



JPP 8&9 project:

Jobs in EU Tourism: Addressing Staff and Skills Shortages in EU Tourism

In line with the objectives set out by the Member States in the EU Agenda for Tourism 2030, the European Commission is currently working on finding effective ways to support the tourism industry and to relaunch EU tourism with improved long-term resilience. In this framework, the Directorate-General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs (DG GROW) launched the Junior Professionals' Project on addressing staff shortages in EU tourism, entitled Jobs in EU Tourism.

The goal of the project is to find the most effective strategies to address staff shortages in the tourism industry, with a specific focus on the hospitality sector. The report presents the findings of the project and is structured as follows: (i) Aim and Methodology, (ii) Diagnosing the issue: data collection and analysis, (iii) Best Practices and (iv) Flagship Solutions.

Aim

*What are the **most effective strategies** to address staff shortages in tourism industry, focusing on the **hospitality sector**, and how can small and medium enterprises ("SMEs") implement these strategies to reduce staff turnover and attract a skilled and motivated workforce as part of the twin transition of tourism?*

Structure of the report

The report is organised in 3 chapters: (i) Data Collection and Analysis, (ii) Identification and assessment of Best Practices, (iii) Flagship solutions. Finally, four annexes include the results of a study by the Research Institute for Tourism on employment in Greek Hotels (Annex 1) and the full outcomes of the stakeholder survey (Annexes 2, 3 and 4).

Data collection and analysis

The team analysed available data on staff shortages in tourism. The main sources of information have been [Eurostat](#) ⁽¹⁾ and a 2022 study commissioned by the Hellenic Chamber of Hotels. This allowed the collection of important information on the state of play for the economy and employment levels of tourism sector in the EU.

To better address project-specific issues, as well as to collect best practices implemented at local, national and EU level, the team prepared a **stakeholder survey**. The survey reached more than 160 contributors from 20 Member States and from a wide range of actors in the EU tourism sector. The main conclusions of this collection exercise were that:

- (i) 92% of participants experienced staff shortages in their Member State tourism sector, mostly severe (average of 7.5/10),
- (ii) half of participants witnessed staff shortages from before COVID-19 pandemic,

⁽¹⁾ https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Tourism_industries_-_economic_analysis#Key_economic_indicators



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- (iii) Working and economic conditions, bad reputation of the sector, lack of specific training and skills, migration of workers to other sectors during COVID and seasonality are mentioned as the main reasons for staff shortages,
- (iv) Three quarters of respondents think the EU could help them in addressing the issue, while only half mentioned the EU as the best-suited proximity level to do so.

Identification and assessment of Best Practices

Best practices to address the issue of staff shortage in tourism were assessed against a set of key performance indicators (KPIs): (i) seasonality, (ii) scalability, (iii) accessibility for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), (iv) youth engagement and (v) contribution to the Twin Transitions.

Best practices were organised in national, regional, local and private activities. Some notable examples are:

- National activities:
 - Labour Market Roadmap in Finland: *Dynamic data model informing decision-makers, business organisations and jobseekers in real time on the existing shortages, mismatches and surplus in labour per region and by occupation.*
 - Online open courses in Portugal & Digital Academy: *Initiatives supporting online learning platforms, subsidizing course fees, and collaborating with industry experts to design relevant curriculum.*
- Regional initiatives:
 - AndalusiaLab to promote tourism with a technological approach: *providing trainings on digital skills adapted to the tourism ecosystem and engaging young tourism workers to integrate existing skills into the mainstream, introducing hubs for networking, collaboration, and knowledge-sharing among industry stakeholders, encouraging partnerships and innovation-driven initiatives to drive growth and development.*
- Local initiatives:
 - Târnava Mare Cycling Eco-Routes: *Developing a cycle tourism network, setting up a local tourism association, increase in the length of stay and level of expenditure of existing visitors, in particular tourists from Romania and visitors on day trips.*
 - TEAM4U in Zell Am See-Kaprun: *creating social cohesion among workers by combining information on career opportunities with information on living perks and social activities and by providing an all-round employment package in an already popular tourist destination.*

Flagship Solutions

Inspired by the best practices identified in the previous chapter, the JP Project introduces Flagship Solutions as innovative approaches aimed at facing the gaps within the tourism industry, to serve as propositions for decision- and policymakers at EU level. These flagships would still need to be tested against the competences and priorities of the Union, but the aim of the project was to set the groundwork for proof of concept in future Union solutions to addressing staff and skills shortages in tourism.



Digital Tourism Talent Hub (DTTH)

A one-stop hub for the digital transition of the tourism ecosystem. Its aim would be to build a more competitive tourist destination, by engaging with the digital and technological needs of SMEs that make up the sector and helping young talent match that demand by equipping them with the right tools and skills for the digital transition in tourism.

Synergy with Erasmus+ Network

Integrating tourism jobs within the existing Erasmus exchange program would help capitalising on the potential of (mostly) university students to address workforce shortages.

In practice, this would be done by organizing matchmaking events, forums, and informational sessions in universities, especially during the first induction weeks.

Tourism job milestones in the 'European Capital' series

To develop the approach toward sustainable tourism growth and job creation, we propose the creation of a **distinct award criterion within the European Capital series**, specifically dedicated to acknowledging and rewarding cities that effectively manage and enhance their tourism job landscape. This flagship would seek to integrate milestones for tourism job creation and sustainable management as key eligibility criteria for participating cities.

European Tourism Employee Seasonal Pass

Given the difficulties in recruiting seasonal workers, the creation of a tourism seasonal pass for seasonal workers would help to make some regions more attractive for workers. This means better local integration, which could go hand in hand with access to several benefits to attract and retain workers.

At the European level, this could take the form of a network of companies volunteering to offer certain benefits to seasonal workers passing through their territories (i.e., discounts and other attractive prices, as well as easier accommodation, transport, and mobility).

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