

PANTOUR SKILLS STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN FOR 2026-2036:

Promoting a Green, Digital
and Inclusive Transition in
Tourism and Hospitality



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Introduction

The PANTOUR Skills Strategy and Action Plan for 2026-2036 is an output of the Pact for Next Generation Skills Alliance (PANTOUR) consortium, which provides a roadmap for the next ten years for skilling, upskilling and reskilling the tourism and hospitality workforce.

This Action Plan translates educational needs identified over the course of the four-year project, into actionable strategies that aligns with the latest policies. It provides pathways to support lifelong learning in digital, green and social sustainability, building from the NTG Blueprint for Sectoral Cooperation on Skills. It promotes sustainable education and training initiatives to cultivate strong collaborations and support the tourism ecosystem. This includes advancing cooperation among industry stakeholders, educational institutions, social partners, and government bodies across the European Union.

As one of the fastest-growing priorities for workforce development, the digital and green (twin) transition has become a key topic of discussion across local, regional, national, and international tourism landscapes. Many challenges remain to advance the transition, including developing cooperation, addressing skills gaps and developing research and intelligence tools to monitor changes. The transition also brings social challenges, such as digital inequality and inclusion gaps.

Addressing the rapid transformation of Europe's tourism sector is crucial, given its central role in promoting employment and driving economic growth. Ensuring the long-term sustainability of the tourism sector requires a workforce equipped to meet future challenges. Enabling digital, green, and inclusive practices is critical to balancing societal demands and supporting Europe's sustainable growth. Therefore, investing in education and training to build a resilient and adaptable workforce and to promote tourism that benefits all is essential. Key actions of this plan include promoting inclusive employment, adapting strategies for a diverse workforce, ensuring equal educational opportunities, and combating discrimination.

This document is organised into five sections. The first section provides an overview of PANTOUR's background and objectives, outlining the consortium's purpose, goals, and key stakeholders. The second section focuses on strategies, detailing the tools and approaches developed by PANTOUR to tackle skills gaps and strengthen education and training within the sector. The third section presents the policy context, highlighting the main tourism and hospitality policies addressed by the consortium and this strategy plan. It also includes evidence-based policy insights collected in consultation with tourism stakeholders. The fourth section presents the 2026-2036 action plan for education and training in tourism. It includes specific actions with strategy examples, identified challenges, possible outcomes and stakeholders' involvement. Finally, the sixth section presents best-practice case studies to illustrate and support the practical implementation of this strategy.

With this document, PANTOUR aims to propose future directions essential for advancing sustainable skills development in tourism and hospitality, while promoting the digital, green, and inclusive transition.

2

PANTOUR Background and Objectives

2.1 PANTOUR Consortium

PANTOUR is a consortium of 13 partners - Aegean University, Breda University of Applied Sciences, Confederación Española de Hoteles y Alojamientos Turísticos, European Association of Institutes for Vocational Training, European Tourism Association, Federturismo, Gestlabor, Turismo de Portugal, Satakunta University of Applied Sciences, Technological University Dublin, Ruraltour, Vimosz, and Zangador Research Institute - from 10 European countries committed to strengthening collaboration in the tourism sector through research and innovative education and training solutions.

Building on the Next Tourism Generation Alliance's (NTG Alliance, 2018–2022) work, PANTOUR promotes NTG and PANTOUR outputs to benefit job seekers, unemployed individuals, and industry workers. Covering activities from 2022 to 2026, the consortium focuses on reskilling and upskilling Europe's workforce to build a more resilient and competitive tourism industry. It also builds on knowledge from the NTG Blueprint for Tourism Sectoral Skills Development (NTG, 2022), which provided a roadmap for addressing digital, social and green skills needs in the European tourism sector.

The PANTOUR consortium built on the NTG's blueprint five subsectors: Visitor's Attraction, Accommodation Providers, Travel agencies and Tour Operators, Destination Management Organisations and Food and Beverage Operations, creating research and content for all tourism subsectors, and tailored resources to meet subsector's needs.

2.2. Main Objectives

As main objectives, the PANTOUR consortium sought to:

- Respond to future skills needs of the industry ecosystem, offering concrete and innovative solutions to address gaps in digital, green and social skills development
- Map skills for new occupational profiles that support the twin transition, developing resilience and attractiveness in the industry
- Build partnerships to address training and education needs, including the development of national and regional skills groups and discussion forums
- Design and implement new strategies and operations tools for tourism

subsectors, integrating digital innovation, sustainability practices and workforce development initiatives

- Make lifelong learning more attractive, aligned with the Pact for Skills (European Commission, 2020b) and Union of Skills (2025), proposing learning solutions and designing new educational tools
- Promote active citizenship in addressing equality, diversity and inclusion, developing targeted actions for SMEs and education providers
- Design programmes for reskilling and upskilling the workforce, developing blended learning and work-place learning material adaptable across different educational levels.

2.3. Development of Collaboration

The PANTOUR consortium built on the [NTG blueprint](#) by developing collaboration with different stakeholders and by maintaining and expanding new partnerships in Europe. These collaborative partnerships were supported by the [NTG Collaborative Governance Framework](#), designed to strengthen stakeholders' participation in skills development. Development from the Collaborative Framework was possible to see in the promotion of the National and Regional Skills Partnerships (NRSPs) across Europe, which bring together industry representatives, educational institutions, social partners, and government bodies. Collaborative initiatives also aimed to amplify employers and employees' voices, increase business engagement, inform policymaking, and ensure education and training providers stay aligned with emerging needs. This approach also raised awareness of workplace challenges and evolving trends at multiple levels, addressing local, regional, and national contexts to:

- Ensure practical relevance of the project outputs
- Engage a wide range of stakeholders across the European tourism ecosystem
- Establish stronger links with EU policies, such as the Pact for Skills (European Commission, 2020b) and Union of Skills (2025)
- Promote a synergic and effective link between research, industry and policy, supporting reskilling and upskilling initiatives in the EU
- Bridge gaps between policies and practical implementation of education and skills development initiatives across Member States.

The consortium also sought to develop initiatives aligned with current industry needs, providing educational support systems especially for micro and small organisations to address the challenges they face in providing workforce training. For this, it has developed extensive educational-industry collaboration through forums, consultation, and feedback with industry stakeholders, which included:

- Pilot testing training tools such as skills intelligence monitoring systems and training programmes
- Participation in surveys and in-depth interviews to provide strategic insights from businesses owners and the workforce on skills gaps, sustainable development and policy implementation challenges
- Participation in national and regional group meetings to

- review research findings and suggest adjustments
- Providing inputs with consultation on future trends and needs for the sector
- Data sharing and knowledge exchange, with important inputs on project's tools and feedback on research results
- Best practices development in sustainable green, digital and social skills, with a focus on equality, diversity and inclusion within the social skills domain.

2.4. Key Stakeholders

The consortium engaged with key stakeholders to ensure alignment with specific skills development needs and actions. It aimed to improve decision-making, promote ownership, and enable the mobilisation of diverse resources, such as funding expertise, and networks for effective implementation.

Table 1 illustrates the stakeholders' categories and groups.

Table 1: Key Stakeholders

| Key Stakeholders Categories | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Key Stakeholders | Examples | Roles in the Ecosystem |
| EU | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government and public national authorities involved in skills and education development, European Commission, EU Agencies, and Directorates | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indicating future policy directions • Promoting funding opportunities • Knowledge dissemination |
| National/Regional Government | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member States and its specific tourism and education authorities, boards and ministries, regional and local tourism and public education agencies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy implementation and strategic planning • Development of educational and industry skilling activities in a national, regional or local level • Developing investment and workforce development support |
| Social Partners | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representatives of bodies of employers & employees, such as industry associations, representative organisations, chambers of commerce, trade organisations/unions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contributing to policy development • Participating in consultations and negotiations • Promoting social dialogue among employers, employees and government to address challenges and issues |

Table 1: Key Stakeholders

| Industry | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual businesses • Private sector employment representatives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementing policies and practices • Promoting workforce development • Promoting innovation, employment and investment opportunities • Driving local and regional development through tourism |
|---------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Key Stakeholder Groups | | |
| Key Stakeholders | Examples | Roles in the Ecosystem |
| NRSPs (National and Regional Skills Partnerships) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National and Regional Skills Partnerships, from different countries and regions across Europe, from industry, government, social partners and educational bodies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening collaborative decision-making to ensure training provision aligns with skills needs • Providing inputs and supporting initiatives for skills development in the tourism sector. |
| Pact for Skills Ecosystem | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholders from government, educational organisations, social partners and industry organisations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing actions for the workforce upskilling and reskilling • Supporting and promoting pathways for developing education and training in Europe. |

Building on the objectives and strategies of the consortium, and stakeholders collaboration outlined above, this strategic document seeks to transform research into practical actions, tackling challenges, reducing skills gaps and mismatches in workforce education and training, and creating strategies that highlight the sector’s strengths, ensuring alignment with current and relevant policies.

3

Strategies to Advance Skills Development

PANTOUR developed a range of actionable strategies and outputs aimed at promoting skills development within the tourism and hospitality sector. These strategies provide valuable guidance for various skills-related actions, including:

- Monitoring skills gaps and emerging needs
- Addressing equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) requirements
- Designing education and training programmes to advance sectoral sustainability
- Identifying future skills profiles and professions aligned with evolving demands
- Promoting collaboration to ensure greater participation of stakeholders in the sector.

The strategies are outlined below:

Table 2: PANTOUR Key Deliverables
Strategic Planning and Intelligence

Sectoral Skills Intelligence Monitor

Tools for mapping skills gaps and anticipating future skills needs through the Sectoral Skills Intelligence and Monitoring toolkit

Development and monitoring of National and Regional Skills Partnerships (NRSPs)

Developing mechanisms to improve cooperation between stakeholders from industry, educational sector, government, industry associations and social partners for skills development

New Occupational Profiles

A handbook with emerging occupational profiles, based on extensive research, that focus on adapting the workforce for the digital, green and social future skills requirements, while attracting learners to the industry.

Skills Strategy and Action Plan (2026-2036)

Detailed roadmap with strategies and an action plan based on up-to-date policies orientation and research to develop sustainable education and training.

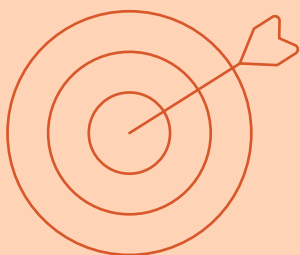


Table 2: PANTOUR Key Deliverables
Innovation & Training Tools

Skills Lab

Collaborative platform that matches skills demands and orientation with skills requirement for future needs, focused on individual assessment for workforce development.

Digital, Green, and Social Skills Training Programmes

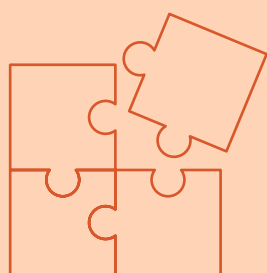
Training programmes with effective work-based and blended learning methodology, focused on the three set of sustainable skills and developed based on future skills needs.

Resource Book for Trainers

A 'Train the Trainer' book, with resources on methods, training material, tips, checklists and best practices.

EDI Best Practices Handbook & Guide

A handbook and guide for SMEs best practices to develop training for skills on equality, diversity and inclusion, tackling inequalities within the workforce and promoting social fairness in the workplace.



Recognising needs variations across countries, the consortium developed strategic planning to investigate skills gaps, mismatches and requirements within each country's subsectors, providing a comprehensive understanding of the existing skills needs tourism landscape in Europe. Focusing on long-term and short-term plans to address education and training challenges present today in the European Union, it also developed different strategies and tools.

Strategic planning and intelligence were implemented to identify and monitor skill trends, gaps, and required actions, as well as to establish mechanisms for planning and collaboration among stakeholders in the long-term. Additionally, innovation and training tools were developed to support tourism organisations in assessing skills needs, developing new training and resources for educators, and understanding education and training needs

4

Policy Context and Insights

4.1. EU Policies Context

In recent years, the EU has introduced measures to address key challenges within the tourism ecosystem. These actions go beyond responding to the impacts of COVID-19, reflecting the need to prepare for a future marked by rapid climate change and technological advancements. Adapting education and training policies to these evolving demands is essential for maintaining competitiveness.

The World Economic Forum's Future of Jobs Report (2025) highlights technological change, geoeconomic fragmentation, economic uncertainty, demographic shifts, and the green transition as forces reshaping the labour market. Despite the growing need for a skilled workforce, the report highlights that skills development remains a major barrier to business transformation.

This plan guides actions based on relevant research, while supporting reskilling and upskilling initiatives through the diverse tools developed highlighted in Table 2. They were also guided by important current policies reflecting the needs of the European Union in tackling sustainable development and developing a resilient workforce.

The European policies that provide the framework for this plan are presented in Table 3 below:

Table 3: Key Policies Guiding this Plan



**Union of Skills
(2025)**

A comprehensive strategy and action plan aimed at developing EU competitiveness and resilience by addressing skills shortages and gaps across subsectors and fragmented skills governance across Member States. Its key objectives are:

- Enhancing the provision of both basic and advanced skills
- Creating opportunities for individuals to continuously update and acquire new skills
- Supporting businesses across the EU in streamlining recruitment processes
- Attracting and retaining talent within Europe

For this, it develops mechanisms to strengthen skills governance by:

- Creating a European skills intelligence observatory
- Bringing together a High-Level Board uniting education, business, and social partners to advise EU policymakers
- Developing recommendation on education and skills

Table 3: Key Policies Guiding this Plan





| | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  <p><u>The Pact for Skills (2020b)</u></p> | <p>The Pact for Skills brings together skills actions shared between different stakeholders, such as education and training providers, social partners, government and industry, maximising skills investment. It builds on the following pillars:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting lifelong learning • Championing gender equality and equal opportunities and combating discrimination • Building strong skills partnerships • Monitoring and anticipating <u>skills supply and demand</u> |
|  <p><u>The EU Agenda for Tourism 2030 (2022)</u></p> | <p>A council recommendation on setting priorities and recognising the sector’s strategic importance in Europe, especially post-COVID-19. Its strategy aims to foster a resilient, sustainable and innovative ecosystem, building collaborative channels and co-implementing the Transition Pathways for Tourism (2022).</p> <p>It focuses on two key target areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The green transition to decarbonise operations and develop the circular economy • The digital transition, including boosting SME digitalisation as well as data and tourism statistics sharing. <p>It provides guidance in five priority areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enabling policy frameworks and governance • Green transition • Digital transition • <u>Resilience and inclusion</u> • Skills to support the transition. |
|  <p><u>The Transition Pathways for Tourism (2022)</u></p> | <p>This policy introduced a new industry commitment to support green and digital transitions, while addressing the impacts of Covid-19. It strengthens the tourism ecosystem resilience and formalises stakeholder involvement within the tourism ecosystem to actively engage with the initiative. The action plan, along with different actions, includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhancing capabilities to strengthen workforce resilience • Creating accessible best practices • Promoting SMEs peer learning and networking, encouraging participation in <u>tourism education development</u> • Raising awareness about the skills needed for the transition. |
|  <p><u>The Digital Education Plan (2021)</u></p> | <p>This policy supports two key digital priorities: fostering the development of a high-performing digital education ecosystem and advancing in digital skills and competences for the digital transformation. Key actions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhancing EU-level cooperation and exchange in <u>digital education</u> • Creating the European Digital Education Content Framework • Implementing digital transformation plans for education and training institutions • Promoting the Digital Opportunity Traineeships initiative • Increasing women’s participation in STEM fields. |

Table 3: Key Policies Guiding this Plan

| | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  <p>The European Skills Agenda (2020)</p> | <p>This policy seeks to drive sustainability, competitiveness, fairness, and resilience across Europe by fostering skill development and collaboration between businesses, social partners, and stakeholders. It emphasises a clear strategy to translate skills into employment opportunities through lifelong learning, upskilling and reskilling targets by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strengthening skills intelligence, backing strategic national upskilling efforts• Promoting skills for the green and digital transitions• Creating training opportunities• Unlocking both public and private investments within the skills ecosystem. |
|  <p>The European Green Deal (2019)</p> | <p>This policy is of utmost importance to call society for climate action. It sets out a plan to transform Europe's economic strategic sector by reducing carbon emissions from energy, transport and industry to reach climate action targets for a sustainable future. Key actions in education and skills development are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reskilling and upskilling to guarantee the ecological transition• Developing a <u>competence framework</u> aimed at helping to develop and assess the necessary knowledge, skills, and attitudes to climate change and sustainable development• Promoting shifts in businesses with new skills requirements• Supporting the just transition with mechanisms to guarantee protection of workers vulnerable to the transition• Providing access to reskilling programmes and opportunities for jobs, aligned with new sectors requirements and new economic sectors. |

4.2. Evidence-Based Policy Insights

To develop this Skills Strategy and Action Plan, the consortium conducted a stakeholder consultation to gather perspectives on changes, challenges, and observations related to policy implementation at local, regional and national levels.

This consultation was made between February and September 2025 and involved 86 survey responses, collected through the National and Regional Skills Partnerships collaborating with PANTOUR. In addition, 21 interviews were conducted with members of the Pact for Skills in Tourism policy discussion group, with a total of 15 countries representation, and 107 respondents:

Table 4: Characteristics of Respondents

| Category | Subcategory | Respondents |
|----------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------|
| Country | Austria | 1 |
| | Belgium | 3 |
| | Bulgaria | 12 |
| | Finland | 4 |
| | France | 2 |
| | Germany | 7 |
| | Greece | 10 |
| | Hungary | 10 |
| | Ireland | 8 |
| | Italy | 10 |
| | Latvia | 3 |
| | Netherlands | 6 |
| | Portugal | 11 |
| | Slovenia | 1 |
| | Spain | 17 |
| Sweden | 2 | |
| Type of Organisation | Trade Union/Trade association | 4 |
| | Tourism Association | 7 |
| | Tourism Organisation | 26 |
| | Education and Training organisation | 41 |
| | Government organisation | 16 |
| | I prefer not to answer | 2 |
| Total | | 107 |

The consultation looked to provide inputs regarding skills policies implementation in tourism with questions on:

- Current actions and initiatives to develop skills in regional/country levels
- Funding and support for skills in regional/country levels
- Barriers and challenges present in skills development in regional/country levels
- Future needs and improvements for policy implementation regional/country levels

The questions were based on seven themes:

- Staff shortages in tourism and hospitality
- Innovative services using advanced technologies
- Environmentally friendly practices
- Social-cultural skills development
- Culture of lifelong learning and access to tourism education
- Strengthening of cooperation and exchange of good practices in the tourism sector
- Best practices to work against discrimination and inequalities

The consultation revealed the following challenges, outcomes and observations on skills policy implementation as seen in Table 5 below:

Table 5: Insights from the Consultation

| Topic | Outcomes, challenges and observations on skills policy implementation |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Promotion of skills and actions to retain workers and address staff shortages | <p>Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement of working conditions and targeted funding to skills development create positive worker experiences and improve retention • Sharing best practices and career transition success stories has improved the perception of the industry <p>Challenges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff shortages persist despite numerous policies for attracting workers and reskilling initiatives, highlighting the need for long-term retention strategies <p>Observations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More retention issues were identified in entry-level positions than in management positions. • EU upskilling and reskilling efforts still require more financial support, as current impacts are not clearly visible |
| Promotion of advanced technologies adoption and in increasing digital skills development | <p>Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU-funded projects have been helpful in promoting advanced technology skills development. However, technological gaps persist as SMEs struggle with adoption • Initiatives such as digital academies and apprenticeships have been beneficial. However, workforce upskilling is slower in small organisations <p>Challenges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessing local funding is challenging, and requires more support • Short-term funding and fragmented training and education systems slow policy integration <p>Observations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross-sectoral cooperation may enhance technology adoption in the tourism sector • Digital inclusion and ethical AI frameworks are essential to advance digital skills development |

Table 5: Insights from the Consultation

| Topic | Outcomes, challenges and observations on skills policy implementation |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Promotion of environmental practices adoption and green skills development | <p>Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainability training has improved the integration of sustainable metrics, laws and actions into organisations • Funding or subsidies for training on sustainable skills have also increased the adoption of practices in rural areas • Green certifications have encouraged the adoption of environmental practices across organisations <p>Challenges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gaps remain in understanding the economic benefits of sustainability • Legislation supports sustainability practices. However, SMEs face financial and infrastructural challenges that hinder advancements <p>Observations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broad understanding of green skills development makes practical implementation difficult; specific green training topics are more easily embedded in operations and widely adopted |
| Promotion of wellbeing, resilience and socio-cultural skills adoption | <p>Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased industry awareness about wellbeing, with more organisations focusing on mental health, resilience and inclusivity training • Community engagement has improved collaboration and inclusion among tourism stakeholders • Initiatives to supporting employee wellbeing were perceived in rural and regional areas <p>Challenges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation mismatches persist, with practical efforts remaining fragmented <p>Observations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identified need to address accessibility in a broader way, such as identifying barriers in participation, promoting equal access to opportunities, and different types of accessibility needs |
| Promotion of lifelong learning initiatives | <p>Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is an increased interest in lifelong learning initiatives within the ecosystem, with more awareness of training opportunities and funding • Developing educational campaigns were perceived as effective in generating interest in more training among workers • Public and private partnership have been successful across regions to provide reskilling and upskilling among subsectors <p>Challenges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low uptake in formal learning can hinder organisations from meeting operational needs and education/training targets • Difficulties for SMEs relate to time constraints, with a few initiatives of government subsidising training for organisations being successful <p>Observations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU funding allocation has created important pathways for workforce skills development. However, projects vary by region. • The sector's low attractiveness continues to hinder progress in workforce training and capacity building |

Table 5: Insights from the Consultation

| Topic | Outcomes, challenges and observations on skills policy implementation |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Strengthening cooperation for skills development in the tourism sector | <p>Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closer cooperation between education and industry was observed but requires more engagement • EU funding has developed stronger education-industry links through collaborative projects • Practical learning through apprenticeships has been beneficial to address common challenges and solutions <p>Challenges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional disconnection hinders effective cooperation and knowledge transfer <p>Observations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More support is needed for transnational knowledge sharing • Although regional and rural organisations benefit from participation in knowledge sharing networks, their connections with wider or national associations remain limited |
| Combating inequalities and promoting inclusion through education in the tourism sector | <p>Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actions to combat inequalities and promote inclusion have increased. However, progress varies across different subsectors and countries • Greater empowerment of marginalised groups was observed with increased government initiatives <p>Challenges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Persistent challenges include underrepresentation in leadership roles, and insufficient recognition for diverse workers • Uneven support for inclusion and accessibility hinders effective progress in organisations • Preparedness for inclusive tourism needs improvement <p>Observations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness of EDI training in the sector is relatively new and still needs stronger outreach and supports • Addressing harassment and discrimination in the workplace requires comprehensive training and compliance with policies |

The insights outlined above have informed this Skills Strategy and Action Plan, offering reflection on successful initiatives and highlighting areas that require further support to advance skills development across Europe. The corresponding actions are presented in the following section.

5

Detailed Action Plan

5.1 Methodology for the Action plan

This Action Plan outlines key priorities and evidence-based actions to enhance skills development across the tourism and hospitality workforce. The proposed actions were informed by interviews and surveys conducted with NRSPs stakeholders and PfST discussion group members, referenced in Section 4.2. They are also aligned with the European policies highlighted in Section 4.1 and shaped by research from different project deliverables, described in section 3. These sources provided critical research insights and ensured alignment in translating findings into actionable strategies.

5.2 Action Plan

This Action Plan contains seven priorities divided thematically, with forty-five actions to address skills development. It also provides useful PANTOUR resources suggestions, and best practice examples for specific actions, which details are outlined in the following chapter. The priorities and actions are in the section below.

Priority 1: Strategic Actions to Address Workforce Gaps, Staff Shortages and Enhance the Sector's Attractiveness with Skills Development

The tourism sector has faced widespread staff shortages across Europe, reflecting multiple post-COVID-19 challenges and the industry's image of poor work-life balance and long working hours. These issues have contributed to a decline in the sector's attractiveness, driven by its vulnerability to unforeseen crises, the seasonality of jobs, and difficulties in engaging younger generations who prioritise wellbeing. The sector employs a significant proportion of foreign workers and women, and is also characterised by generally lower formal qualifications compared to other service industries (Eurostat, 2024; Interreg Europe, 2025).

Addressing these shortages requires comprehensive skilling, reskilling, and upskilling initiatives. This includes promoting clear career pathways for tourism workers, developing new skills profiles, tackling inequalities and embedding wellbeing into training at all levels. Such actions strengthen competitiveness, build a sustainable talent pipeline, and foster a fairer, more resilient and attractive industry.

Actions:

Priority 1: Strategic Actions to Address Workforce Gaps, Staff Shortages and Enhance the Sector's Attractiveness with Skills Development:

| Priority 1 Actions | Examples of specific actions | Description of specific challenges | Expected outcomes | Key stakeholders |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1.1. Promote Attractiveness through wellbeing Initiatives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer courses on wellbeing and fairness in the workplace. • Launch campaigns to increase career attractiveness and sector's branding • Dedicate time for training. • Train managers on how to support workers. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited Career Attractiveness, as jobs often offer low wages and limited progression. • Seasonality restricts growth, as seasonal roles create job insecurity and fewer development opportunities. • Negative industry perception, associated with long hours and poor work-life balance. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritisation of work life balance with flexible working arrangements. • Supportive work environments that promote dignity and respect through training. • Improved productivity and performance through employee wellbeing. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National/ Regional Government • Industry • Social Partners • Education & Training Providers |
| 1.2. Launch Campaigns to Attract Talent and Improve the industry's Image | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop more digital/ online material on education and training to attract workers. • Promote success/ best practices stories • Offer incentives for workers, such as support for training | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negative industry perception, as tourism is often associated with long hours, low pay, and poor work-life balance • High worker turnover, with frequent staff changes • Seasonality reduces job security and long-term growth opportunities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer of competitive wages • Improved working conditions that ensure retention of qualified workers • Retention with awareness on the different career paths in the industry. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National/ Regional Government • Industry • Social Partners |

Priority 1: Strategic Actions to Address Workforce Gaps, Staff Shortages and Enhance the Sector's Attractiveness with Skills Development:

| Priority 1 Actions | Examples of specific actions | Description of specific challenges | Expected outcomes | Key stakeholders |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Useful PANTOUR Resource: EDI Handbook of Best Practices | | | | |
| 1.3. Develop Strategies to Promote Generational Succession by Encouraging Lifelong Learning in Tourism Education | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer subsidised education for workers to upskill • Develop education programmes focused on different ages and with collaboration • Build digital sharing platforms | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of workers, with a persistent staff shortage across the sector, impacting service quality and growth • Low attractiveness among younger generations, making tourism careers less appealing to younger talent | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased workforce participation attracting more workers to the tourism sector • Reduced workforce gaps, addressing shortages and ensuring critical roles are filled • Enhanced workforce age diversity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU • National/ Regional Government • Industry • Education & Training Providers • NRSPs |
| 1.4. Update Skill Profiles and Develop Education and Training Materials Tailored to Tourism Sector Needs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct skills gap analysis • Review occupational profiles, job descriptions and competences • Pilot more training with education-industry collaboration initiatives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The industry is slower than other sectors to modernise and adapt education and training to current trends • Slow adoption of changes in curricula provides challenges in skills development | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced sector appeal, offering educational content adapted to needs • Evolving demands met, addressing anticipating future needs and attracting the workforce | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU • National/ Regional governments • Industry • Education & Training Providers |
| Useful PANTOUR resources: SIMM , New Occupational Profiles Handbook , Training Programmes | | | | |
| 1.5. Implement talent retention strategies by providing career growth through upskilling and reskilling opportunities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer regular training to keep employees engaged • Create clear career progressions with HR professionals for development plans • Partner with universities and VET to develop and deliver training | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High mobility of skilled workers, as qualified professionals acquire transferable skills, making it easy for them to move to other sectors • The sector struggles to retain talent due to limited attractiveness compared to other industries | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stronger workforce resilience, building a tourism workforce that can adapt to challenges and changing conditions • Higher engagement and retention, with an increase worker commitment and loyalty by providing clear career pathways | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU • National/ Regional Government • Industry • Social Partners • Education & Training Providers • Pact for Skills Ecosystem • NRSPs |
| Best Practice 3: Van der Valk Hotels | | | | |

Priority 1: Strategic Actions to Address Workforce Gaps, Staff Shortages and Enhance the Sector's Attractiveness with Skills Development:

| Priority 1 Actions | Examples of specific actions | Description of specific challenges | Expected outcomes | Key stakeholders |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1.6. Promote the attraction and integration of talent by supporting the inclusion of migrant workers through educational pathways opportunities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer subsidised language courses, and cultural awareness training in organisations • Create pathways for recognition of prior learning • Ensure tourism programmes are accessible for migrants, with flexible entry systems and schedules | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restricted immigration policies limit the inflow of skilled workers, reducing labour availability and increasing staff shortages • Migrants face more challenges in applying for educational opportunities, hindering workforce stability and inclusion | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased representation in tourism employment and growth of the sector • Boost of participation of migrant background workers in education in the tourism workforce • Attracted and retained global skills, securing talent from third countries, whether trained within or outside the EU | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU • National/ Regional Government • Social Partners • Education & Training Providers |

Best Practice 12: [Programme 'Integrar'](#) (Portugal)
 Useful PANTOUR resources: [EDI Best Practices Handbook](#); [SkillsLab](#)

Priority 2: Strategic Actions to Support the Digital Transformation and for Adoption of Advanced Technologies

Developing skills for the digitalisation of the economy and supporting the digital and green transition are essential for sustaining the competitiveness of the tourism industry. Bridging the gap between rapid advances in digital and emerging technologies and transforming businesses through skills innovation is critical to building a stronger industry ecosystem - particularly in a sector dominated by SMEs that require additional support for digitalisation (OECD, 2021; European Commission, 2022). The tourism sector also shows wide variation in digital proficiency, with uneven adoption of digital skills and unequal access across rural and urban areas and among European countries, highlighting persistent gaps and disparities (Eurofound, 2023). Addressing these skills gaps is fundamental to strengthening the ecosystem with forward-looking approaches that improve employability and competitiveness. Greater adoption of strategic digital skills can enhance engagement and attractiveness, empower individuals, and contribute to a greener, fairer sector (Union of Skills, 2025).

Actions

Priority 2: Strategic Actions to Support the Digital Transformation and for Adoption of Advanced Technologies

| Priority 2 Actions | Examples of Specific Actions | Description of challenges | Expected Outcomes | Key stakeholders |
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| 2.1. Integrate supports for SMEs for workplace training in advanced technologies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support SMEs in identifying, accessing, and combining relevant EU initiatives and instruments for workforce upskilling in advanced digital technologies Offer funding, tax relieves or vouchers for SMEs to invest in training Support practical adoption of tools through advisory services and peer-learning activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SMEs lack the economic and time resources as large corporations to develop and impart digital training content. Unequal infrastructure access reduces competitiveness compared to larger organisations SMEs have limited access to expertise, causing a skills gap | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased innovation and competitiveness boosting growth Anticipated needs and challenges to enhance preparedness of the workforce SMEs equipped with business tools and external support to deliver high-quality, relevant training programs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> EU National/Regional Government Industry Social Partners Education & Training Providers NRSPs |
| Useful PANTOUR resources: Training Programmes | | | | |
| 2.2. Scale up education and training in advanced digital skills - including AI literacy, AR/VR, IoT, big data, and sustainable technologies - through expanded courses, apprenticeships, and continuous development. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct sectoral analysis of skills needs to propose targeted educational courses Develop specialised training modules for organisations Create e-learning hubs/platforms in local/regional level addressing needs with local language and examples | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Slow adoption and integration of technology into operation and training, compared to other industries Regional and inequalities disparities Digital skills gap and workforce readiness | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced workforce readiness by improving advanced technology literacy Increased industry innovation, efficiency, compliance and competitiveness, advancing the twin transition Improved service quality by fostering technology adoption | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> EU National/Regional Government Industry Education & Training Providers |

Priority 2: Strategic Actions to Support the Digital Transformation and for Adoption of Advanced Technologies

| Priority 2 Actions | Examples of Specific Actions | Description of challenges | Expected Outcomes | Key stakeholders |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Best Practice 2: Chef & Gastro Academy Useful PANTOUR resources: Country Profiles Reports , Training Programmes | | | | |
| 2.3. Streamline curriculum approval to match technological advances, enabling timely classroom implementation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fast-track curriculum reviewing processes Schedule more frequent reviews for digital topics Provide training for educators for new trends and for increasing new curricula adoption. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Slow integration of digital skills into curricula creates significant skills gaps Rigid EU and national curricula frameworks limit flexibility and hinder implementation Bureaucracy and delays slow the adoption of new practices | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accelerated integration of emerging technologies, enabling agile and future-ready education systems Streamlined curriculum approval processes to minimise bureaucratic delays Stronger alignment between education and industry needs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> EU National/ Regional Government Education & Training Providers |
| Useful PANTOUR resources: Resource Book for Trainers | | | | |
| 2.4. Advance the twin transition by promoting education and training in digital and sustainable technologies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop foundational education and training in digital and green skills and tools Provide subsidised e-learning courses and/or micro-credentials to increase flexibility Promote education and training through free available initiatives in incentivising SMEs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SMEs lack the resources (such as time and money) to impart training Difficulty in integrating digitalisation into green initiatives due to fast-evolving technologies Uneven adoption of the twin transition skills into curricula across Members States due to economic or infrastructure limitations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accelerated digital and green transitions, enhancing innovation capacity across the EU Reduced skills gaps necessary for the twin transition Alignment of the workforce with policy and climate goals | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> EU National/ Regional Government Industry Social Partners Education & Training Providers |
| Useful PANTOUR resources: Training Programmes | | | | |
| 2.5. Use advanced technologies to promote accessible upskilling pathways for diverse workers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote initiatives to integrate accessibility features to diverse needs Implement mobile training solutions to reach a wider audience Develop tools/ resources to support SMEs in advancing training for technologies integration | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workers from diverse background face persistent training barriers. Existing technologies are under-utilised for skill enhancement SMEs have limited access to education and training opportunities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> More flexible and adaptable learning through digital training. Increased workforce participation from diverse backgrounds Broadened access to learning opportunities beyond traditional methods | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> EU National/ Regional Government Industry Education & Training Providers |

Priority 2: Strategic Actions to Support the Digital Transformation and for Adoption of Advanced Technologies

| Priority 2 Actions | Examples of Specific Actions | Description of challenges | Expected Outcomes | Key stakeholders |
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| Useful PANTOUR resources: SkillsLab , Training Programmes | | | | |
| 2.6. Develop capabilities in big-data analytics to enhance data-driven decision-making, innovation competitiveness | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop short courses and certifications tailored for tourism professionals • Create shared-data platforms for tourism organisations access market trends • Set up learning hubs for data-driven tourism | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innovation in the tourism industry is outpaced by other sectors • SMEs face limited competitiveness compared to large organisations and struggle with complex data governance requirements • Difficulty in retaining specialised IT workers, limiting the digital transformation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced innovation capacity, competitiveness, and digital upskilling in the sector • Strengthened data governance and compliance • Improved decision-making and operational efficiency | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU • National/ Regional Government • Industry • Social Partners • Education and Training providers |
| Best Practice 6: Visit Finland Academy Useful PANTOUR resources: Training Programmes ; New Occupational Profiles | | | | |

Priority 3: Strategic Actions to Drive Green Innovation and Environmental Responsibility through Sustainable Practices

Addressing green sustainability is a core priority for the tourism and hospitality sector, given its significant environmental impacts, including carbon emissions, disposable materials, waste, and water consumption. Concerns about tourism’s role in altering natural ecosystems and affecting community livelihoods must also be tackled through targeted education and training initiatives. Developing circular practices within the sector is essential to promote resilience and secure the future of destinations and generations. A key pillar of the green transition is the need for skilled professionals equipped with knowledge of the circular economy, environmental protection, and the twin transition (European Commission, 2024).

Actions

Priority 3: Strategic Actions to Drive Green Innovation and Environmental Responsibility through Sustainable Practices

| Priority 3 Actions | Examples of Specific Actions | Description of challenges | Expected outcomes | Key Stakeholders |
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| 3.1. Build capacity access for managing funding opportunities to support organisations for the green transition | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create centralised funding platforms. • Simplify mechanisms for funding application | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fragmented funding policies reduce overall policy impact • Low awareness and understanding of available funding opportunities • Complex bureaucratic procedures hinder access to financial support | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater understanding and utilisation of financial support for skills development • Faster adoption of environmental practices and integration of sustainable practices across the sector • Improved competitiveness and reduced bureaucracy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU • National/Regional Government • Social Partners • Industry |
| 3.2. Design and offer incentives for SMEs to deliver sector-specific education and training programmes focused on environmental practices | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop incentives such as tax reliefs, subsidised training programmes and grants/scholarships for education and training • Create certification and recognition for organisations for developing expertise | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited infrastructure and time constraints make it difficult for SMEs to deliver training • High implementation costs restrict access to green training programs • Lack of in-house expertise to design and deliver specialised sustainability training | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand access to expert-led training and advisory services to help SMEs address sustainability knowledge gaps • Increase SME participation in workforce upskilling and reskilling initiatives aligned with environmental goals • Enhance the competitiveness of small organisations by improving compliance with EU sustainability standards and market requirements | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU • National/Regional Government • Industry |

Priority 3: Strategic Actions to Drive Green Innovation and Environmental Responsibility through Sustainable Practices

| Priority 3 Actions | Examples of Specific Actions | Description of challenges | Expected outcomes | Key Stakeholders |
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| 3.3. Expand and promote capacity-building for green certification programmes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop specific micro-credentials training programmes for explanation of eco-labels and certification requirements • Link green certifications to the concept of tourism destination carrying capacity. • Train professionals in green skills offering education and training opportunities • Establish peer-learning networks, mentorships and champion programmes for capacity-building in organisations and local/regional associations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fragmented training and development initiatives create inefficiency and inconsistent capacity-building • Complex EU Green procurement criteria make sustainable public procurement challenging to navigate • Superficial sustainability practices undermine longterm impact | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harmonisation across sectors and stronger integration with transition pathways • Clear, measurable sustainability outcomes, including reductions in emissions, waste, and resource consumption • Reduced discrepancies between sustainability policies and implementation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU • National/ Regional Government • Industry |
| 3.4 Provide targeted circular economy training for tourism organisations to strengthen the ability to measure and report key environmental performance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop specific education and training content in circular economy in a flexible way (online, self-paced, in-house and in VETs) • Integrate environmental performance metrics training for organisations • Develop workshops and events with best practices to disseminate knowledge | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inconsistent implementation of sustainability initiatives across Member States • Limited adoption of circular economy skills within the tourism industry • Difficulties in accurately measuring and reporting key sustainability performance indicators (KPIs) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater harmonisation across subsectors, aligning practices and standards to create consistency • Increased adoption of circular economy practices by integrating reuse, recycling, and resource efficiency into tourism operations to reduce environmental impact • Developed organisational capacity to measure and report sustainability KPIs accurately, ensuring EU compliance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU • National/ Regional Government • Industry • Education & Training Providers |

Best Practice 5: [Balaton-felvidéki Nemzeti Park](#)
 Useful PANTOUR resources: [Training Programmes](#)

Priority 3: Strategic Actions to Drive Green Innovation and Environmental Responsibility through Sustainable Practices

| Priority 3 Actions | Examples of Specific Actions | Description of challenges | Expected outcomes | Key Stakeholders |
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| 3.5. Ensure regional skills needs and national education policies are aligned with EU frameworks to enhance environmental awareness and sustainable innovation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a skills gap analysis to align needs and identify gaps in environmental competencies • Integrate EU sustainability frameworks in curricula and green certification requirements • Create incentives for policy-alignment training, encouraging implementation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Misalignment of policies recommendations with regional skill requirements lead to low stakeholder engagement • Slow curricula adoption compared to other industries • Limited awareness in adopting green policies slows progress toward sustainability goals | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alignments of policy to reflect local tourism realities and skills gaps • Increased awareness on sustainable practices, reducing regional disparities • Upskilled workforce to combat environmental challenges | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU • National/ Regional Government • Industry • Social Partners • Pact for Skills Ecosystem • NRSPs |
| Useful PANTOUR resources: SIMM | | | | |
| 3.6. Foster collaborative channels to promote responsible environmental practices and develop community-based education/training initiatives in partnership with local communities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop collaboration initiatives between businesses and local communities to ensure excess tourism and other sustainability issues are addressed. • Address community-based tourism practices through targeted education and training • Develop green and social sustainability training | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inconsistent approaches driven by diverse regional requirements • Limited awareness and inconsistent application of responsible environmental practices • Excessive tourism beyond a destination's capacity leads to negative impacts on the local population, including displacement, higher living costs, and pressure on infrastructure • Weak collaboration among local stakeholders hindering coordinated action | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced local engagement with more partnership between the industry sector, local communities and authorities • Reduced environmental impacts through local relevant actions and improved livelihood in communities • Improved awareness of environmentally responsible practices aligned with the twin transition needs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU • National/ Regional Government • Industry • Social Partners • Education & Training Providers • Pact for Skills Ecosystem • NRSPs |

Priority 4: Strategic Actions to Build Resilience, Enhance Wellbeing, and Strengthen Social Competencies in Tourism Social competences are critical in the tourism and hospitality sector.

Developing skills such as cognitive, cultural, and soft skills - considered core skills for the workforce - alongside initiatives that build resilience and wellbeing in the workplace, is essential for driving positive changes in the industry. Studies highlight that these skills are vital across sectors to future-proof the workforce (OECD, 2020; Pact for Skills, 2020b). Investing in skilling and upskilling for social competences not only supports sustainable growth but also strengthens workforce resilience, improves social interaction, and enhances engagement. Developing social skills contributes to a healthier work environment by equipping employees to communicate effectively, think critically about future challenges, and design solutions for sustainability, while promoting wellbeing.

Actions:

| Priority 4 Actions | Examples of Specific Actions | Description of challenges | Expected outcomes | Key Stakeholders |
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| 4.1. Deliver targeted education and training programmes to strengthen socio-cultural skills across a diverse workforce | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop intercultural competences education and training • Develop resources for organisations and learners on language training • Establish peer-learning and mentorship programmes in organisations to improve exchange of practices | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Underdeveloped soft skills limit career progression and workforce readiness • Service quality and guest interaction is negatively impacted by gaps in communication skills • Limited mobility and integration, leading to social exclusion of migrant workers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved communication and guest interaction • Enhanced career progression opportunities • Improved integration of third-country nationals into the EU tourism workforce | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU • National/Regional Government • Industry • Social Partners • Education & Training Providers |

Useful PANTOUR resources: [Training programmes](#), [EDI Handbook of Best Practices](#)

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| 4.2. Enhance wellbeing and work-life balance by providing change management resources and education and training for managers and employees | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop change management education and training for management levels • Introduce wellbeing champions programmes • Enhance tracking and monitoring to evaluate impact of change management structures and training in organisations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resistance to change leads to workers disengagement, amplified by seasonality and unusual working hours • Limited wellbeing initiatives fail to address the challenges of irregular schedules and seasonal employment, impacting employee satisfaction and retention | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved employee wellbeing and work-life balance to enhance satisfaction and retention • Greater adaptability and resilience in response to changing industry demands • Reduced resistance to change through supportive structures and workplace practices | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU • National/Regional Government • Industry • Social Partners • Education & Training Providers |
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Best Practice 10: [Trigon Hotels](#)

Useful PANTOUR resources: [EDI Handbook of Best Practices](#), [Training programmes](#)

| Priority 4 Actions | Examples of Specific Actions | Description of challenges | Expected outcomes | Key Stakeholders |
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| 4.3. Continuously promote resilience training and provide organisational support to strengthen it | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and enhance education and training in adaptability, stress management and mental health • Train managers on fostering team resilience, emotional intelligence and supportive communication • Establish peer support networks for staff to share experiences and strategies • Offer flexible study and work arrangements according to needs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insufficient infrastructure and limited training on emerging topics hinder workforce development and sector resilience • High turnover, burnout, and quiet resignation reflect low engagement and poor working conditions • Industry vulnerability to external crises and negative perceptions of mental health exacerbate instability and resistance to change | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthened workforce resilience and adaptability through improved crisis preparedness and change-readiness. • Lower turnover and higher retention driven by supportive practices and a healthier work environment • Normalisation of mental health conversations to foster an inclusive and supportive workplace culture | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU • National/ Regional Government • Industry • Social Partners • Education & Training Providers |

Useful PANTOUR resources: [EDI Handbook of Best Practices, Training Programmes](#)

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| 4.4. Expand funding and develop targeted resources for the development of social competences | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create dedicated funding for social competences programmes delivery in tourism education and training organisations • Introduce incentives schemes for organisations to integrate social competences into training • Create targeted resources, such as digital education and training, adapting materials and measuring competences development | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited funding for developing social competences compared to green and digital • Less efficiency with workforce gaps in intra and interpersonal skills, collaboration and conflict management • Mismatch between workforce training and sector requirements | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased recognition of social competences, expanded access to relevant training resources. • Greater understanding and utilisation of financial support for skills development. • Better alignment between workforce and sector's softskills needs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU • National/ Regional Government • Industry • Education & Training Providers |
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Useful PANTOUR resources: [EDI Handbook of Best Practices](#)

| Priority 4 Actions | Examples of Specific Actions | Description of challenges | Expected outcomes | Key Stakeholders |
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| 4.5. Integrate transversal skills education and training into tourism education and continuous professional development programmes. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embed transversal skills modules into existing courses • Develop professional development courses for educators and micro-credentials on transversal skills | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transversal skills are seen as core skills but underdeveloped in training • Gap between industry expectations and workforce capabilities • Difficulty identifying, recognising, and communicating the need for these skills | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater recognition and integration of transversal skills in education and professional development programs • Align evolving industry needs with training content • Improved workforce readiness and career mobility through stronger transversal skills | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National/ Regional Government • Industry • Education & Training Providers |

Useful PANTOUR resources: [SkillsLab](#), [Training Programmes](#)

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| 4.6. Increase the focus on entrepreneurship education for younger generations to build an innovative ecosystem | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate entrepreneurship modules into education and training • Establish and organise mentorship programmes for students to develop entrepreneurship skills • Introduce project-based learning activities into curricula and education for development of innovation and entrepreneurship skills | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited innovation and creativity within the sector • Dependence on large chains limits youth employment opportunities in smaller businesses • Young people face more barriers to entering the labour market | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foster innovation and creativity across the sector by embedding entrepreneurial thinking into education and practice • Create diverse employment pathways that open opportunities for younger people • Boost engagement and employability through entrepreneurship education | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU • National/ Regional Government • Industry • Education & Training Providers • Pact for Skills Ecosystem • NRSPs |
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Priority 5: Strategic Actions to Promote Lifelong Learning and Expand Access to Tourism Education for a Sustainable Industry

Skills policies that promote lifelong learning aim to ensure that every individual - regardless of social status, ethnic background, age, or gender - has access to quality education (Union of Skills, 2025; EU Skills Agenda, 2020). This fosters future career opportunities, improves quality of life, and supports social inclusion. While lifelong learning systems in tourism and hospitality have made progress in reducing inequalities and increasing participation, persistent challenges remain. These include low levels of digital and green skills, ongoing gender and entrepreneurial gaps, and acute skills shortages that impact the sector (Union of Skills, 2025; European Commission – Report on Monitoring the Skills Transition, 2025). Skilling, reskilling, and upskilling initiatives are essential to build a stronger workforce, from entry-level to specialised skills. Promoting accessibility, inclusion, and local development through lifelong initiatives is key to creating better lives, quality jobs, and unlocking the full potential of the industry.

Actions:

Priority 5: Strategic Actions to Promote Lifelong Learning and Expand Access to Tourism Education for a Sustainable Industry

| Priority 5 Actions | Examples of Specific Actions | Description of challenges | Expected outcomes | Key Stakeholders |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 5.1. Expand access to high-quality tourism education and training across Europe to enable continuous upskilling and reskilling, supporting the twin transition and workforce inclusion | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer micro-credential and digital badges for short aligned with the European Digital Credentials for Learning (EDC) • Provide targeted funding or financial aid for underrepresented groups participating in education • Develop collaboration on developing solutions to supporting continuous professional learning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Persistent skills gaps in green practices, digital technologies, sociocultural competencies, and EDI within the tourism workforce • Limited accessibility of lifelong learning opportunities for workers across the sector • Significant mismatch between current workforce skills and the evolving needs of the tourism industry | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced skills gaps through targeted education and training programmes • Improved access to lifelong learning opportunities for the tourism workforce, ensuring inclusivity across regions and career stages • Better alignment between workforce skills development and sectoral needs, with increased engagement in continuous learning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU • National/ Regional Government • Industry • Social Partners • Education & Training Providers • Pact for Skills Ecosystem • NRSPs |

PANTOUR resources: [Country Skills Profile Reports](#), [Development of Skills Collaboration Groups \(NRSPs\)](#)

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| 5.2. Foster structured collaboration between higher education, vocational training providers, and industry to co-design curricula and training programs aligned with evolving sector demands and regional labour market needs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tailor more programmes that can be adapted to regional, local and specific context. • Develop best practices sharing platforms on education and training initiatives that can be adapted to regional needs. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training programs are not sufficiently adaptable to regional, local, and subsector-specific contexts. • Insufficient dialogue and collaboration between educators and organisations, hindering alignment of skills with industry needs. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SMEs and employees engaged in quality tailored training programs, boosting use of learning opportunities and lifelong learning participation. • Strengthened dialogue and partnerships between educators and employers. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National/ Regional Government • Industry • Education & Training Providers • Pact for Skills Ecosystem • NRSPs |
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Priority 5: Strategic Actions to Promote Lifelong Learning and Expand Access to Tourism Education for a Sustainable Industry

| Priority 5 Actions | Examples of Specific Actions | Description of challenges | Expected outcomes | Key Stakeholders |
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| 5.2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co-design curricula with partnerships between VET, Education and Industry training providers. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Persistent gaps between educational content and practical industry requirements, reducing the relevance of training. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved alignment between educational content and industry requirements, reducing skills mismatches. | |

Useful PANTOUR resources: [Development of Skills Collaboration Groups \(NRPS\)](#), [SIMM](#), [SkillsLab](#)

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| 5.3. Continue to strengthen SMEs supports by facilitating lifelong learning, through expanded apprenticeships, targeted financial incentives, and dedicated training funds | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand apprenticeships programmes in the sector. Create a digital wallet/voucher system where funding flows directly from the state to the training provider upon course completion, removing the administrative and cashflow burden from the SMEs Establish dedicated training funds with public and private partnerships | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SMEs face financial constraints and lack standardised training resources, limiting their ability to provide structured employee development compared to larger organisations. Insufficient time and capacity for employee training due to staff shortages and operational pressures Challenges in attracting and retaining talent, reducing competitiveness and long-term sustainability | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A more competitive ecosystem supported by effective funding mechanisms and incentives that expand access to training. Sector employment increases because of enhanced workforce skills and improved talent retention | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> EU National/ Regional Government Industry Education & Training Providers Pact for Skills Ecosystem NRSPs |
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Useful PANTOUR resources: [SIMM](#), [Training Programmes](#)

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| 5.4. Expand the availability of part-time, micro-credential, and online learning programmes to enhance flexibility and accessibility in tourism education and training, supporting diverse learners needs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop courses to be stacked or taken individually Expand micro-credentials initiatives Create multilingual e-learning platforms Develop inclusive and accessible learning materials and courses, aligned with diverse learners needs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traditional learning models do not adequately address the needs of diverse lifelong learners Low participation in lifelong learning limits workforce adaptability and skill development Insufficient recognition of informal and short-term learning reduces engagement and weakens the culture of lifelong learning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greater flexibility in learning pathways and increased participation, enabling lifelong learners to access education that fits diverse schedules and needs More formal recognition of micro-credentials and short-term learning, validating alternative learning formats Enhanced workforce adaptability and resilience, supporting sustainable growth in the tourism sector | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> National/ Regional Government Industry Education & Training Providers |
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Best Practice 9: [Guinness Learning for Life Programme](#)
 Useful PANTOUR resources: [SkillsLab](#), [EDI Handbook of Best Practices](#)

Priority 5: Strategic Actions to Promote Lifelong Learning and Expand Access to Tourism Education for a Sustainable Industry

| Priority 5 Actions | Examples of Specific Actions | Description of challenges | Expected outcomes | Key Stakeholders |
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| 5.5. Promote career guidance by providing accessible resources and tools that help workers navigate opportunities and progression pathways within the tourism sector | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop online portals with AI-powered career pathway tools. • Strengthen career guidance with supports, such as career centres, in collaboration with VETs • Develop collaboration for tourism employers to share practical career insights | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited awareness of career pathways, reducing clarity on opportunities for progression • Low motivation and engagement among workers, hindering participation in development initiatives • High turnover and poor retention rates creating instability in the workforce | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved awareness of career pathways, giving workers clear visibility of progression opportunities within the tourism sector • Higher motivation and engagement, encouraging participation in professional development and lifelong learning initiatives • Reduced turnover and improved retention, as workers see viable career growth and stability in the sector | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industry • Education & Training Providers • Pact for Skills Ecosystem • NRSPs |

Useful PANTOUR resources: [Skills Lab](#)

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|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 5.6. Implement new professional development initiatives to enhance trainers' expertise and ensure the implementation of current and future educational needs in the tourism sector | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop professional development courses frameworks, such as courses for trainers, providing more online and blended format education opportunities • Facilitate collaboration between organisation trainers and education institutions to develop or co-develop training content | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mismatches in training and industry requirements can limit full professional development • Fragmented education and training content reduces effectiveness • Slow adaptation to sectoral changes, leaving tourism education and training behind emerging trends and skills needs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faster adaptation of educational programs to sectoral changes, keeping pace with emerging trends and skills demands • Strengthened development of trainers, fostering innovation and responsiveness in tourism education | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National/ Regional Government • Education & Training Providers • Industry |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Useful PANTOUR resources: [Training Programmes](#)

Priority 6: Strategic Actions to Strengthen Collaboration and Share Best Practices in Tourism

Strengthening collaboration has been a key priority outlined by the Pact for Skills (2020b) to advance workforce development in tourism through practical and impactful skilling initiatives. Building strong partnerships among stakeholders - including education providers, government bodies, industry organisations, and social partners - is essential for improving economic competitiveness and driving social progress (NTG Blueprint, 2022). Establishing robust governance frameworks can help address fragmented initiatives for skills and sustainability challenges, and anticipate skills needs effectively and on time. Promoting the exchange of best practices, fostering cohesion, and encouraging joint solutions enable stakeholders to better understand each other's priorities, improve skills intelligence, and coordinate actions (Union of Skills, 2025). This collaborative approach ensures that skills shortages, gaps, and emerging needs are continuously addressed, creating a more resilient and adaptive tourism sector.

Actions:

Priority 6: Strategic Actions to Promote Lifelong Learning and Expand Access to Tourism Education for a Sustainable Industry

| Priority 6 Actions | Example of Specific Actions | Description of challenges | Expected outcomes | Key Stakeholders |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 6.1. Enhance cross-border skills validation recognising prior learning gained through stackable formal, informal, and non-formal learning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop more micro-credentials initiatives and recognition across borders • Create online systems for recognition and validation of prior learning to fast-track processes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fragmented qualification systems across Member States make cross-border recognition and mobility difficult • Non-formal learning and non-EU qualifications often goes unrecognised, slowing career progression • Tourism skills are often learned informally but are not formally recognised | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standardisation across Member States by ensuring consistency and official recognition • Enhanced lifelong learning by encouraging individuals to pursue flexible learning options • Boosted competitiveness, efficiency, and service delivery | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU • National/Regional Government • Industry • Education & Training Providers |
| 6.2. Improve partnerships at national and regional levels, between all relevant stakeholders including industry, education and training providers, social partners and national and regional governments for knowledge sharing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish formal collaboration structures, such as skills groups in regional and/or national levels • Launch knowledge-sharing platforms for stakeholders with different resources • Provide funding for the development of joint projects between education and industry organisations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholder engagement is fragmented, limiting collaboration and alignment • Training and education programmes do not match industry needs, creating skill gaps • SMEs and social partners have reduced representation in policy discussions, reducing their influence | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthened regional and national networks • Better alignment between education and industry needs • Greater inclusion of SMEs and social partners to boost workforce competitiveness | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National/Regional Government • Industry • Education & Training Providers • Pact for Skills Ecosystem • NRSPs |

Best Practice 11: [DEHOGA Brandenburg](#)

Useful PANTOUR resources: [Development of Skills Collaboration Groups \(NRSPs\)](#)

Priority 6: Strategic Actions to Promote Lifelong Learning and Expand Access to Tourism Education for a Sustainable Industry

| Priority 6 Actions | Example of Specific Actions | Description of challenges | Expected outcomes | Key Stakeholders |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 6.3. Establish EU, national, and regional collaboration platforms/ databases to strengthen learning networks and enable peer-to-peer exchange of best practices | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share best practices through national and regional platforms in local languages • Launch virtual communities of practice, with organisation of online and on-site events for knowledge-sharing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of awareness and fragmented information limits networking and coordination among stakeholders • Language and structural barriers restrict effective cross-regional collaboration and adaptation of best practices • SMEs face limited visibility and difficulty accessing EU programs and showcasing innovations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand cross-regional communication and centralise resources to improve networking • Provide updated, high-quality training and scalable best practices to support adaptation and lifelong learning • Enable easier monitoring and access to enhance SMEs participation and networking opportunities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU • National/ Regional Government • Industry • Social Partners • Education & Training Providers • Pact for Skills Ecosystem • NRSPs |
| Useful PANTOUR resources: Development of Skills Collaboration Group (NRSPs) , SkillsLab | | | | |
| 6.4. Strengthen links to support effective collaboration and capacity building by promoting regional innovation hubs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the design of new training and trainer qualifications • Facilitate sharing of best practices through forums, workshops, knowledge platforms | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited stakeholder connectivity and coordinated structures for sharing knowledge and partnerships • Insufficient resources and time hinder skills development and adaptation to emerging requirements • Collaboration structures are fragmented, limiting capacity building and innovation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stronger industry-education collaboration to align skills with labour market and regional needs • Expanded capacity building through knowledge transfer, upskilling, and professional development • Promotion of innovation to drive adaptability and competitiveness in the workforce | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National/ Regional Government • Industry • Education & Training Providers |
| Useful PANTOUR resources: Resource Book for Trainers | | | | |
| 6.5. Establish a national collaborative governance structure for tourism skills development to ensure effective cooperation with different tourism stakeholders | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create formal collaboration mechanisms for effective collaboration • Develop toolkits and guidelines for effective stakeholder engagement, organising meetings and training for collaborative governance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of harmonisation leads to inefficiencies and uneven quality • Limited stakeholder engagement, especially SMEs and regional actors, reduces inclusivity and effectiveness of governance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A unified governance model ensures coordination and alignment with EU frameworks | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU • National/ Regional Government • NRSPs |

Priority 6: Strategic Actions to Promote Lifelong Learning and Expand Access to Tourism Education for a Sustainable Industry

| Priority 6 Actions | Example of Specific Actions | Description of challenges | Expected outcomes | Key Stakeholders |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 6.5 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to ensure effective cooperation • Formalise 'National/Regional Skills Partnerships (NRSPs)' as recognised consultative bodies for tourism skills development to ensure effective cooperation with different tourism stakeholders | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty in tracking progress, policy impact and enforcing compliance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusive decision-making and policy implementation by ensuring representation from SMEs, social partners, education providers, and industry stakeholders into governance structures • Improved stakeholder cooperation, making monitoring and compliance easier | |
| <p>Best Practice 1: The Institute of Greek Tourism Confederation Useful PANTOUR resources: Development and monitoring of National and Regional Skills Partnerships (NRSPs)</p> | | | | |
| 6.6. Continue to ensure all relevant stakeholders have a voice in national and regional policy development through the NRSPs or other strategic mechanisms | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure balance representations with transparent mechanisms for stakeholders' participation • Strengthen community engagement skills co-designing tourism experiences with communities • Establish consultation mechanisms, such as workshops, online consultations, partnership boards or councils • Provide resources such as toolkits and online and in-person sessions on co-creation strategies and effective collaboration | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited stakeholder representation, with SMEs, social partners, and regional actors requiring a formal voice in policymaking • Exceeding a destination's carrying capacity creates pressures such as gentrification, rising living costs, displacement of residents, and strain on infrastructure • National policies may overlook regional needs and rural challenges • Limited coordination and duplication of efforts | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing skilling policies that consider all stakeholders who actively contribute to shaping tourism • Reduced inequalities by integrating rural needs into national strategies • Increased social dialogue and collaboration between public and private actors • A more balanced distribution of tourism benefits within communities, with improved social cohesion | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National/Regional Government • Industry • Education & Training Providers |
| 6.7. Provide guidance to EU resources, improving more collaborative projects and initiatives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create toolkits with step-by-step information on how to apply for collaborative projects • Establish advisory centres/services to offer consultations on project design and applications | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complex and fragmented EU funding and application processes • Limited knowledge and guidance for collaboration and eligibility criteria | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce administrative barriers and increase participation in EU programs by providing clear guidance on processes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU • National/Regional Government • Pact for Skills Ecosystem |

Priority 6: Strategic Actions to Promote Lifelong Learning and Expand Access to Tourism Education for a Sustainable Industry

| Priority 6 Actions | Example of Specific Actions | Description of challenges | Expected outcomes | Key Stakeholders |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| 6.7 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organise workshops focused on SMEs on EU projects management, budgeting and reporting | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insufficient capacity to manage funding applications | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raise awareness of EU opportunities and foster cross-border collaboration Build capacity through targeted guidance and support, enabling SMEs and regional actors to successfully apply for funding | |

Priority 7: Strategic Actions to Promote Inclusion, Social Fairness and Combat Discrimination in Tourism

The European Pillars of Social Rights (European Parliament, Council of the European Union, & European Commission 2017) emphasises the need for a more equitable labour market, promoting fair working conditions, social protection, and inclusion (European Commission-Pact for Skills, 2020b). Addressing inequalities and ensuring full inclusion of the workforce - while tackling discrimination, bias, and promoting accessibility and equal opportunities - is key to improve access and enhance quality of life and work for tourism employees. Stronger links between skills development and social inclusion promote decent work in tourism, can improve employability, and create equal opportunities for all individuals, regardless of gender, age, race, social status, or disability (ILO, 2022). Developing pathways that promote inclusion and combat discrimination through education is crucial to achieving social fairness, strengthening competitiveness, and preparing the sector for the future.

Actions:

Priority 7: Strategic Actions to Promote Inclusion, Social Fairness and Combat Discrimination in Tourism

| Priority 7 Actions | Example of Specific Actions | Description of challenges | Expected outcomes | Key Stakeholders |
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| 7.1. Integrate EDI content more systematically into curricula across VETs, Higher Education and organisational training programs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop toolkits, case studies and material for educators and trainers on EDI • Offer certification programmes for EDI teaching • Establish and monitor EDI as criteria in accreditation and for ESG reporting | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insufficient integration of EDI content in education and training programs • Mismatch between on-the-ground workforce needs and available training, limiting practical relevance • Persistent workplace inequalities, with low workforce engagement in development initiatives, reducing participation in lifelong learning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater integration of EDI principles in education and training, ensuring learners develop inclusive and culturally competent skills • Improved alignment between training content and real workforce needs • Enhanced workplace inclusivity and higher workforce engagement and motivation, supported by EDI-focused training initiatives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National/ Regional Government • Education & Training Providers |

Useful PANTOUR resources: [EDI Handbook of Best Practices](#), [Training Programmes](#), [Resource Book for Trainers](#)

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| 7.2. Prioritise EDI training into tourism organisations, ensuring staff participation and embedding inclusive practices into the workplace culture | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embed EDI practices in such recruitment, customer service, and leadership development • Deliver mandatory training programmes and refresher courses • Develop strategic planning including requirements in EDI | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insufficient integration of EDI content in education and training programs • Workplace inequalities persist due to low prioritisation of EDI-focused initiatives, reducing employee engagement and affecting participation in development opportunities • Difficulty meeting retention goals, driven by limited inclusivity and career progression pathways | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved alignment between workforce needs and training content, ensuring inclusivity and relevance • Reduction of workplace inequalities, supported by EDI-focused education • Improved retention rates, as inclusive environments foster long-term commitment and satisfaction | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industry • Education & Training Providers • Pact for Skills Ecosystem • NRSPs |
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Priority 7: Strategic Actions to Promote Inclusion, Social Fairness and Combat Discrimination in Tourism

| Priority 7 Actions | Example of Specific Actions | Description of challenges | Expected outcomes | Key Stakeholders |
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| Useful PANTOUR resources: EDI handbook of Best Practices , Training Programmes | | | | |
| 7.3. Continue implementing awareness campaigns and education and training programmes to reduce inequalities and promote fair practices in tourism | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use social media, industry newsletter and tourism events to develop campaign awareness in promoting fair practices and reducing inequalities Engage stakeholders to integrate fair practices into policies, providing toolkits and resources for implementation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited EDI knowledge and skills, making it difficult for organisations to create inclusive environments or respond effectively to discrimination Barriers to upskilling disadvantaged groups make it hard to meet the 60% adult education target set by the Union of Skills. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greater awareness of systemic inequalities across the industry Improved EDI knowledge and skills among employees and leaders, with more consistent implementation of EDI policies and practices Stronger organisational commitment to equality and inclusion, leading to higher employee engagement and performance driving innovation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> National/ Regional Government Industry Social Partners Education & Training Providers Pact for Skills Ecosystem NRSPs |
| Useful Pantour resources: EDI Handbook of Best Practices | | | | |
| 7.4. Implement strategies that recognise EDI champions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share recognition featuring EDI champions in industry newsletters and media Develop rewards system, such as appointing team leads as EDI advocates Offer micro-credentials for EDI champions to support career progression | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low recognition of EDI efforts, leading to employee demotivation and disengagement Inconsistent EDI initiatives across teams and departments Limited accountability for EDI outcomes, reducing progress and impact | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Higher recognition of EDI efforts, boosting employee motivation and engagement. Reduced workplace conflict and improved communication through inclusive practices. Clear accountability for EDI outcomes, driving measurable progress | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> National/ Regional Government Industry Social Partners NRSPs |
| 7.5. Establish clear metrics to track and evaluate the effectiveness of EDI training across industry organisations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define KPIs and metrics in organisations with training support Implement self-assessment and skills gaps assessments Implement more training in organisations in EDI, tracking performance and impacts | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inequalities remain unaddressed due to limited understanding of organisational issues Lack of effective impact measurement makes tracking progress on EDI initiatives difficult Inconsistent implementation of EDI initiatives across departments and teams | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved understanding of organisational inequalities through data-driven insights. Clear accountability for EDI progress and results. Ability to measure impact effectively using defined metrics | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> EU National/ Regional Governments Industry |
| Useful PANTOUR resources: EDI Handbook of Best Practices , SIMM | | | | |

Priority 7: Strategic Actions to Promote Inclusion, Social Fairness and Combat Discrimination in Tourism

| Priority 7 Actions | Example of Specific Actions | Description of challenges | Expected outcomes | Key Stakeholders |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 7.6. Implement tailored diversity management training programs for all industry subsectors to strengthen inclusive practices and leadership capacity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and customise training for specific subsectors, with practical tips and examples • Offer certification programmes for inclusive leadership • Establish benchmark standards to measure and recognise best practices | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty communicating and managing diverse stakeholders • Limited leadership capacity to manage diverse teams due to lack of understanding of diverse worker's needs • Challenges in attracting and retaining talent, with employee disengagement. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction in bias and discrimination through better awareness and inclusive practices • Enhanced leadership capacity to manage diverse teams effectively • Stronger talent attraction and retention due to inclusive culture | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National/ Regional Governments • Industry • Education & Training Providers |

Useful PANTOUR resources: [EDI Handbook of Best Practices](#); [Training Programmes](#)

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| 7.7. Promote fair employment and accessibility training to broaden access and expand opportunities for under-represented groups | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design accessibility training programmes for organisations • Partner with diversity and disability associations and networks to co-create training that reflects inclusion • Implement inclusive recruitment training and practices | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bias and discrimination affecting different genders, people with disabilities, minorities, migrants, and older workers • Underrepresentation of minorities in leadership positions • Entry barriers and limited opportunities for underrepresented groups | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced bias and discrimination toward diverse groups • Greater representation of minorities and underrepresented groups in leadership roles • Lower entry barriers and expanded opportunities for underrepresented groups | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU • National/ Regional Government • Industry • Social Partners • Education & Training Providers • Pact for Skills Ecosystem • NRSPs |
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Best Practice 8: [Albergo Etico](#)

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| 7.8. Promote and implement best practices initiatives to prevent discrimination and foster an inclusive workplace culture | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop best practices making them available in different formats (videos, social media, reports and toolkits) and in different languages for effective implementation • Promote success stories from organisations recognised by best practices initiatives • Provide training for employees on how to monitor and report discrimination practices and equip them with the skills to identify and address discrimination effectively | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Underrepresented groups face bias, entry barriers, and limited career opportunities • Insufficient data and guidance slow progress on EDI initiatives • Low employee awareness of EDI reduces engagement and limits efforts to prevent workplace discrimination | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expanded career opportunities for underrepresented groups through fair employment practices • Reduced bias and entry barriers, fostering equal access to roles • Higher employee awareness of EDI principles, leading to stronger engagement and empowerment of workers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU • National/ Regional Government • Industry • Social Partners • Education & Training Providers • Pact for Skills Ecosystem • NRSPs |
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Best Practice 4: [Associação Pão a Pão](#)

Useful PANTOUR resources: [EDI Handbook of Best Practices](#)

6

Best Practices Examples

This section brings together a range of best practices case studies developed by consortium partners and developed by the Tour-X project, available at the [PANTOUR website](#) and [Tour-X website](#). These best practices showcase different aspects of collaboration, the value of training, strategies for sustainability, accessibility and inclusion, and targeted policy initiatives within tourism and hospitality organisations across Europe. These practices also offer insights into how we can design actions that encourage skills development to strengthen sustainability, and to drive a transition essential for the tourism ecosystem.

Best Practices Case Studies

Best Practice in Collaboration

[The Institute of Greek Tourism Confederation](#) (Greece)



The Institute of the Greek Tourism Confederation is a successful non-profit initiative to promote lifelong learning in tourism, created by major tourism bodies, covering **multiple subsectors**: the Greek Tourism Confederation, the Hellenic Hoteliers Federation, the Hellenic Association of Travel & Tourist Agencies, and the Confederation of Entrepreneurs of Rented Rooms and Apartments. Since 2015, they have trained 42,000 individuals across 20 subregions on 220 topics, developed with a transversal skills approach, best practices sharing and developing 'train the trainer' initiatives to maximise their results. The organisation also has mechanisms in place to identify training gaps and needs and promote flexible employment practices focusing on attracting and retaining workers.

Website: <https://insete.gr/?lang=en>

Best Practice in Developing Training Platforms

[Chef & Gastro Academy](#) (Bulgaria)



Chef & Gastro is an innovative digital platform launched in 2020 that supports upskilling and reskilling in Bulgaria's **food and beverage sector**. It serves as a centralised resources hub, providing courses, seminars, self-learning modules, in different skills, from culinary, to entrepreneurship and management of food and beverage businesses. It also focuses on green skills and sustainability. The platform aspires to be a source of knowledge and an educational hub, where employees from the sector can search for innovative courses and develop more skills.

Website: <https://academy.chefandgastro.com/>



Best Practice Initiative for Attracting and Retaining Employees

[Van der Valk Hotels \(Netherlands\)](#)

Van Der Valk Hotels is a holding **accommodation** company operating in multiple countries that develops a flexible and employee-centred approach to training and development, to boost engagement and retention. The organisation emphasises cross-training for internal mobility, such as offering retraining across different departments, support career aspirations through developing training for role transitions and utilise different methodologies for training, such as digital gamification and blended learning. The perceived training impacts include lower employee turnover, enhanced wellbeing among employees and talent retention.

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



Best Practice in Developing Inclusivity

[Associação Pão a Pão \(Portugal\)](#)

Pão a Pão is a Portuguese NGO that supports the integration of refugees and migrants into the **food and beverage sector**. It operates a restaurant, Mezze, and offers catering services while providing training and employment opportunities. Pão a Pão's main objective is to increase employability of migrants and refugees with a certified training programme, promoting social inclusion and fair access to the labour market. This initiative was developed in partnership with the Lisbon School of Hospitality and Tourism and supported by Calouste Gulbekian Foundation, with actions that include tackling barriers such as legal, housing, health support and promote change in societal perceptions about migrant's value in society.

Website: <https://www.paoapao.pt/>

Best Practice in Green Sustainability

[Balaton-felvidéki Nemzeti Park \(Balaton-Upland National Park\) \(Hungary\)](#)

Established in 1997, the Balaton-felvidéki Nemzeti Park covers 57,019 hectares in the Balaton region in Hungary, being a major regional **visitor attraction** site. It employs 135 tourism professionals, and combines conservation with tourism development, with a special focus on environmental education. The organisations key actions are developing geotour guides, regular training for staff on inclusive tourism, and collaborations with the University of Pannonia to develop lecturers and practical knowledge sharing in conservation. It has also introduced digital innovation, through mobile app development and regular digital training of staff. The park has seen higher engagement with the public and schools, supporting training for tour guides in the region.

Website: <https://www.bfnp.hu/hu>





Best Practice in Green Sustainability

[Visit Finland Academy](#) (Finland)

Visit Finland Academy provides practical and tailored training for Finnish tourism organisations, especially in micro and small enterprises, ensuring coherent tourism development and more competitiveness. The organisation has different supports in place, with a special digital platform and digital skills training for **multiple subsectors** and key areas, such as social media marketing, digital advertising strategies, customer experience and data management. The approach delivers training through thematic modules, including real-life examples and practical exercises. The academy has also developed a programme with coaches trained by Visit Finland to help businesses in a consistent and comprehensive manner. The Academy's benefits include improved digital discoverability of tourism businesses, strengthening internationalisation and competitiveness, and focusing on supporting sustainable initiatives.

Website: <https://www.visitfinland.fi/liiketoiminnan-kehittaminen/akatemia>

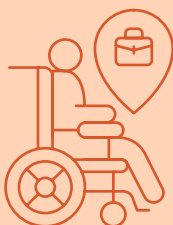


Best Practice on Developing Digital Skills

[TIPI- Viajando al Futuro](#) (Spain)

TIPI, a Basque County organisation founded in 2012, is specialised in working with **destinations** and community development. It developed the project Viajando al Futuro (Travelling to the future) in 2024 to promote sustainable tourism in Laciana Valley, in Leon, an underpopulated region in Spain. Through this project, TIPI promoted skills development and participatory decision-making workshops to strengthen local community involvement in tourism strategy development aligned with local needs and cultural identity. The project consists of research on stakeholders' engagement to gather insights; co-creation of sustainable tourism strategies; identifying barriers and opportunities for tourism development and allocating resources for planning. With this initiative, TIPI aims to develop sustainable strategies to strengthen social inclusion and serve as a model for future rural tourism development projects in Spain.

Website: <https://www.tipigara.co/en/>



Best Practice in Training for Accessibility

[Albergo Etico](#) (Italy)

Albergo Etico Roma is a socially responsible and non-for-profit **accommodation** provider that promotes social inclusion and accessibility by employing individuals with disabilities, who compose the majority of its staff. The hotel provides professional training and employment opportunities to people with different disabilities, focusing on training and integrating individuals in the workforce. The hotel has a three-year programme that combines theory and practical experience, with an initial phase of 'artificial

nest' for skills-building, and 12-18 months of coaching with industry experts. Roles are assigned according to interest and capabilities, building competences for independence after the programme. The programme focuses on structure, immersive training to foster autonomy and inclusion of individuals in the tourism workforce.

Website: <https://www.albergoeticoroma.it/>



Best Practice for Community Empowerment with Lifelong Learning

Guinness Learning for Life Programme (Ireland)

The Learning for Life Culinary Arts Programme is a collaborative skills programme designed by TU Dublin's School of Culinary Arts and Food Technology in partnership with Diageo Ireland. This programme provides equitable access to hospitality and tourism careers for individuals facing employment and educational barriers. It targets participants such as early school leavers, refugees, asylum seekers and mature students, promoting an 8-week practical training with a 4-week industry placement. The programme aims to develop a talent pool of professionals looking to work in the **food and beverage sector**, supporting participants with skills and confidence to enter the workforce.

Website: <https://www.tudublin.ie/explore/faculties-and-schools/arts-humanities/schools/culinary-arts--food-technology/partnership/bespoke-programmes-with-partners/>

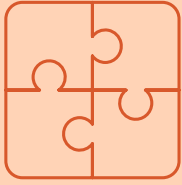


Best Practice in Developing Wellbeing in the Sector

Trigon Hotels (Ireland)

The Trigon Hotels are operating properties in Cork, Ireland, offering **accommodation, food and beverage** and **conference** facilities. Since 2019, the organisation has formalised its commitment to EDI to reflect the diverse background of employees and develop wellbeing practices. Recognising the need for change to build a valued team and enhance work practices, Trigon has introduced initiatives such as Females in the Workplace, with menopause and fertility support, including paid leave and management training; gender identity and expression, promoting inclusive training for all genders and LGBTQ+ employees; the Ability@work Partnership, to integrate more employees with disabilities in the workforce; and JAM cards, being the first Irish hotel group to adopt this tool for guests/employees with visible/invisible disabilities. Among the impacts perceived, Trigon has seen an increase in employee engagement, motivation, retention and wellbeing in the workplace.

Website: <https://www.trigonhotels.com/>



Best Practice in Collaborative Governance for Skills Development

DEHOGA Brandenburg (Germany)

The TourX Governance Box is a practical framework that helps partners from the TourX project work together effectively at regional and European level. It supports collaboration between industry, education providers, and public authorities to identify skills gaps and labour market needs in tourism. As part of the German knowledge triangle, DEHOGA Brandenburg aligned its project work with the TourX Governance Box, establishing strong cooperation within the consortium, across regional knowledge triangles, and with German stakeholders. This approach and its results are illustrated in the DEHOGA Brandenburg Erasmus Plus Project Workbook

Website: <https://www.dehoga-brandenburg.de/ausbildung-karriere/erasmus/erasmus-insights/>



Best Practice in Migrant Inclusion in Education

Integrar para o Turismo (Portugal)

The 'Integrar para o Turismo' (Integrate for Tourism) Programme, launched in 2024, is one of the 60 measures of Portugal's Accelerate the Economy Programme. It is a joint initiative by Turismo de Portugal (through its network of Hotel and Tourism Schools), the Agency for Integration, Migration and Asylum (AIMA), and the Portuguese Tourism Confederation (CTP). The programme aims to design and deliver training and employment pathways that support the reception, skills development, and professional integration of migrants and beneficiaries of international protection in Portugal. By entering workplaces and interacting with colleagues and customers, migrants naturally strengthen their social networks in Portugal, and participants become part of national professional pathways with recognised qualifications.

Website: <https://programas.academiadigital.turismodeportugal.pt/program/059557a89c7642698fe6d554cf89b74c>

7

Conclusion

The Skills Strategy and Action Plan developed by PANTOUR outlines pathways for building a stronger, future-oriented workforce in the tourism and hospitality sector. It provides a set of tools, strategies, evidence-based insights, and actions to guide the development of education for sustainable skills. Strengthening resilience and adaptability to current and future changes - particularly in response to digital, green, and social challenges - is essential for maintaining Europe's competitiveness, as emphasised by its policies.

Creating effective education and training pathways requires collaboration across the sector and continuous monitoring and evaluation of how educational needs are being met. In a rapidly changing global context, transformational education must go beyond knowledge transfer, and it should empower individuals to develop their full potential, preparing them for ongoing change and growth within the tourism industry.

Building on the initiatives launched under the NTC Blueprint for Sectoral Cooperation on Skills, and further strengthened by the PANTOUR project, this Action Plan focuses on building individual and organisational capacity, underpinned by strong commitment and collaboration among stakeholders dedicated to advancing education, skills and training within the sector. Implementing tangible actions supported by facilitating mechanisms, such as the Pact for Skills and the Union of Skills, and collaborative initiatives, such as the highlighted in this Plan, will enable the sector to thrive. These efforts aim to create quality jobs, improve lives, and ensure the long-term prosperity of tourism and hospitality in Europe.

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Pact for Next Tourism Generation Skills, 2026
<https://nexttourismgeneration.eu/pantour/>



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.