

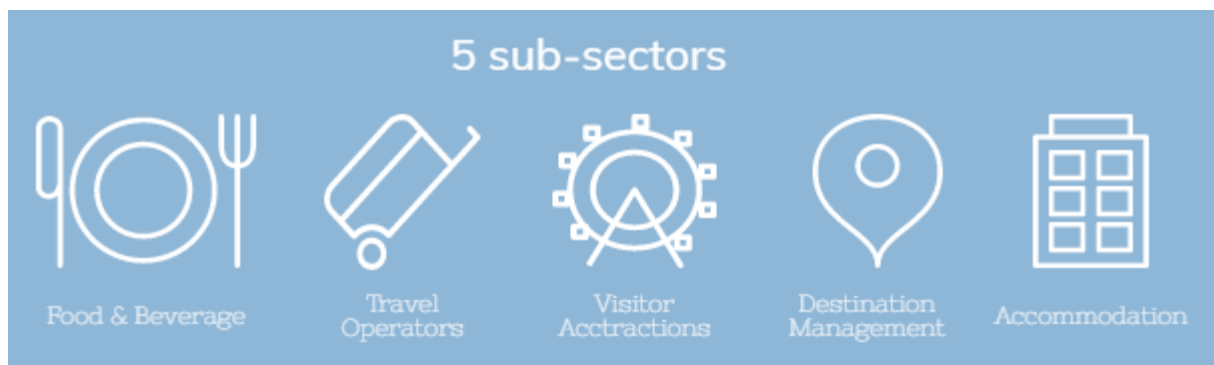


# The future of green, digital and socio-cultural skills in tourism

Next Tourism Generation research summary

# About the project

- The Next Tourism Generation Alliance aims to provide the tourism industry with a set of core modules in digital, green and social skills to meet future needs.
- The EU funded project includes a range of European partners: Italy, UK, Spain, Bulgaria, Hungary, the Netherlands, Germany and Ireland.
- It covers 5 sub-sectors: Destination Management, Food & Beverage, Visitor Attractions, Travel Agents / Tour Operators and Accommodation.



# The research – key trends

- Interviews and a survey with the tourism industry were used to identify key current and future skills, skills gaps and trends.
- 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.
- Due to recruitment challenges, the industry will need to encourage those who traditionally tend not to work in hospitality such as students and parents.
- Geo-tourism and “adventures” will be in increasing demand.



# The research – industry skills

- The UK tourism industry was asked about their workforces' current proficiency levels in terms of green, digital and social skills.
- The research found that 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.



# The research – industry skills

- Current skills gaps revolve around language skills and religious beliefs but also rather specific skills such as biodiversity and Artificial Intelligence.
- What the industry predicted as key skills in 2030 mirror the future trends in terms of green tourism, tailor-made experiences and understanding the community one visits.

Current top skills need	Key skills in 2030
Conservation of biodiversity	Promotion of environmentally friendly activities/products
Willingness to change	Customer orientation
Foreign language skills	Awareness of local customs
Awareness of religious beliefs	Gender equality skills
Artificial Intelligence and robotics skills	Social media skills



# The research – green skills

- Green tourism is becoming more popular and visitors are increasingly looking for businesses that have sustainability on their agenda.
- In Scotland in particular it is thought that eco-tourism will grow and tourists will visit a destination with a view to do something that will benefit that location.
- In 2030, the industry will use more green initiatives to save on costs. Minimising the use of packaging will increase as will monitoring energy usage.
- Current skill levels are fairly low in terms of conservation of biodiversity and the promotion of sustainable forms of transport.
- Future key green skills are predicted to centre on the promotion of environmentally friendly activities and products as well as knowledge of climate change.

## FUTURE KEY GREEN SKILLS

1. Promotion of environmentally friendly activities and products
2. Knowledge of climate change
3. Ability to minimise the use and maximise efficiency of energy and water consumption

# The research – social skills

- In 2030, the industry believes that people will want more personalised services and human interaction and so soft skills will be key to getting repeat business.
- Equality and diversity awareness will become more important in 2030 and will form a natural part of the working environment.
- It is thought that this increased focus will shape leisure and business travel more such as tailor-made provisions for LGBT customers or solo women travellers.
- Current skill levels are fairly low in terms of foreign languages, intercultural host-guest understanding and respect as well as knowledge of different religious beliefs.
- Future key social skills are predicted to centre on customer orientation and positive and ethical behaviours towards staff and customers.

## FUTURE KEY SOCIAL SKILLS

1. Customer orientation
2. Promoting a positive work environment
3. Ethical conduct and respect

# The research – digital skills

- There is a lack of digital skills across the industry with a large proportion, especially in more rural areas, of companies lacking basic digital skills such as setting up and managing a Facebook page.
- In 2030, digital skills will become more important both in terms of how to operate businesses as well as how to improve the visitor experience.
- It will also be key for businesses to understand the concept of immersive technology in order to animate the experiences they offer.
- Current skill levels are fairly low in terms of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and robotics as well as applying digital hardware technologies such as virtual reality.
- Future key digital skills are predicted to centre on social media, online marketing and monitoring online reviews.

FUTURE KEY DIGITAL SKILLS
1. Social media skills
2. Online marketing and communication skills
3. Skills to monitor online reviews



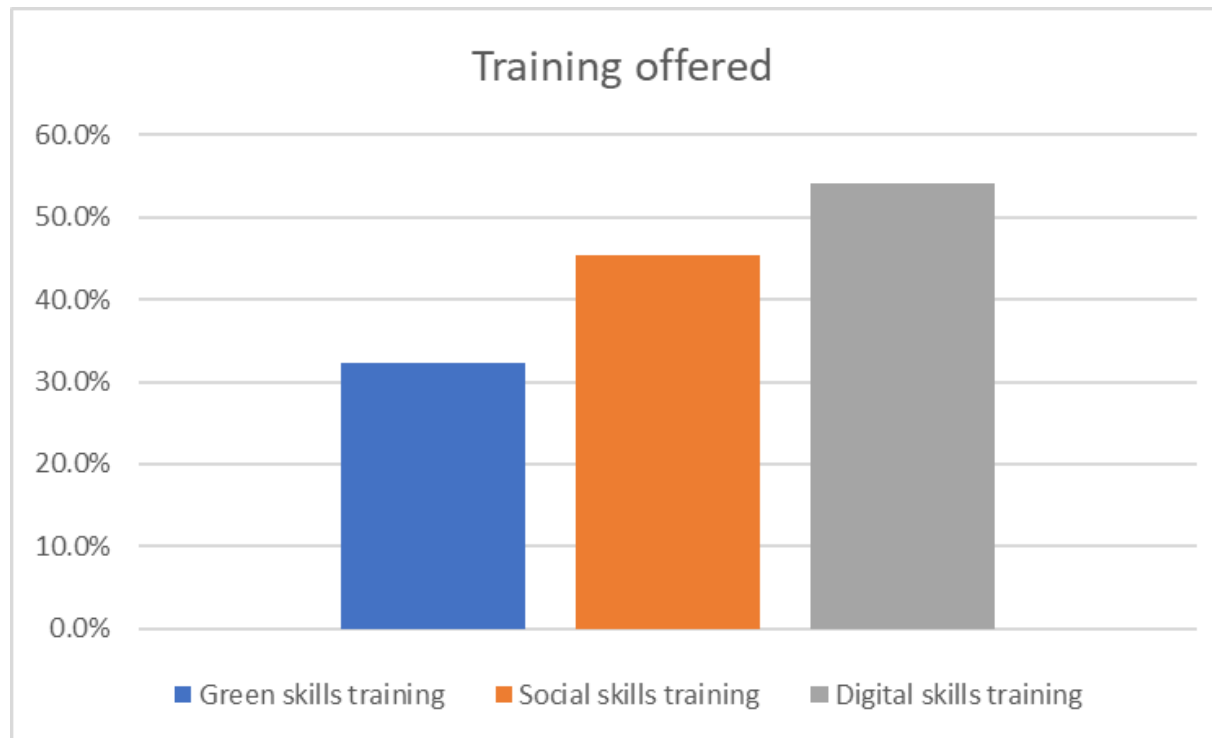
# The research – training needs

- By looking at current skill levels and comparing these to future key proficiencies, a number of skills gaps emerge across the three areas. Filling these are key to future proofing the workforce.
- In terms of green skills, the workforce needs to be trained on conservation of biodiversity as well as promotion of sustainable transport and environmentally friendly activities and products.
- Regarding specific social skills, the workforce will need training on foreign languages, intercultural understanding and the diversity in religious beliefs.
- Key digital skills the workforce need training on are website development, data analytics and computer programming.

SKILLS GAPS	
GREEN	Promotion of sustainable forms of transport
	Conservation of biodiversity
	Promotion of environmentally friendly activities and products
SOCIAL	Ability to speak foreign languages
	Intercultural host-guest understanding and respect
	Diversity in religious beliefs
DIGITAL	Website development
	Data analytics, business intelligence, big data
	Computer programming

# The research – training needs

- By taking into account the reported need for increased skills across all three areas, it is interesting to note that only around half of the industry offers training on digital and social skills to staff. Only 32.2% of employers provide training to staff on green skills.



# 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.**
- **There will be a growth in geo-tourism and an increased focus on tailor-made provisions.**
- **Key future skills will centre around the promotion of environmentally friendly activities and products, customer orientation and the awareness of local customs.**
- **To future proof the workforce, training needs to incorporate biodiversity, sustainability, effective use of social media and cultural understanding.**

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