increasingly essential for competitiveness and innovation in tourism: data analysis, digital marketing, and the use of digital platforms.

2.1.2. PORTUGAL'S DIGITAL TRANSITION STRATEGY

The National Digital Strategy is Portugal's strategic framework to guide digital transformation to 2030, in four dimensions (People, State, Companies, Infrastructure), approved by Resolução do Conselho de Ministros n.º 207/2024 on 30 December 2024 (Portugal Digital Strategy).

It includes the Action Plan for 2026–2027 which aims to position Portugal among the ten most advanced countries in the European Union in digital transformation by 2030, with a focus on innovation, competitiveness, inclusion, and sustainability. The Action Plan is structured into twenty strategic actions, encompassing areas such as digital skills, the digital transformation of enterprises, the modernisation of public services, cybersecurity, interoperability, digital regulation, artificial intelligence (AI), education, justice, and civic participation.

Implementation of the actions will involve partnerships among the public sector, the private sector, academia, and civil society, with an emphasis on adapting to technological change and addressing the needs of the population.

2.2. GREEN SKILLS

Portugal needs to go further in helping companies/organizations to materialize Sustainability in their Strategic and Business Agendas.

Portugal's green strategy is anchored in its updated National Energy and Climate Plan (PNEC 2030), the Basic Climate Law, and a series of ambitious targets and reforms aimed at achieving carbon neutrality by 2045 (Agência Portuguesa do Ambiente, n.d.).

In tourism, the +Sustainable Tourism Plan 20-23 (Turismo de Portugal, 2021b) contributes to stimulating the circular economy in tourism, fostering the transition to an economic model based on prevention, reduction, reuse, recovery and recycling of materials, water and energy, thus strengthening the Agenda for Circular Economy in the Tourism Sector and placing the tourism ecosystem at the climate transition towards a new green and inclusive economy.

To promote the energy transition and the circular economy of tourism companies there is a need to develop new training content on environmental management (green) skills to stimulate a change of attitude throughout the sector's value chain.

As part of the qualification of the tourism professionals there are objectives to be achieved:

1. Qualify and train young people and tourism professionals in sustainability practices, as agents of change;
2. Ensure a transversal integration of the pillars of sustainability in the educational training projects;
3. Educate for sustainability and circular economy;
4. Empower companies for the sustainable management of their activity;
5. Empower tourist destinations for the demands of the planet.

Based on the tourism trends, the available tourism training and the feedback from the Portuguese tourism stakeholders, more training initiatives are needed in these domains: energy efficiency and renewable energy solutions for tourism businesses, water management and efficiency, circular economy practices (waste reduction, recycling, sustainable procurement), climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies. green certifications and environmental standards

2.3. SOCIAL SKILLS

Portuguese education policies aim to develop students' social skills, so that they better respond to the challenges of today's world. That is why Portugal is strengthening the ability of its education system to respond to labour market needs.

The education system is increasingly integrating social and emotional learning into curricula at all levels, from basic to higher education and vocational training. Adult learning programmes and upskilling initiatives also target soft skills, especially for low-qualified groups and those at risk of exclusion.

Related to tourism sector, Aveiro Labour Observatory (Aveiro Labor Observatory, 2023) identified the most important soft skills required: Complex Problem Solving, Teamwork, Critical Thinking, Emotional Intelligence, and Adaptability.

Employers in Portugal consistently rank soft skills among the most in-demand competencies, including communication, teamwork, flexibility, and leadership. These are seen as critical for productivity, innovation, and workplace well-being.

To face the challenges of the globalization and competitive market there are some general training courses to provide capacity building in Leadership (although they are not directly oriented to tourism sector).

Advanced Training in Leadership and Creative Team Development (Universidade Católica Portuguesa, 2023)

Leadership.YOU (ISEG Lisbon School of Economics & Management, 2023)

Executive Master | Strategic Management of People and Leadership (ISCTE Executive Education, 2023).

Based on the tourism trends, the available tourism training and the feedback from the Portuguese tourism stakeholders, more training initiatives are needed in these domains: digital citizenship; cross-cultural awareness and empathy (how to deal with customers and co-workers of a variety of nationalities and cultural backgrounds); networking skills (building a loyal clientele); wellbeing and personal safety at work; responsible leadership in tourism industry and employee branding for SME´s in tourism industry.

3. 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** (that have been updated in 2025, so this report now includes **10 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.



Making Portugal the best destination to study and work in Tourism.

3.1. BEST PRACTICE: TURISMO DE PORTUGAL

Turismo de Portugal - "An organisation for the development of Portuguese tourism"

Subsector - Destination management organisation

Turismo de Portugal is Portugal's National Tourism Authority and is responsible for:

- Promoting Portugal as a tourist destination;
- Supporting the development of infrastructures for tourism and investment in the sector;
- Fostering the training of human resources;
- Regulating and conducting inspections of games of chance.

Turismo de Portugal has already won 9 editions of the World Travel Awards - Europe's Edition in the category of Europe's Leading Tourist Board (World Travel Awards, 2023).

3.1.1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Turismo de Portugal is responsible for training and qualifying the tourism sector human resources and for the technical and pedagogical research. It also coordinates, implements and recognizes the courses and vocational training actions in this area. Moreover, it certifies the professional skills required for tourism careers.

For this reason, Turismo de Portugal manages a network of 12 hotel and tourism schools that aim to teach and train young people and to prepare them for their first job, improving the quality and prestige of the different tourism careers.

3.1.2. ANALYSIS AND OVERVIEW

Key principles

Turismo de Portugal's general view on skills development in tourism is closely tied to its training strategy.

Turismo de Portugal recognizes the importance of granting individuals with the necessary skills to excel in the tourism sector, and it has implemented several initiatives to achieve this goal:

- In January 2018, the UNWTO distinguished Turismo de Portugal's schools training project – known by Tourism Training Talent (TTT) - with the first place in the Innovation and Public Policy category during the 14th edition of the UNWTO awards, for its example of training of future generations in the sector. Based on the Tourism Strategy 2027, Tourism Training Talent is a training program provided by the network of schools, focused essentially on people's talents, soft skills development, innovation and internationalization of tourism professionals, as a basis for the success of the sector in Portugal.
- In 2020, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Turismo de Portugal has made significant adjustments in the education system, launching an online training platform (Academia Digital | Digital Academy) with an emphasis on new training areas to respond to new demands. Academia Digital changed the way tourism professionals learn, enabling the development of specific programmes in three areas: digital, green and social.
- In March 2023, the Portuguese Ministry of Economy and Maritime Affairs launched The Agenda for the Tourism Professions, an instrument to support the promotion, attraction and retention of talent in the sector based in training programmes adapted to new trends and to the market.

- In 2021, the training actions developed under the 360° Tourism Companies Programme, a measure that aims to place companies at the heart of the sector's sustainable transformation process, preparing companies for the challenge they face in the future. It is focused on training tourism companies in sustainability and ESG - Environmental, Social and Governance - management, so that they obtain the technical knowledge needed to incorporate environmental, social and governance performance measurement indicators into their internal processes and to report on them by producing a sustainability report appropriate to their size and type of activity.
- In March 2022, Turismo de Portugal joined the Pact for Skills, a shared engagement model for skills development in Europe.
- In March 2023, the Portuguese Ministry of Economy and Maritime Affairs launched The Agenda for the Tourism Professions, an instrument to support the promotion, attraction and retention of talent in the sector based in training programmes adapted to new trends and to the market.

Examples and case studies

An example which makes Turismo de Portugal a frontrunner in addressing the digital and sustainable transition of the tourism sector is the online training platform and the training programme on the Sustainability and ESG management aimed at tourism companies:

- Academia Digital (Academia Digital Turismo de Portugal, 2023)
- 360° Tourism Companies Programme (Turismo de Portugal, 2023e)

Potential pitfalls and challenges

The tourism customer is increasingly demanding. Tourism industries need to innovate and improve quality standards to ensure the future of business in the long term.

According to the research and reflections within the framework of PANTOUR project, there is no doubt that Turismo de Portugal's strategy for training professionals and companies in the tourism sector should continue to achieve the type of tourist that Portugal wants to receive.

Portugal aims to go beyond Sun & Sea tourism model to a more qualified tourist destination: diversification of tourist products, establishing a sustainable tourism (although more expensive) and ensuring a tourist experience with a standard of excellence.

On one hand, focusing on technology to help the sector to adapt quickly to new behaviours and trends, without forgetting that tourists are looking for a unique, unforgettable and personalized experience. On the other hand, keeping in mind the balance between minimizing the negative impacts of tourism on the environment, society and culture, while maximizing the positive benefits for the host communities and the visitors.

To complement the current training offer, it is required a structured training programme focused on social and cultural skills (probably a third itinerary of the UPGRADE Programme) and on leadership for the tourism companies.

Benefits and outcomes

Some of the benefits that resulted from the Turismo de Portugal's training strategy are:

- It improved the quality and competitiveness of the tourism sector in Portugal, by enhancing the skills and qualifications of the tourism professionals, as well as by fostering innovation and entrepreneurship in the tourism industry.

- It contributed to the valorization and diversification of the tourism offer in Portugal, by creating tailor-made training plans that respond to the specific needs and potentialities of each territory, as well as by promoting the cultural and natural heritage of the destinations.
- It supported the recovery and resilience of the tourism sector in Portugal, by providing training opportunities for workers affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as by aligning the training strategy with the European Union's priorities and initiatives, such as the Pact for Skills.

Measuring success

Turismo de Portugal developed a Power BI on Tourism education and training which collects information on the number of students/trainees attending tourism courses at the different levels of education.

Responsibility and accountability

The responsibility for implementing and monitoring the initiatives presented in this best practice belongs to the Training Department and the schools' network, under the coordination of Turismo de Portugal's Executive Board.

References and external resources

Website: Turismo de Portugal

Visitportugal is the official website for promoting Portugal as a tourist destination (developed by Turismo de Portugal, I.P.) Sobre Portugal BI Portugal | www.visitportugal.com

School network website: Escolas do Turismo de Portugal

Academia Digital: <https://academiadigital.turismodeportugal.pt>



CONTINUOUS
TRAINING

NATIONAL STRATEGY

SUSTAINABILITY
AND ESG

Conclusion

Turismo de Portugal is a world reference on skilling, reskilling and upskilling the tourism workforce with international recognition for its best practices, and 9 times winner of the World Travel Awards - Europe's Edition in the category of Europe's Leading Tourist Board.

The training courses offered by Turismo de Portugal's Schools are adapted to the new trends and demands of the tourism market, focusing on innovation, entrepreneurship, sustainability, accessibility, soft skills and multidisciplinary competencies. The courses also have a strong relationship with the market/companies and public entities of the tourism sector, through the realization of curricular internships.

By offering these training opportunities and resources, most of them free of charge, Turismo de Portugal contributes to the improvement of the quality and competitiveness of the tourism sector in Portugal and abroad.

Purpose:



“Taking care of our business and the people who are with us, in order to create wealth in the long term”.

3.2. BEST PRACTICE: ONYRIA GROUP

Onyria - "Life dreamed by Onyria"

Subsector - Accommodation provider

The Onyria Group is based on a family structure. It was created, about 30 years ago, to make the management of Hotels, Villas, Golf Courses, Restaurants - Monte Mar - integrated, in the name of a dream shared by several generations - to offer the best that life has and to perpetuate moments.

Today the Onyria Group involves the second generation of the family and has the ideal of contributing to a higher quality of life, offering special moments in dreamy places.

The Onyria Group has projects in Hospitality, Golf, Catering and Health.

3.2.1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Onyria Group is developing a strategy for creating a new organisational culture. They are looking for Dreamers to work with, aligned with their purpose: “Taking care of our business and the people who are with us, in order to create wealth in the long term”.

3.2.2. ANALYSIS AND OVERVIEW

Key principles

Authenticity, Honesty, Familiarity, Readiness, Team spirit, Trust and Ambition. These are the 7 Values and Attitudes that the Onyria Group seeks when recruiting people and that must be reflected in the actions of its employees.

Examples and case studies

Some great examples of the Onyria Group strategy for creating a new organisational culture are:

1. Onyria Experience Playbook

The e-book aims to facilitate employee integration, to encourage a good working environment and to guide relations with colleagues, clients and partners.

2. Onyria Academy

The Onyria Academy is an academy dedicated to the employees of the Onyria Group, which offers them the opportunity to develop their personal and professional skills through training programmes with a variety of subjects and formats.

The purpose is to promote an energising, motivating and collaborative working environment where the employees feel valued and empowered to achieve a full and meaningful life.

The training programmes developed by Onyria Academy are:

- I.THE_BREAKFAST_CLUB (Directors club)

Training for directors of the Onyria Group, usually lasting 1 hour on Fridays, with different topics and speakers.

- II.TRAINING_LAB (Dreamers)

A series of training courses on a variety of topics, with the aim of providing participants with fundamental tools and knowledge for both their professional and personal development.

III.HEY_DREAMER

- Welcoming trainees | Buddies Onyria - each trainee is welcomed and accompanied by a "Buddy Onyria"

- Trainings with different themes or specific to a current topic (e.g. Family Day, Financial Literacy)

The main skills trained at the Onyria Academy are clearly defined:

- Soft skills

Team spirit | Patience | Communication | Time management | Problem-solving skills | Leadership | Adaptability | Empathy | Critical thinking | Social sensitivity | Creativity

- Hard skills

Proficiency in English and other languages | Advanced Excel | People management | Project management | Image editing | Microsoft Office | Sales | Interview technique | HTML | SEO | Stock management

3. Happiness Week

The last week of September is internationally recognized as Happiness at Work Week. The aim of this week is to create activities and moments of conviviality among employees that prioritize happiness at work. During this week there are activities with different themes that are interconnected with happiness, to encourage employees to explore personal competences related to the topic.

4. A Happiness survey is carried out for all employees (how they feel in the workplace, level of satisfaction with meals, transport, personal development, working conditions, etc.).
5. A post-internship survey or interview is carried out to evaluate the trainee.
6. Fringe benefits: psychology counselling, medical care, hairdresser and make-up services available at work.
7. Initiatives: Employees of the Onyria Group are guests for a day at the Onyria Quinta da Marinha Hotel.

Potential pitfalls and challenges

Implementing a new organizational culture in a company can be challenging and may encounter several pitfalls:

- **Failing to Communicate:** Effective communication is crucial during a change process. If employees are not informed about why the change is happening and how it will impact them, it can lead to confusion and resistance.
- **Resistance to Change:** Some organizations have a culture that leans toward stability and their leaders may view change as a threat.
- **Limited Knowledge and Resources for Change Management:** If the organization does not have sufficient knowledge or resources to manage the change process effectively, it can lead to implementation failures.

Benefits and outcomes

The benefits and positive outcomes that Onyria Group expects to achieve by adopting a strategy for creating a new organisational culture is to give people a greater voice, to recognise a greater employee involvement and to have workers with more personal and professional skills.

After almost two years of a pandemic, with extreme difficulties for the hotel sector, the Onyria Quinta da Marinha Hotel compensated the employees of the entire Onyria group with a 5-star experience at the hotel. 247 employees and their families were able to enjoy their stay and the hotel's different services and activities, such as hiking, yoga classes, and DJ entertainment .

Measuring success

Key steps to measuring the success of the new organizational culture strategy:

- **Employee surveys:** Happiness survey and post-internship survey can provide insights into employees 's perceptions of the new culture.
- **Organizational performance:** Confirming if the new culture is contributing to business outcomes.

Responsibility and accountability

The responsibility for implementing and monitoring the results of the initiatives presented in this best practice belongs to the Culture, Communication & Marketing Department.

References and external resources

Website: [Onyria Group](#)



HAPPINESS WEEK

PSYCHOLOGIC COUNSELING

TRAINING FOCUS
HARD & SOFT SKILLS

Conclusion

Onyria Group is a best practice in attracting and retaining talent.

The strategy of Onyria Group is based on: Recruiting people who are passionate about what they do, who demonstrate commitment and teamwork, and who offer excellent service to their clients.

Offering some benefits and actions to their staff, such as birthday day, medical consultations, psychological support, discounts on services, and more.

Believing that people are the success and the future of their organization and want them to grow professionally and individually.

The slogan "Life Dreamed By Onyria" reflects the group vision of delivering a dream-like experience to their customers and employees.

It is the Group's policy to respect the environment.



3.3. BEST PRACTICE: THE WORLD OF WINE

The Fladgate Partnership | The World of Wine – “A cultural district with a WOW factor”

Subsector – Food & Beverage

The Fladgate Partnership is a holding company that has businesses in Port Wine, tourism and distribution. In Portugal, it also has distribution companies that supply its products and those of others to hotels, restaurants, retailers and consumers.

The World of Wine project is a major initiative in tourism, located in the historic area of Vila Nova de Gaia with a complex of seven museums/experiences, 14 food and beverage outlets (Restaurants, Bars and Cafés), a wine school and shops.

In September 2023, Fladgate Still & Sparkling Wines was created, after the purchase of IdealDrinks by The Fladgate Partnership adding further expertise, knowledge and over three centuries of heritage through this new challenge.

The Group currently has around 1,150 employees, spread across different facilities in Vila Nova de Gaia, Porto, Lisbon and the Douro.

3.3.1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The original company of the group is Taylor's Port was founded in 1692. However, in 2001 it acquired Croft Port, which was founded in 1588 and celebrated its 430th anniversary in 2018. With its other brand (Fonseca Port) The Fladgate Partnership is a leading player in producing special category Port, which it sells in over 105 countries.

It has been a pioneer in Port and, more recently, in tourism. The creation of The Yeatman Hotel, which opened in 2010, was arguably the catalyst that started the tourist boom in the city of Porto. It also owns the Vintage House Hotel, in Pinhão.

The Fladgate Partnership Group wants to convey a global image of a careful and responsible organization, with constant attention to cost reduction and in search of a positive and cooperative working relationship.

It is the Group's policy to respect the environment, therefore is everyone's responsibility to rationalize the available resources. The aim is to provide the client with a final product of superior quality while respecting the group's values and culture.

3.3.2. ANALYSIS AND OVERVIEW

Key principles

The key principles of the group are competitiveness, rigor and quality, guiding and reinforcing the culture of the company, only achieved with the collaboration of all employees.

When it comes to company values, they are:

- Pride – in the global quality of the company and their products.
- Organization – led with professionalism and rigor.
- Teamwork.
- Respect – for the clients and within the team.
- Boosting and Enhancing - individual and group capabilities.

They value their historic legacy and innovation, as well as diversity of products. Their human capital is considered strategic for achieving their goals.

When it comes to human resources new approaches are being implemented, like for instance, hiring abroad. In this sense, we can mention a pilot-project in Cape Verde (extended recently to São Tomé and Príncipe) with students from the hotel and tourism school, hiring there and providing all the needed help for the immigration process, may it be cultural integration, legal processes or accommodation facilitation.

Examples and case studies

The best practice that will be highlighted is a partnership between public and private sector – in this case, between IEFP (the national public employment service) and the company being addressed.

The group faces the same challenges with job profiles that need to be redefined and the lack of human resources, affecting the whole sector. Taking this into consideration two different assumptions have been made: the need to bring new people to the sector while accepting that they are training people who are passing through. Nevertheless, it is important to ensure they have all the training needed for the job as soon as possible and aligned with the group values as much as possible.

This pilot project (implemented for the first time in 2020) consists in a tailor-made training in partnership with IEFP Gaia (the local branch of the public employment service). Since IEFP mission is to promote the creation and quality of employment and combat unemployment by implementing active employment policies, including vocational training they were available to create this specific training to the new employees in the group.

The process starts with the company identifying the employees they need – this may include a process of recruitment conducted internally and/or identifying unemployed with the help of the IEFP. Afterwards, they will create a group of new employees, who will need to be trained/skilled in order to be able to provide the excellent service they aim to provide (most of them won't have the basic skills/previous training to be able to provide the needed service standards). When the group is created, both institutions work together in order to define the topics that the training will address, may it be soft or hard skills (usually, the training programme will include both). The programme has the duration of one month, starting with three days in the classroom and then alternating between the classroom and the workstation.

The most important aspect is that the design of the training topics is tailor-made for the specific group. Also, the trainers are both internal and external, which seems to bring the best outcome: the external ones won't impact the normal functioning of the organization (which seems to be a downfall of the process) and the in-house training providers are more aligned with the core values and organization culture and will be able to continue training them, even after the end of the initial period, accompanying their development.

One of the highlights is that this partnership allows the company to provide training to their employees that is supported financially by the public institution.

Potential pitfalls and challenges

This best practice is based on bringing new profiles into tourism and hospitality to whom initial training is offered, and the company states that, internally, there is some resistance to this change that has been created by the market itself, since there are no available and trained human resources. Some old employees are more resistant to embrace people with different profiles and sometimes with less professional training. One of the challenges is to convince the middle-management that this is the new reality. Also, it is important that they see themselves as part of the training team, providing continuous feedback and training.

Also, this programme demands internal trainers and not everyone is talented and skilled to be an internal trainer, having as well the availability to do it. Finding the right trainer with the needed skills is a challenge as well.

However, the human resources director identifies the biggest challenge: reconciling training with operations (restaurant downtimes are used for training), since the F&B operation is very demanding. To overcome this challenge, the company decided to conduct the training before people report to their respective workplaces/managers.

Benefits and outcomes

The main benefits of creating a continuous training culture in the organization have been identified internally:

- The employees feel more valued and more prepared to their role, making them feel more confident and therefore, engaged;
- Higher level of service- level of service improves with training;
- Employees feel accompanied and involved, which gives them safety;
- Internal trainers are a way of reinforcing brand values;
- Managers are also involved in the process, assuring better results in the recruitment and onboarding processes;
- Employer branding – the exit interviews, show most of the employees valued the training provided, becoming ambassadors for the group.

Measuring success

The success of the best practice can be assessed by the retention rate that increased in 2023. Also, the exit interviews, as mentioned before, highlight the importance of the training that was given from the beginning. This may also take advantage of the rapid career progression and internal mobility (vacancies available and visible to all).

Responsibility and accountability

The responsibility for implementing and monitoring the results of the best practice is on the Training Coordinator assisted by Human Resources Director and in-house trainers at front of house. All of this needs to be supported by leaders and top management.

References and external resources

Website: <https://fladgatepartnership.com/en/>

Project: <https://www.wow.pt/en>



PUBLIC-PRIVATE
PARTNERSHIPS

INTERNATIONAL
RECRUITMENT

IN-HOUSE TRAINING

Conclusion

One of the main conclusions of this case study is the importance of setting partnerships between the public and the private sectors, allowing both to fulfil their missions. It is also worth mentioned the need to face the changes occurring in the sector, which will impact the service and the people working in tourism.

Finally, the company considers that training is needed to reinforce skills that will allow more satisfaction and higher quality service, stating that training should not be used as a “salary review”, meaning that it’s not an outcome, but a starting point.



*A human-centered economy
that is based on sharing and
collaboration.*

3.4. BEST PRACTICE: O VALOR DO TEMPO

O Valor do Tempo - "The world has never been so Portuguese"

Subsector: Visitor attractions

O Valor do Tempo Group was created in 1994 in Seia, and its first public expression came in 2002 with the opening of the Bread Museum.

The group currently owns 15 different Portuguese brands and is a business focused on customer experience.

Remaining faithful to the Group's values, the brands are based on a legacy of Portuguese history and heritage and honour the past and traditions that time has preserved. The brands don't want to sell a product; they want the customer to go into the shop and feel absorbed by the atmosphere and take away a memory. They want to leave a memory in the customer's mind.

3.4.1 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

O Valor do Tempo is a Portuguese group of companies that works with the best that Portugal has to offer to the world, especially in the fields of history, culture and tourism.

There is a strong focus on the quality and uniqueness of their products and services, which could attract more customers and employees who value the Portuguese heritage and culture.

The group also have a diversified portfolio of brands that cater to different segments and markets, which could reduce their exposure to specific risks and increase their resilience.

O Valor do Tempo Group also claim to have a human-centered economy that is based on sharing and collaboration, which could foster a positive work environment and a loyal customer base.

3.4.2. ANALYSIS AND OVERVIEW

Key principles

At O Valor do Tempo Group, authenticity is a choice, not a consequence. That is why the company values loyal people with a well-developed sense of ethics, who contribute to a happy and harmonious environment in the workplace.

O Valor do Tempo Group believes in the value and power of people as an essential asset for the success of their business. The organization wants every individual to develop their potential and believe there is always room to overcome and reinvent oneself.

Commitment, innovation, creativity, dynamism, a proactive approach, and humility are the values that motivate over 700 employees at O Valor do Tempo Group, who work passionately as a team, every day, spontaneously transmitting this passion to their customers.

The inner talent of their employees is considered their greatest asset; it is an essential source of energy for the group and a strategic pillar for the business activity.

Examples and case studies

O Valor do Tempo Group offers a challenging and valued professional career as part of a relationship that is based on mutual high standards, encouragement, and respect.

How did the company create an organizational culture focused on people management?

I. Training

Factory of Dreams – the Training Academy – is aimed at all who work in the O Valor do Tempo Group and it is for all brands and for all jobs.

The trainings use the brand name to exploit the different possible meanings of the word: “Value of time”; “Being the value of time”, “Sales with value”, “Leaders with value”. Trainings for continuing professional development in the various company departments seek to enhance their employees’ professional skills and excellence in customer contact.

With a training room equipped with audiovisuals, rest and leisure areas, a meeting room and a space for practical training that simulates a store environment, the academy also has accommodation with capacity to host up to 20 people simultaneously so that our people can stay comfortably installed during training periods.

More than a training centre, Factory of Dreams reflects the group essence, helping to reinforce their brands’ concepts and instigate everyone’s creativity and self-improvement.

II. Open communication

Internal communication channels with their employees are a preferred means that allows the company to identify opportunities for improvements in performance, spaces and working relations.

III. Recognition of merit

Identifying individual skills and promoting dialogue are key to enhancing the best in each person and serve as a stimulus for development and professional excellence, rewarding each employee's performance impartially and transparently.

Potential pitfalls and challenges

O Valor do Tempo Group has grown a lot in recent years and there was no structured Human Resources Department.

In 2022, they decided to create a new Human Resources Department (where each brand has its Human Resources manager) and the Factory of Dreams, the group's training academy.

They hired a Chief Happiness Officer that helps promoting the mindset change, so that people stop seeing work as an obligation, something they must do, and start seeing it as a source of personal fulfilment.

At the end of the day who is responsible for happiness at the workplace?

First, the group believes that the main role lies with each individual. Secondly, everyone is responsible for happiness at work. However, managers have an additional responsibility. They have an obligation to promote an environment in which people feel safe. It suggests that the quality of the manager-employee relationship is a significant factor in employee retention and satisfaction.

Finally, the group implemented a Smiling Culture, a way of welcoming and attracting customers to their stores.

Benefits and outcomes

The main benefits of creating a people-oriented organizational culture are clear for O Valor do Tempo Group:

- The employees become great ambassadors for the group's brands;
- Workers know on a daily basis how much they've already achieved in bonuses because they access an app that gives them this information in real time (Casting app). Productivity bonuses bring a valuable return: they help the company grow and also empowers and benefit the employee with knowledge about the organization;

- Some employees who leave the company sometimes return;
- There is a professional progression within the company; the group prioritises internal recruitment first.
- Employee´s Happiness increases (reduction of absenteeism and turnover; increase in productivity and sales).

Measuring success

O Valor do Tempo Group success can be assessed by its internationalization strategy. In August 2023, the group opened the first 'The Fantastic World of the Portuguese Sardine' shop outside of Portugal. They have ventured to live the American dream, bringing one of Portugal's most important business cards to Times Square: canned fish. It's one of the new attractions in Times Square, one of New York's most visited tourist attractions.

Source: Imprensa de Nova Iorque rendida a nova loja portuguesa em Times Square - SIC Notícias (sicnoticias.pt)

Responsibility and accountability

The responsibility for implementing and monitoring the results of the initiatives presented in this best practice belongs to the Human Resources Department.

References and external resources

Website: [O VALOR DO TEMPO – Grupo Empresarial](#)

Promotional videos:

[Grupo O Valor do Tempo \(short version\) \(youtube.com\)](#)

[The Fantastic World of the Portuguese Sardine \(youtube.com\)](#)



EMPLOYEES
BONUSES

INTERNAL
PROGRESSION

OPEN
COMMUNICATION

Conclusion

O Valor do Tempo Group is a best practice in attracting and retaining talent.

Placing happiness at the heart of the organizational culture is its strategy.

In a changing labour market, where companies are struggling to find employees and not the other way around, O Valor do Tempo Group decided to lead the development of People and promote organizational Happiness, providing their employees with the security to be calm and focused when carrying out their activities.



We are a humanist company

3.5. BEST PRACTICE: TRAVELSTORE

Travelstore - "One of the world's best Travel Designers agencies"

Subsector - Travel agents and tour operators

TRAVEL MANAGEMENT 3.0

Travelstore specializes in business travel solutions for companies, differentiating through technology, that allows the maximal customization. It's a company that operates different business units and brands, all entirely focused on servicing corporations and their employees.

The company aims to create "out-of-the-box" solutions for the travel manager, the travel organizer and the traveler. The ability to listen is one of their DNA key components. The company states that is "why it has and always will be the customers who define our value proposition". The company was founded in 2020 and has, now, around 250 employees (180 in Portugal, and the others Algeria, Angola and Mozambique, where they also have branches).

3.5.1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The organization core values are efficiency ("Best pricing and a dedicated team reassures me that nothing will fail"); confidence ("More balanced financial conditions gives our company the ease to focus on our business") and closeness ("Having someone to help me with anything I need, no matter when.").

The CEO shared they had two main concerns since the company foundation: specialization and humanism. "We are a humanist company", he states.

Considering the sub-sector of travel agents and tour operators and having this kind of approach, the company is seen as very innovative. The employees were given hybrid and remote work way ahead the pandemic.

Also, addressing the well-being of the employees as individuals is, since ever, the way of managing human resources, as well as recruiting focused on interpersonal skills more than technical ones.

Travelstore offers salaries above the market average and links variable compensation to performance for all roles and functions.

So, some specific actions are responsible for the success and competitiveness of the company, as the CEO believes.

3.5.2. ANALYSIS AND OVERVIEW

Key principles

Travelstore key principles are humanism, specialization, a culture of error and appraisal and not less important, variable pay.

In a more general way, it is also important to highlight how they promote the learning by doing, the long-life learning and, also, the on-the-job training. This keeps everyone involved and engaged, since it is also well known that prioritizing employee training and development, benefits both the individual and the organization.

Examples and case studies

Appraisal Culture

It is worth mentioning how Travelstore invests in personal development conducting twice a year a moment of employee development, for all employees, fostering a culture of appraisal, recognition and continuous development.

In addition, the company promotes a culture of praise, sharing good practices and recognition from colleagues or clients. This practice has been facilitated by the existence of collaborative work tools that allow for more constant sharing with a larger number of employees.

Variable Pay

Variable pay seems to have a high impact on the employee performance, because knowing that their efforts directly impact their earnings, make them more motivated and focused on achieving and/or exceeding their goals.

For the CEO this is also the best way to align individual and organization goals, leading to a more goal-oriented workforce which, ultimately, impacts the overall results.

This also impacts the talent attraction and retention, mainly high-performing individuals, who are crucial for Travelstore, focused on specialization and tailor-made services.

The Error Culture

Travelstore fosters a positive error culture, which from their point of view has some key advantages such as increased innovation, allowed by the knowledge that errors will be seen as a learning opportunity and are not going to be punished.

This also improves the transparency and trust among employees and their relationship with the organization. Our interviewee emphasizes that they really take this seriously, stating that this can't be a "false principle", leading to misinterpretations or disappointments. Like he says "this can't be 'marketing'".

Potential pitfalls and challenges

One challenge that is addressed by Travelstore is the way the company trust training and cross-training will happen, naturally, in the work environment as they foster collaboration. Nevertheless, he is now aware that this is not enough, and that is why that by the time of our interview they were considering creating a more structured and intentional training program.

This will help the company to be more efficient providing every employee the needed competencies. This is also a result of this fast-changing world that will keep evolving vertiginously, forcing them to be more rapid to provide the necessary upskilling and reskilling (which is also one of their needs, since they are automating as much tasks as possible).

Other challenge may be to stay competitive in the market since more companies are now following their way of being, mainly, paying above the market. For instance, they mentioned giving a raise to the employees last year (2022), so they can cope with the inflation rate. There is, however, a downside of this approach that has to do with the competitiveness of the organization itself.

This is important as a learning for other companies, since it stresses out that a good work environment needs to be assured, side by side, with a competitive salary but the salary itself will not be enough. Besides, using only (or mainly) salary can be challenging for the company itself.

Benefits and outcomes

A humanist culture, that prioritizes the well-being and development of its employees guarantees various benefits, such as, the employee retention, which diminishes recruitment and training costs, while maintaining a more experienced workforce and a more engaged one.

This also serves as way of creating positive reputation for them as employers. They believe to have this positive employer branding which helps them to attract new employees more easily.

For them, who value efficiency and closeness, having employees more motivated and creative is crucial. Even more because one of their main services is to create tailormade solutions for their clients, business and individual ones.

Measuring success

The success is based on the results of the company, their retention rate and potential of attracting new employees in this highly competitive workforce market. Also, the success as a competitive and sustainable company, which continues to grow after 23 years of business. “Our success is based on our people”.

Responsibility and accountability

The responsibility for implementing and monitoring the results of the initiatives presented in this best practice belongs to the CEO and the Human Resources Manager.

References and external resources

Website: <https://www.grupotravelstore.com/en>



ERROR CULTURE

VARIABLE PAY

APPRAISAL CULTURE

Conclusion

Travelstore is a real example of how a humanist culture in a tourism organization has a profound positive impact. The CEO refers the close relation between employee well-being, guest satisfaction, and the long-term success of the business.

The competitive market and the fast-changing revolutions, with special emphasis in the technological one, demands engaged and talented workers and Travelstore feels like having a competitive positioning when it comes to attracting and retaining talent.



*A human-centered economy
that is based on sharing and
collaboration.*

3.6. BEST PRACTICE: BOOST PORTUGAL

BOOST PORTUGAL - "Experiences that connect people with the most genuine side of Portugal". Subsector: Visitor Attractions.

Boost Portugal is a company that combines innovative projects of tourist animation, alternative means of transport and technology.

3.6.1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Boost Portugal is a leading tours-and-experiences operator in Portugal, offering immersive activities in Lisbon and Porto—from Tuk Tuk rides and Segway or e-bike tours to guided walks, foodie experiences, and full-day excursions designed to showcase the country's culture, history, and gastronomy.

Its purpose is to create authentic, memorable, and impactful experiences that connect people with the most genuine side of Portugal, using local storytellers and technology to turn trips into stories worth telling.

3.6.2. ANALYSIS AND OVERVIEW

Key principles

BOOST aspires to inspire every visitor by creating experiences that combine fun, culture, authenticity, and environmental respect. More than simply showcasing

destinations, BOOST seeks to build emotional connections, celebrate Portuguese identity, and drive a tourism model that is both sustainable and distinctive.

Boost Portugal brings together 16 brands and has more than 200 employees.

Examples and case studies

Employees Training

BOOST offers a comprehensive training approach that includes in-house programs, mandatory courses such as first aid, and customized learning paths chosen by each employee.

The BOOST Group:

- Created BOOST University to deliver internal training for employees.
- Formed partnerships with leading universities.
- Offers employees a one-month training program tied to a one-year loyalty agreement, where early leavers reimburse the training cost to promote retention and commitment.

BOOST at Tourism ON – Tourism Professions Fair

Participating in the Tourism Professions Fair provides an opportunity to engage with students from across the country and share valuable insights with them:

- *The role of tourist animation*
- *Essential skills for those who want to work in events*
- *Real examples of activities, challenges, and opportunities*
- *Training paths and employability options in the field*

In addition, this event is a great opportunity to build new partnerships and strengthen their connection with schools and industry organisations.

BOOST is delighted to take part in this event and play a role in shaping the professionals of tomorrow!

Corporate Team building by BOOST

Benevola is a brand of impactful experiences, born from the collaboration between two Boost Portugal units: Boost Events, a leader in organizing corporate events, and Jump, a nationally recognized brand in the team-building universe.

The focus is designing personalized events aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals, bringing together teams, communities, and causes.

The overall goal is to transform team building into a strategic tool for engagement and productivity, making employees feel valued and connected to the company's mission.

Potential pitfalls and challenges

BOOST Portugal's international expansion

Expanding to seven new markets (Spain, Netherlands, USA, and South America) means dealing with diverse regulations, tax systems, and operational standards. This can strain management resources and require strong local partnerships.

Recruiting skilled professionals in new regions while preserving BOOST's unique culture and high service standards presents a significant challenge, requiring robust onboarding processes, cultural integration strategies, and continuous training to ensure consistency across all markets.

Benefits and outcomes

BOOST has dedicated ESG and R&D teams driving sustainability and innovation across the organization. This combination ensures continuous growth, responsibility, and forward-thinking solutions.

Boost has been distinguished by Turismo de Portugal with the "Sustainability Engaged" seal. This recognition, awarded under the Empresas Turismo 360° Programme, reflects the commitment to a more responsible, human, and conscious tourism.

Every step BOOST takes towards sustainability is guided by the certainty that the future of the sector depends on the choices we make today.

Measuring success

Success relies on expanding operations into new markets and maintaining strong retention rates.

The retention approach is built on clear performance metrics and a strong sense of empathy towards every team member. Exceptional employees are recognized and rewarded, with an annual allowance allocated to everyone.

The group invests in continuous development through upskilling and reskilling programs, ensuring career growth and adaptability. This combination of recognition, resources, and learning opportunities creates a culture where talent thrives and stays engaged.

Responsibility and accountability

The responsibility for implementing and monitoring the results of the initiatives presented in this best practice belongs to the Head of People and Happiness.

References and external resources

<https://boostportugal.com/en/about-us/>

<https://www.benevola.pt/pt>

3.7. BEST PRACTICE: ABREU VIAGENS

ABREU VIAGENS - "A trusted travel company that blends timeless heritage with bold innovation". Subsector: Travel agents and tour operators.

Agência Abreu is the trusted travel company that blends timeless heritage with bold innovation - turning proximity, care, and expertise into unforgettable journeys.

3.7.1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Agência Abreu, founded in Porto in 1840 by Bernardo Luís Vieira de Abreu, is credited as the world's first travel agency to open public-facing service offices. It was created to support emigration—handling passports and visas, selling train tickets to Lisbon and sea passages to South America—later expanding destinations to Africa, North America and Europe and, in the 1950s, consolidating flagship offerings such as European Circuits and Group Travel.

From the 1960s onward, Abreu became a leader in cruise sales, expanded its retail network, launched its own tour operator, and pioneered charter flight operations in Portugal, Spain and Brazil. In the new millennium, it created Mundo Abreu (2003) and Expo Abreu (2014), strengthened internationalization, and invested in technology and digital channels—establishing itself as the largest travel organization operating in the Portuguese market, with its own network and dedicated teams. In 2015, Agência Abreu stood as the largest travel organization in Portugal, with 150 company-owned stores and around 1,500 employees worldwide, remaining under the ownership of the founder's direct descendants and placing the customer at the center of its mission.

3.7.2. ANALYSIS AND OVERVIEW

Key principles

The world's oldest travel agency still in operation celebrates 185 years and keeps its eyes on the future. Agência Abreu continues to reinvent itself, investing in innovation, customer proximity, and an omnichannel approach.

Agência Abreu believes proximity to their people and sustained investment in their growth are essential to valuing careers and fostering human development. This policy sets out their commitment to enabling every employee to progress, build stability, and continuously acquire the skills needed to thrive—today and in the future.

Agência Abreu's upskilling and reskilling approach blends proximity, stability, and progression with agile, project-based learning and strong cross-generational collaboration. By valuing every employee and enabling continuous development, the company sustains talent, accelerates growth, and strengthens their collective capability.

Examples and case studies

Abreu's approach to upskilling and reskilling is anchored in four main principles:

A competency-based framework

The company has defined a group-wide competency model, with transversal competencies for all staff and specific competencies for each role. This model guides recruitment, performance appraisal, identification of development needs and the design of training actions, ensuring coherence across different business units and functions.

Learning tailored "to measure"

Training is deliberately designed to be relevant to day-to-day work, avoiding generic content perceived as distant from operational reality. Abreu systematically listens to managers and teams, adjusts programmes iteratively and differentiates between what is better delivered online (short, focused topics) and what requires in-person, practice-oriented sessions.

Combination of internal expertise and external inputs

Whenever possible, Abreu uses internal trainers and senior staff to deliver training, especially on products, systems and customer service, complementing this with selected external providers for specialised topics. This reinforces internal

know-how, recognises experienced employees and ensures that content is aligned with the company's culture and processes.

Proximity, stability and progression

The company understands skills development as a way to value careers, foster retention and support progression, not merely as a technical update. It deliberately blends on-the-job learning, mentoring-type interventions and structured programmes to accompany employees over time.

Examples and case studies

Abreu's upskilling and reskilling model is illustrated by several complementary initiatives:

Group-wide competency model and skills dictionary

Before the pandemic, Abreu mapped all functions and defined a competency framework that remains the reference for HR policies. Transversal competencies are shared across the group, while role-specific competencies are attached to particular functions, and both are periodically reviewed in light of emerging themes such as artificial intelligence, sustainability, innovation and creativity. This framework supports performance management and informs training priorities at unit and individual level.

Blended training offer and flexible formats

Abreu has rebuilt its training plan around a mix of classroom courses, webinars and short "spot" sessions, aligned with the school-year calendar but operating on a rolling basis. Live online sessions are used for quick updates or targeted information that fits within 40–45 minutes, reducing travel and time away from sales desks, while longer or more complex topics are reserved for face-to-face training, which allows deeper interaction and practice. Particular attention is paid to the geographical dispersion of staff—from Viana do Castelo to the Algarve, including the islands—so that in-person training justifies the cost and time of travel.

Strong emphasis on internal trainers and peer learning

The company increasingly relies on experienced employees as trainers, especially for product knowledge, reservation systems and customer service. Senior staff share accumulated expertise, while younger employees contribute new skills, creating a deliberate balance between generations. Product teams and the in-house tour operator also deliver training directly in key locations, enabling staff to associate faces with interlocutors and to exchange operational perspectives.

On-the-job mentoring and talent programmes

A flagship initiative is an on-the-job development programme for selected employees identified as having high potential. Two internal professionals—with strong field experience—accompany small groups of participants in their daily work, offering immediate feedback, practical tips and personalised support. The programme blends elements of mentoring, coaching and in-store training, involves regular follow-up and is adapted between editions based on lessons learned, including more systematic documentation and clearer stages. Objectives include improving sales performance (“sell more and better”), enhancing service quality and reinforcing retention of key staff.

Integration and foundational training (Spotlight)

For new employees, Abreu runs a structured integration programme, Spotlight, with distinct paths for retail network staff and for back-office and logistics teams. It covers company culture, organisational structure and internal interlocutors, as well as intensive training on the reservation system, aviation specifics and internal procedures. Simulations and practical exercises are used to accelerate autonomy and ensure that newcomers can handle complex operations, particularly in air travel, from an early stage.

Continuous product and destination training

Given the strategic focus on tailor-made travel, Abreu invests in ongoing product training, often involving fam trips and destination visits so that staff can experience products first-hand. This is complemented by internal resources (destination sheets, product fiches) that front-office staff can consult while serving clients, supporting more confident and personalised advice.

Potential pitfalls and challenges

Despite clear progress, Abreu faces several challenges in sustaining and scaling its upskilling and reskilling model. Managing training logistics across a geographically dispersed retail network remains demanding, especially when balancing travel costs, time away from sales and the need for in-person sessions on specific topics. Ensuring continuous updating of the competency model and training content—so that they reflect rapid changes in technology, products, sustainability requirements and customer expectations—is an ongoing task that requires time and coordination between HR, business units and senior management. Maintaining engagement over time, avoiding “training fatigue” and guaranteeing that managers systematically create space for learning within commercial pressures are also critical issues, particularly in peak seasons. Finally, the company recognises that measuring the full impact of mentoring and tailored training on retention, performance and organisational culture is complex, calling for more robust indicators and systematic monitoring without overburdening teams.

Benefits and outcomes

Abreu highlights several benefits from this integrated approach:

Higher relevance and perceived value of training, as employees feel that content is directly applicable to their reality and not “esoteric” or detached from day-to-day work.

Improved sales quality and customer service, particularly in leisure travel and tailor-made products, supported by deeper product knowledge and more consistent service standards (including through the “Ser Abreu” customer-service programme).

Stronger internal networks and culture, with staff across regions and business areas getting to know each other, share challenges and associate specific faces with central support teams.

Enhanced talent retention and engagement for employees selected into mentoring-type programmes, who report feeling recognised, accompanied and encouraged to progress within the company.

Measuring success

Abreu measures the success of its training and mentoring initiatives through a mix of quantitative and qualitative indicators. It monitors sales performance (e.g. targets met, “selling more and better”), retention and internal progression of participants, and demand to join new editions of the programmes. Feedback from employees, mentors and managers is also collected to assess perceived usefulness, impact on confidence and team dynamics, and to adjust future editions.

Responsibility and accountability

The responsibility for implementing and monitoring the results of the initiatives presented in this best practice belongs to the Human Resources Director.

References and external resources

<https://www.abreu.pt/>

3.8. BEST PRACTICE: PORTUGUESE REGIONAL TOURISM ENTITIES

Territorial and sector-specific training programmes: aligning regional, and national strategies

This best practice case illustrates how regional tourism entities in the Algarve and Alentejo lead the co-design of territorial and sector-specific training programmes, working with Turismo de Portugal and its school network to align national strategy with local skills needs.

3.8.1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In the Algarve and Alentejo, the regional tourism boards have taken on a leading role in identifying skills gaps and mobilising local stakeholders for capacity-building, positioning workforce development as a strategic lever for destination competitiveness, sustainability and resilience. These entities are responsible for the promotion, qualification and sustainable development of their destinations, and have progressively expanded their action from image and marketing towards the upskilling and reskilling of tourism professionals and companies across their territories.

To respond to concrete territorial challenges—such as pressure on coastal areas, the growth of wine tourism, major European events or the need to retain qualified staff—these regional organisations have initiated and steered collaborative training programmes involving Turismo de Portugal, its hospitality and tourism network of schools, municipalities, business associations, universities and companies. Examples include “Competências do Futuro Algarve”, anchored in the Algarve’s strategic marketing plan META, and a positioning and excellence plan for the Alentejo Litoral both co-designed with local hotelier, associations, local actors and local Hospitality and Tourism Schools.

Turismo de Portugal national strategic supports this framework, contributing with technical expertise and the operational capacity of its school network and

Digital Academy, aligning these resources with the agendas and priorities defined at regional level. The starting point for all joint programmes is a structured diagnosis of skills needs led by the regional entities, combining surveys and interviews with employers and workers across subsectors (accommodation, restaurants, local accommodation, tourism animation, travel agencies and others), which reveals gaps in digital, green and social-cultural competences and highlights operational constraints such as seasonality, uneven digital literacy and varying levels of engagement with topics like languages.

Illustrative examples

Case A – “Competências do Futuro Algarve”

“Competências do Futuro Algarve” was conceived by the regional tourism board as an instrument to operationalise the META strategic marketing plan, with the central objective of aligning workforce skills with the region’s ambitions in terms of competitiveness, sustainability and value creation. The project is structured around four main axes: strengthening service excellence and perceived value, enhancing core occupational competences, promoting retention of qualified human resources, and responding to digital and sustainable transitions, notably through modules on digitalisation, sustainability practices, circular economy and continuous qualification.

A comprehensive survey was disseminated to thousands of contacts in the sector, including both employers and employees, in order to identify training needs, preferred topics and logistical conditions (such as ideal schedules, duration and time of year). Training is delivered through virtual sessions for the core content, complemented by in-person bootcamps and workshops hosted in the Algarve tourism schools and the regional tourism board, covering themes like water efficiency (“Save Water”), ESG tools, the “Algarve Destino Seguro” safety initiative and other cross-cutting issues relevant to the destination.

Case B – Training plans for the Alentejo

In the Alentejo, the regional tourism entity has promoted a positioning and excellence plan for the coastal area (Alentejo Litoral), developed in close collaboration with local hoteliers and the School of Hospitality and Tourism of

Setúbal, following a territorial study that highlighted strong pressure on local services and the need for an integrated response in areas such as sustainability, mobility, identity, housing, health care and training. Through joint workshops, employers and the school defined the foundations of curricula and modules, including a “BE Alentejo” component aimed at reinforcing the sense of place and service standards for both migrant and non-migrant workers.

Building on this experience, further initiatives are being prepared for the Baixo Alentejo (in connection with the European Wine City designation), Évora (linked to the European Capital of Culture) and the rapidly growing wine tourism segment, using a cluster-type approach that mobilises higher education institutions, polytechnics and the tourism school of Portalegre to create specialised postgraduate courses and an “Enotourism Academy”. In parallel, training modules are being developed for staff at Beja airport and other public front-line services, to strengthen hospitality and destination knowledge for visitors using that gateway.

3.8.2 ANALYSIS AND OVERVIEW

Key principles

These programmes are grounded in a set of common principles that can be transferred to other regions and countries:

Territorial and product “tailor-made” training

Training offers are designed specifically for sub-regions (e.g. Algarve, Alentejo Litoral) and for concrete products or agendas, such as coastal luxury resorts, water efficiency, destination safety, wine tourism or large cultural events. Rather than generic catalogues, curricula are shaped around local development trajectories, labour market pressure points and strategic projects that will increase demand for qualified staff in the short and medium term.

Collaborative governance with regional leadership

Regional tourism entities convene and coordinate the process, bringing together Turismo de Portugal’s schools, municipalities, business associations, universities and companies, while employers contribute actively to defining learning

outcomes and course content, and schools translate these inputs into coherent training pathways. This governance model creates shared ownership of programmes and ensures that regional priorities drive the use of national training resources.

Integration of digital, green and social skills

All initiatives embed a transversal approach to future skills, combining modules on digitalisation (e.g. digital marketing, artificial intelligence, data use, online distribution), sustainability (e.g. ESG, circular economy, resource efficiency, sustainable certifications, water management) and social-cultural competences (e.g. communication, empathy, leadership, conflict management, cultural intelligence). This reflects the understanding that these transitions are interdependent and must be addressed holistically in workforce development.

Continuous diagnosis and adaptive design

Skills needs analysis is a recurring process: initial surveys and interviews are followed by feedback collection from participants and companies at the end of each edition, feeding revisions of themes, formats and workloads. Topics such as destination safety, water efficiency, ESG tools or languages have been added or adjusted following stakeholder input, while low participation in certain modules has prompted reflection on communication and perceived relevance.

Flexible pedagogical models

To overcome constraints related to seasonality, work schedules and geographical dispersion, the programmes combine virtual training (often through the Digital Academy) with presence-based bootcamps and workshops hosted in tourism schools or regional venues. Schedules, duration and delivery modes are adapted as much as possible to company operations, including options for shorter sessions and modular participation across the year.

Potential pitfalls and challenges

Reaching the right audiences

Despite using multiple channels—national tourism registers, business associations, universities, municipalities and direct mailing—regional entities still

report difficulty in making all companies aware of opportunities, with many entrepreneurs later stating that they “never heard” about the programmes. This underlines the need for diversified, persistent and targeted communication strategies, possibly including new digital tools and intermediaries.

Seasonality and organisational constraints

Heavy seasonality in many destinations limits the windows during which companies can release staff for training, and some businesses remain reluctant to allow participation during working hours, while employees face personal constraints after work. Additionally, participation in some themes, such as languages, remains lower than expected, even when identified as a priority in surveys, suggesting that perceived urgency and short-term returns influence enrolment decisions.

Fragmented resources and mandates

Regional tourism entities often have limited human resources fully dedicated to training, and do not hold formal competences in this area, which requires strong coordination with schools, municipalities and other actors to ensure continuity and follow-up. Ensuring that programmes do not depend excessively on individual champions, and that structures and roles are institutionalised, is a key lesson for long-term sustainability.

Measuring success

While immediate feedback from participants and companies is generally positive, there is still a need to systematise impact evaluation, linking training to observable changes in service quality, business performance, employee retention and destination indicators. Collaboration with regional tourism observatories and the use of shared indicators are seen as crucial next steps.

Benefits and outcomes

Closer alignment between training supply and real needs

By starting from territorial diagnoses led by regional entities and continuous dialogue with employers and workers, the programmes improve the match

between training content and the concrete challenges faced by companies and destinations, enhancing the relevance and perceived value of participation.

Acceleration of digital and green transitions

The integration of digital, environmental and social-cultural skills into all initiatives supports companies in modernising their operations, adopting sustainable practices and strengthening their capacity to respond to evolving visitor expectations and regulatory frameworks.

Strengthened cooperation and “regional glue”

The co-design process reinforces cooperation between regional tourism boards, Turismo de Portugal, its school network, municipalities, business associations and the education and training system, creating a form of “regional glue” that had often been missing in earlier, more fragmented training programmes.

Improved attractiveness of tourism careers

By offering structured, context-relevant and often innovative learning opportunities, these programmes contribute to positioning tourism as a sector that invests in people, supports lifelong learning and opens pathways for progression, which is essential to attract and retain talent in a highly competitive labour market.

Responsibility and accountability

Members of the regional entities and responsible for leading the diagnosis, co-design and mobilisation of territorial training programmes, as well as fully accountable for demonstrating that these initiatives respond to real regional needs, and contribute to measurable improvements in skills, service quality and destination development.

References and external resources

<https://www.turismodoalgarve.pt/pt/default.aspx>

<https://www.visitalentejo.pt/en/>

3.9. BEST PRACTICE: AHRESP

AHRESP – Associação da Hotelaria, Restauração e Similares de Portugal. Subsector: F&B (Business and employers association – HORECA and accommodation sectors).

Through a proximity-based approach and strong territorial coverage, AHRESP plays a key role in translating public policies and strategic frameworks into practical tools, training and support adapted to micro, small and medium-sized enterprises.

3.9.1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

AHRESP is one of the oldest business associations in Portugal, representing companies in accommodation, restaurants, cafés, bars and similar services nationwide, including the islands. Its mission is to support entrepreneurs, reinforce business sustainability, promote skills development and enhance the attractiveness of tourism professions in HORECA.

Recognising that skills are central to competitiveness, sustainability and resilience, AHRESP has built a model tailored to a sector dominated by small businesses with limited resources. Its intervention focuses on accessibility, pragmatism and direct applicability, combining training, digital tools, technical support and awareness-raising across operational, managerial, digital, environmental and social skills.

The association works through 16 regional delegations and 9 service centers whose staff maintain close contact with local entrepreneurs, translate national and European frameworks into practical guidance and prioritise tailor-made, small-scale solutions. This includes on-site training in establishments where owners and staff cannot easily leave, ensuring micro-enterprises are not excluded from ongoing digital and sustainable transitions.

AHRESP understands upskilling and reskilling as part of a broader agenda that also encompasses fair working conditions and wages, professional recognition and business viability. Skills initiatives are explicitly linked to collective bargaining,

re-naming and valorising professions, and advocacy for policies that reflect SMEs' real capacity to comply and innovate.

For AHRESP, competitive advantage in HORECA depends less on infrastructure and more on well-prepared people able to manage complex operations, deliver consistent service and adapt to new expectations and regulations. Training is therefore conceived as a tool to improve management quality and efficiency, enhance customer experience and differentiate businesses, while making careers more attractive and future-oriented in a context of labour scarcity.

3.9.2. ANALYSIS AND OVERVIEW

AHRESP's approach to upskilling and reskilling is guided by several interrelated principles:

Key principles

Alignment with real SME needs and constraints

Training and support must start from a realistic understanding of how micro and small businesses operate: few staff, long working hours, low margins, and strong operational dependency on owners and a small core team. This means that offers must be short, flexible, very focused and often delivered in formats that minimise absence from the workplace.

Practical, modular and immediately applicable learning

Courses are designed to be concrete, hands-on and directly linked to everyday tasks, favouring short modules that participants can immediately test in their own businesses (for example, implementing a specific food safety procedure, redesigning a menu to reduce waste, or improving online visibility).

Integrated view of digital, green and social skills

AHRESP does not treat digitalisation, sustainability and social/soft skills as separate projects, but as dimensions that must converge in the same action. A training path on food waste, for instance, will typically combine environmental content (reduction and valorisation of waste), digital tools (basic monitoring, use

of platforms) and relational skills (team engagement, communication with clients about sustainable choices).

Human-centred and economically viable transition

The association insists that transitions must be inclusive and economically feasible, especially for micro-enterprises. Skills initiatives are always linked to realistic pathways for cost savings, risk reduction or revenue improvement, so that entrepreneurs see training as an investment rather than a cost.

Proximity and territorial cohesion

Regular presence in the territory, through delegations and field work, is considered a non-negotiable condition for impact. This proximity allows AHRESP to adapt messages and tools to different regional realities, support companies in navigating local administrative requirements and ensure that rural or interior areas are not neglected.

Examples and case studies

Based on these principles, AHRESP has implemented several initiatives that position the association as a reference in supporting the digital and sustainable transition of the tourism sector.

AHRESP Academy

The Academy is a structured and accredited training framework that concentrates much of the association's educational offer. It provides both catalogue courses and tailor-made programmes, in face-to-face, online and blended formats, depending on the needs and possibilities of companies.

Key thematic areas include:

- Food hygiene and safety (HACCP, good practices, audit preparation).
- Occupational health and safety.
- Operational management, cost control and leadership of teams.
- Sustainability in restaurants and accommodation, including energy and water efficiency, circular practices and local sourcing.
- Food waste reduction, menu planning and stock management.

- Digital marketing, social media, online reputation and presence in booking platforms.

In many cases, particularly for very small businesses, training is delivered on site, with the trainer working directly in the kitchen, service area or back office, helping the team to integrate new practices into existing routines. This “training at the workplace” model has proven especially effective for owners and middle managers who have very limited time and cannot leave the establishment.

Tailor-made corporate training

Beyond open courses, an increasing share of the Academy’s activity is custom-designed training for specific companies or groups of establishments, where content, schedule and modality are negotiated in detail. This approach responds to the strong preference of many entrepreneurs for highly focused interventions that directly solve identified problems (e.g. improving hygiene practices in a particular kitchen, or supporting the digitalisation of a small group of rural accommodations).

Inclusion and employability programmes – “Reconectar” and “Integrar”

These programmes target people in vulnerable situations or long-term unemployment, providing them with sector-relevant skills and supporting their integration into HORECA jobs. Training combines technical content (basic operations, safety, customer service) with transversal competences and, where possible, matches participants with companies facing recruitment difficulties, thus contributing simultaneously to social inclusion and to reducing labour shortages.

“Seleção Gastronomia e Vinhos” Programme (with Turismo de Portugal)

This national initiative distinguishes restaurants that promote Portuguese gastronomy, regional ingredients and quality wines; from 2026, it will also function as a lever for structured upskilling. After an evaluation visit, each establishment receives a detailed diagnostic report including strengths and training needs. On this basis, AHRESP, together with Turismo de Portugal, designs a personalised training plan focusing on both operational teams and

leadership profiles; the award of the programme's seal will depend on completion of the training path. This conditionality explicitly connects recognition to demonstrable investment in skills.

AHRESP–ASAE National Roadshow

In partnership with the national food and economic safety authority, AHRESP organises a travelling programme of sessions where inspectors, entrepreneurs and staff share information and clarify doubts in an open, non-punitive environment. The aim is to demystify regulatory frameworks, promote compliance, reduce fear and misunderstanding, and, at the same time, build mutual trust between authorities and businesses.

Digital tools for compliance and efficiency

Among its digital initiatives, AHRESP has developed a HACCP Digital solution, which centralises mandatory records, automates part of the documentation process and helps companies prepare for inspections, significantly reducing bureaucracy and the risk of non-compliance for small establishments. The e2R platform offers free access for companies to monitor their energy use, identify savings opportunities and simulate potential reductions in costs and emissions, turning abstract sustainability goals into concrete, measurable actions.

Complementary services such as the My AHRESP app and “AHRESP Esclarece” provide rapid, personalised responses to legal, fiscal and operational questions, which indirectly supports skill building by increasing entrepreneurs' understanding of their obligations and options.

Social responsibility and valorisation of professions

AHRESP invests in the symbolic and practical recognition of hospitality professions, for example by re-naming the role “Empregado de Mesa” to “Assistente de Sala”, and by advocating for wage improvements through collective bargaining. Initiatives like the Patrons' Club (Clube de Mecenias), which mobilises resources in emergency situations (such as wildfires), reinforce the social role and cohesion of the sector, indirectly supporting a culture of responsibility, solidarity and pride among workers.

Partner organisations involved

To deliver on this agenda, AHRESP collaborates with multiple partners:

- National authorities and agencies (e.g. tourism bodies, labour and training institutions, ASAE).
- Sector confederations such as the Portuguese Tourism Confederation (CTP).
- Professional training centres, especially in the food and hospitality area.
- Technology providers that co-develop or host digital tools.
- Local and regional entities that help disseminate programmes and reach specific groups of companies.

These partnerships extend the reach of AHRESP's initiatives, ensure coherence with national and European strategies and provide additional specialist expertise where needed.

Potential pitfalls and challenges

Despite positive results, several challenges persist:

Engaging micro-enterprises

Many micro-businesses have almost no slack in terms of time or staff; even short training implies closing the establishment or overloading remaining staff. This makes recruitment and retention of participants a constant challenge.

Regulation overload

The combination of strict regulatory requirements and limited internal capacity creates a sense of overload and can generate resistance to new initiatives, even when they aim to facilitate compliance. AHRESP must therefore carefully frame training and tools as simplifiers rather than additional burdens.

Labour shortages and working conditions

Structural staff shortages put pressure on existing teams and can hinder participation in training; at the same time, training alone cannot solve underlying issues of remuneration, housing and seasonality. Aligning skills initiatives with broader efforts to improve working conditions remains a complex but necessary task.

Keeping pace with change

Digital technologies and sustainability standards evolve quickly, requiring frequent updates to training content and tools, as well as continuous professional development for trainers.

Scaling tailor-made approaches

The highly customised “Taylor-made” model is effective but resource-intensive; balancing depth of support with the need to reach many companies is an ongoing dilemma.

Benefits and outcomes

The implementation of AHRESP’s best practices has resulted in:

Improved technical, digital and managerial skills among tourism entrepreneurs and workers;

Increased compliance with legal and safety requirements; Greater adoption of sustainable practices and digital tools;

Enhanced professional recognition and attractiveness of tourism careers;

Strengthened resilience and competitiveness of tourism SMEs.

Measuring success

Success is monitored through indicators such as participation rates in training actions, adoption of digital tools, reduction of non-compliance situations,

feedback from companies and professionals, and increased engagement with AHRESP's support services.

Responsibility and accountability

The design, implementation and monitoring of these initiatives are the responsibility of AHRESP's technical and training teams, working in close coordination with regional delegations and strategic partners. As members of the association and responsible for supporting companies on the ground, regional staff are accountable for ensuring that actions truly respond to local needs, that public and private resources are used effectively and that results are reported transparently to governance bodies and partners.

References and external resources

Website: <https://ahresp.com/>

Academia AHRESP: <https://academia.ahresp.com/home>

Seleção Gastronomia e Vinhos: <https://selecao-gastronomia-e-vinhos.com/pt>

3.10. BEST PRACTICE: HILTON

Hilton – “A business of people serving people”. Subsector: Accommodation.

3.10.1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Hilton is a leading global hospitality company with a portfolio of 26 world-class brands comprising more than 9,000 properties and over 1.3 million rooms, in 141 countries and territories.

3.10.2. ANALYSIS AND OVERVIEW

Key principles

With extensive career development opportunities, dynamic support for learning and leadership development, and an innovative culture committed to well-being, Hilton offers Team Members opportunities that match their skills and passions.

Hilton empowers lifelong learning and encourages Team Members to find their passion to create their own journey to careers that are right for them.

As leaders advance in their journey at Hilton, their growth is guided by a structured and available series of development experiences, such as:

- the **GM Elevator Program** for cross-functional, cross-cultural exposure early in career;
- a layered portfolio of **Leadership development programs** to build core capabilities (driven by purpose, influential, interpersonal, resilient & innovative);
- The **SHINE GM Program** focused on leadership presence, purpose, and personal effectiveness for senior operational roles. The approach emphasises real business challenges, mentoring, mobility, and ownership thinking—producing measurable growth in capability, confidence, and readiness for broader responsibility.

Benefits and outcomes

For Individuals

- Accelerated readiness for broader roles (GM and senior operations);
- Enhanced leadership maturity;
- Confidence and self-leadership that translate beyond work.

For teams

- Higher trust and alignment between leaders and teams;
- Clearer decision-making under complexity; more consistent execution;
- Improved engagement from leaders who communicate with clarity and empathy.

For the organisation

- Stronger leadership pipeline and internal fill rates for critical roles;
- Retention of high-potential talent through transparent pathways;
- Global agility from cross-cultural experience.

Measuring success

“Recognition Matters”

Hilton’s approach to recognition is grounded in celebrating awesome work and people with extraordinary awards, modern tools, and meaningful moments.

Responsibility and accountability

The responsibility for carrying out these initiatives and evaluating their results is jointly held by multiple stakeholders across the organisation, ensuring a coordinated and shared approach.

References and external resources

<https://jobs.hilton.com/us/en/>

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.

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[in](https://www.linkedin.com/company/pantour-pact-for-next-tourism-generation-skills/) [linkedin.com/company/pantour-pact-for-next-tourism-generation-skills/](https://www.linkedin.com/company/pantour-pact-for-next-tourism-generation-skills/)

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