

Will my job exist in 5 years? The changing landscape in tourism careers, employment and skills

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Changing Tourism Landscape

- AI and tech adoption
- Climate change impacts
- Demographic shifts
- Volatile, uncertain, complex world

Are we preparing our workforce for jobs that will actually exist?



Reality Check

- 45% of tourism jobs will be transformed or automated by 2030, with nearly 40% of required skills changing fundamentally (World Economic Forum, 2025)
- In the next decade, global number of tourism jobs will grow with 29% towards 449 million (WTTC, 2024)

A continuous struggle to fill vacancies and find people with the right skills sets.

Mapping the Skills Gap - Europe-wide research into tourism's skills crisis

- 873 surveys + 100 interviews across 9 countries
- Current vs. future skills assessment; new job profiles
- Identified critical gaps in 3 key areas (green, digital, social)

Average skills gap of 40% across all competencies - with some gaps exceeding 100%

> Full research reports on www.nexttourismgeneration.eu/pantour/

The Three Survival Skills Sets



DIGITAL FLUENCY

Not mastery, but
confident
collaboration with
tech.



SUSTAINABILITY THINKING

Environmental
consciousness as
default mindset.



HUMAN-CENTERED DESIGN

Using uniquely human
skills that technology
can't replicate.

- PANTOUR (2024, 2025)

- OECD (2023). "Skills for 2030: OECD Future of Education and Skills Framework".

From Job Titles to Skills Portfolios

- **Old:** Fixed job titles, linear career paths
- **New:** Fluid skills portfolios, project-based work, continuous learning
- The question really isn't '**Will my JOB exist?**' but '**Will my SKILLS be relevant?**'



emeritus.org

- *PANTOUR (2023-2025)*

- *ILO (2024). "World Employment and Social Outlook: Trends in the Tourism Sector".*

From Tasks- to Skills-Orientation

**WE ARE
HIRING!**

AI TOURISM EXPERT
Are you a passionate about tourism with a soft spot for AI?

What You'll Do:

- Integrate machine learning to optimize pricing and recommend budget-friendly options
- Develop AI-driven algorithms for personalized travel recommendations
- Knowledge of AI for marketing/research purposes
- Knowledge of AI for marketing/research purposes
- Data Management, Analysis and Forecasting
- Improve operational efficiency through automation

What We're Looking For:

- Core digital literacy and use of office applications **(D)**
- Digital marketing and social media skills **(D)**
- Use of specific digital technologies and software applications **(D)**
- Digital skills for sustainability management **(D)**
- Problem solving skills in a digital context **(D)**
- Sustainable Tourism and Supply Chain Integration **(G)**
- Customer-Oriented Skills **(S)**
- Critical Thinking Skills **(S)**
- Communication and collaboration through digital technologies **(D)**
- Data analytics and data driven decision making **(D)**

D: digital skills
G: green skills
S: social skills

**WE ARE
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TOURISM EXPERIENCE DESIGNER
Are you a passionate about tourism with a soft spot for experiences and emotions?

What You'll Do:

- Researching and defining new "instagrammable" places
- Competitor analysis (USP)
- Conduct user research to understand diverse preferences and design personalized experiences
- Storytelling and Branding
- Creating immersive tourism product

What We're Looking For:

- Core digital literacy and use of office applications **(D)**
- Communication and collaboration through digital technologies **(D)**
- Communication and collaboration through digital technologies **(D)**
- Digital content creation skills **(D)**
- Use of specific digital technologies and software applications **(D)**
- Data analytics and data driven decision making **(D)**
- Sustainable Tourism and Supply Chain Integration **(G)**
- Customer-Oriented Skills **(S)**
- Experience Management Skills **(S)**
- Initiative and Commitment Skills **(S)**
- Critical Thinking Skills **(S)**
- Sustainable Transport and Eco-Friendly Services **(G)**
- Effective Communication Skills **(S)**

D: digital skills
G: green skills
S: social skills

PANTOUR handbook of New Occupational Profiles :

https://nexttourismgeneration.eu/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/Pantour-_NOP_HANDBOOK_final.pdf

Digital skills:

The AI revolution is here - Are we ready?

PANTOUR insights – the gaps are massive:

- Generative AI: 102% gap
 - Robotics: 98% gap
 - AR/VR experiences: 95% gap
-
- Staff don't need to be AI engineers, but **fluency** is needed in common digital solutions
 - **Self-learning capacities** are key to be able to deal with all the dynamics
 - The winning formula: **'High tech with a human touch'**

- PANTOUR Skills Gap Analysis (2024)

- Baum, T. (2024). "Artificial Intelligence and Tourism Employment". *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Technology*, 15(2), 201-218.

Green skills: What's at stake

- Carbon footprint of tourism (8% of global emissions)
- Key insight Pantour: 87% gap in CO2 management skills, yet this is becoming mandatory
- All large tourism companies must report sustainability metrics by 2025 (EU's Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive; CSRD)

Without green skills, tourism businesses can't comply, can't compete, can't survive.

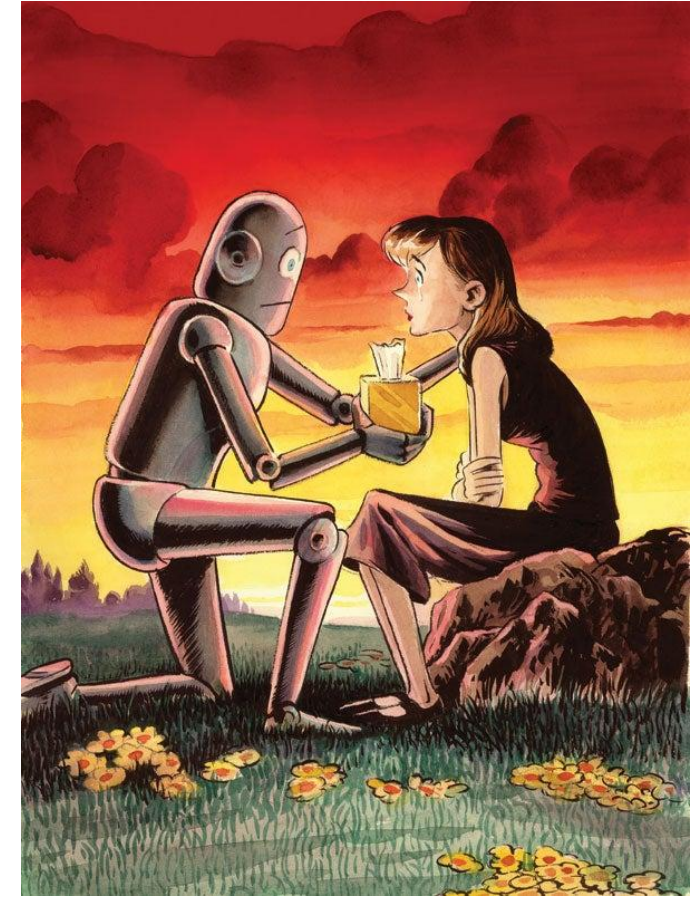
- Lenzen, M. et al. (2018). "The carbon footprint of global tourism". *Nature Climate Change*, 8, 522-528.
- European Commission (2023). *Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive*.
- PANTOUR, 2024, 2025

Social/cultural skills: The Human Advantage in an AI World

- Relevance of empathy, cultural nuance, creativity, emotional intelligence
- PANTOUR finding: Customer Service Excellence rated 4.80/5 importance - highest of all skills
- Tourism and hospitality: people pay for authentic human connections
- As technology handles *transactions*, humans create *transformations*

The future belongs to those who can blend technical fluency with irreplaceable human skills

Pine, B.J. & Gilmore, J.H. (2023). "The Experience Economy, Updated Edition". Harvard Business Review Press.



Employers: Attracting and Retaining of Staff

- **The Problem:**

72% of European tourism businesses report difficulty filling vacancies (HOTREC, 2024)

- **What's changed:**

- Gen Z wants: Purpose, flexibility, development opportunities – NOT just salary.
- Traditional recruitment doesn't work anymore

- **What works:**

- Employer branding that showcases a *learning culture*
- Sustainable employability (healthy careers, life-long-learning, life-work balance)
- Employee Experience Design

- **Success story:**

Accor's "Heartist" program - 94% retention rate through skills investment

Employers: The Impact of EDI

- Organizations with strong EDI practices are 25% more likely to achieve above-average profitability and experience improved staff retention, productivity and innovation.
- Adopting EDI practices improves:
 - **Workforce Resilience** — Attracting and retaining diverse, qualified talent secures the industry's future.
 - **Guest Experience** — Tourism depends on human communication and acceptance of people with different values, customs and cultures.
 - **Business Performance** — When work supports the whole person, it supports their entire well-being and performance.

PANTOUR EDI reports (2025): <https://nexttourismgeneration.eu/edi/>

WE ARE HIRING! INCLUSIVE TOURISM SPECIALIST

Are you a passionate about tourism with a soft spot for Inclusivity?

What You'll Do:

- Compliance = Diversity, equity, inclusion (DEI)
- Stakeholder communication
- Creation of corporate strategies
- Building collaborative relationships
- Training and awareness raising

What We're Looking For:

- Communication and collaboration through digital technologies (D)
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Skills (S)
- Cultural Intelligence Skills (S)
- Change and Adaptability Skills (S)
- Responsible Leadership Skills (S)
- Strategic Leadership Skills (S)
- Initiative and Commitment Skills (S)
- Effective Communication Skills (S)
- Customer-Oriented Skills (S)
- Sustainable Tourism and Supply Chain Integration (G)
- Experience Management Skills (S)
- Use of specific digital technologies and software applications (D)
- Work-Life Balance Skills (S)
- Digital competence gap identification (D)
- Data analytics and data driven decision making (D)

D: digital skills
G: green skills
S: social skills

Your Action Plan - Starting Tomorrow

For **Industry:**

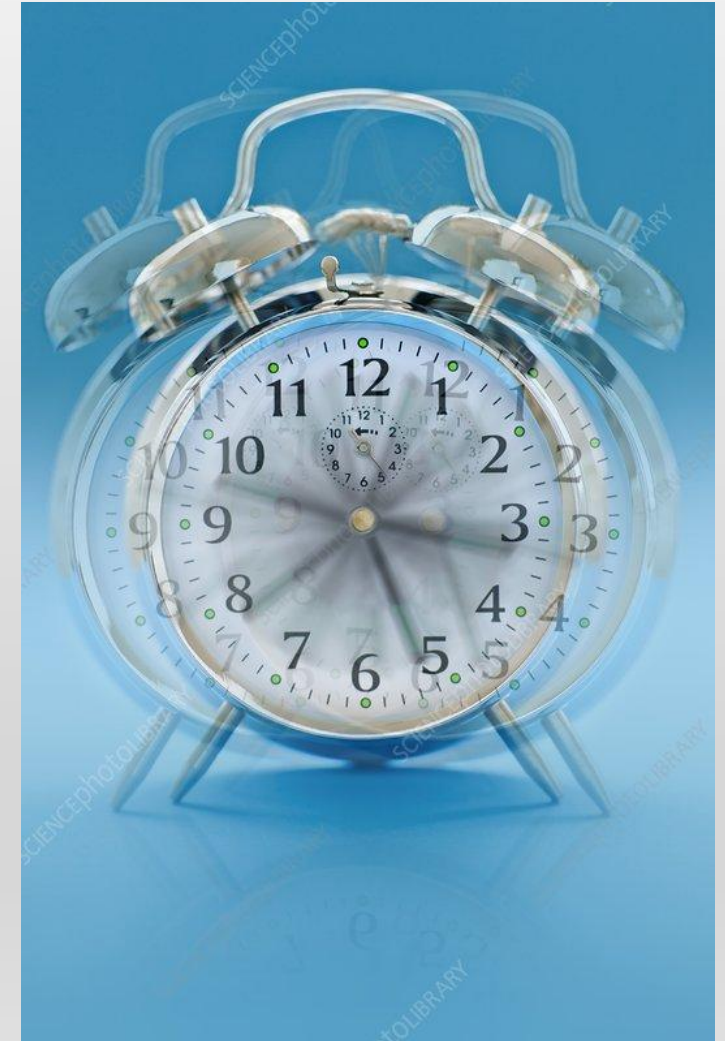
- Audit your current vs. needed skills (use PANTOUR framework)
- Build a learning *culture*, not only at training events
- Team up with education institutions for workforce pipeline

For **Educators:**

- Embed AI literacy across curriculum NOW
- Make sustainability a mindset, not a 'course'
- Teach adaptability as a core competency

For **Individuals:**

- Identify your "AI-proof" human skills
- Commit to e.g., one new skill per quarter
- Build your personal learning network



THANK YOU!

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Further references

- *UN Tourism (2024). "Tourism Employment: Module 8 of the Tourism Satellite Account (TSA:RMF 2024)."*
- *McKinsey Global Institute (2023). "The Future of Work After COVID-19 in Hospitality and Tourism."*
- *European Commission (2024). "Blueprint for Sectoral Cooperation on Skills in Tourism."*
- *Sigala, M. (2024). "Rethinking Tourism Education in the Era of AI and Sustainability". Journal of Teaching in Travel & Tourism, 24(1), 1-25.*
- *WTTC (2024). "Navigating the Workforce Crisis: Strategic Priorities for Travel & Tourism Recovery"*