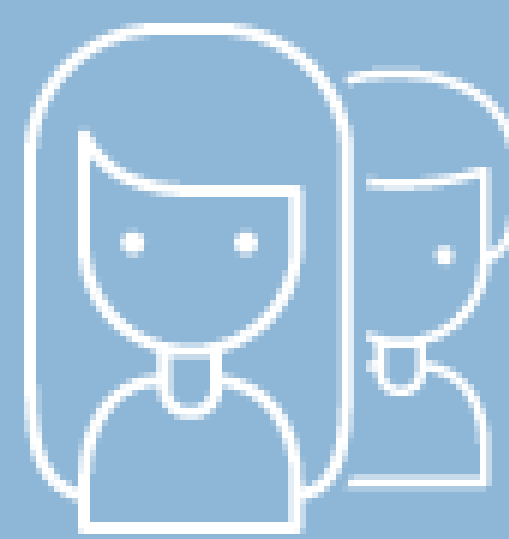


# The future of green, digital and socio-cultural skills in tourism



- The tourism sector accounts for around 10% of all UK jobs  
- By 2025 the sector will provide 3.7m jobs



- Tourism spending is up by 6%  
- By 2025 the sector will be worth £257bn

## Key findings

Desk research, in-depth interviews and a survey with the tourism industry were used to identify key industry trends and current and future skills needs

### Industry trends:

1. Adventurers rather than tourists
2. Growth of geo-tourism
3. Demand for highly skilled workers
4. Shrinking employment pool
5. Increased need for flexible working

*"The way that tourism is perceived generally will change quite significantly over the next decade in terms of the workforce as well as customer demand."*

### Impact on skills:



• There is a lack of digital skills across the industry with smaller organisations struggling to effectively use social media.



• The levels of social skills were fairly good, however in Northern Ireland and Scotland, organisations felt that cultural skills needed to improve due to an increase in Chinese visitors.



• It was found that green tourism is becoming more popular however businesses are lacking awareness in terms of sustainability.

### Key skills in 2030:



- Promotion of environmentally friendly activities and products
- Knowledge of climate change
- Ability to minimise the use of energy and water consumption

*"In 2030, the industry will use more and more green initiatives to save on costs. Minimising the use of packaging will become standard as will decreasing the carbon footprint. Customers are becoming increasingly aware of green initiatives and want the services they use to also align with the green agenda."*

NTG research interviewee from the UK tourism industry



- Social media skills
- Online marketing and communication skills
- Skills to monitor online reviews

*"The skill is using digital and your customer service skills to ensure that, whilst a guest might be sourced originally from somewhere that costs commission, the guest has such a great visit that they will book again and again in the future direct with you."*

NTG research interviewee from the UK tourism industry



- Customer orientation
- Promoting a positive work environment
- Ethical conduct and respect

*"Challenges for the future will include developing social skills and knowledge that will attract and retain a wider and more diverse visitor demographic. This will require staff to gain an understanding of the needs and interests of a more varied audience and to think creatively about creating and managing the visitor experience to meet them."*

NTG research interviewee from the UK tourism industry

## In summary

- The tourism industry will change quite significantly over the next 10 years.
- The employment pool is expected to shrink and there will be a demand for higher skilled staff.
- Better digital fluency - "High Tech with a Human Touch"- will be important in developing future tourism skills
- There will be a growth in geo-tourism and an increased focus on tailor-made provisions.
- Skills in creating unique and personalised experiences will be important.
- Key future skills will centre around the promotion of environmentally friendly activities and products, customer orientation and the awareness of local customs.
- Self-learning capacities of workforce is needed to cope with fast changing digital innovations and disruptive business models
- To future proof the workforce, training needs to incorporate biodiversity, sustainability, effective use of social media and cultural understanding.

To download the full NTG country interview and survey reports:  
visit: [www.nexttourismgeneration.eu/research](http://www.nexttourismgeneration.eu/research)

The Next Tourism Generation Alliance (NTG) is the first European partnership for improving a collaborative and productive relationship between education, industry and governments. It will establish the first European Blueprint for Tourism Skills which aims to address digital, socio-cultural and green skills gaps to meet future needs.

\* Industry figures from Visit England

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