



European
Commission



BLUEPRINT FOR SECTORAL COOPERATION ON SKILLS

Tourism

Responding to skills
mismatches at
sectoral level

A key action of the New
Skills Agenda for Europe

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Introduction

Technological progress and globalisation are revolutionising the way we live, learn, work and do business. Digital and other key technologies are reshaping the foundations of industry and the wider global economy.

This offers tremendous opportunities for innovation, growth and jobs, but it also requires skilled and adaptable people who are able to drive and support change.

In order to deliver **sector-specific skills solutions**, the New Skills Agenda for Europe has launched **the Blueprint for Sectoral Cooperation** on Skills. The Blueprint is a new framework for strategic cooperation between key stakeholders (e.g. businesses, trade unions, research, education and training institutions, public authorities) in a given economic sector. It will stimulate investment and encourage the strategic use of EU and national funding opportunities. The aim is to develop concrete actions to satisfy short and medium term skills needs to support the overall sectoral strategy.

The Blueprint can only bring results if it is driven and owned by sector stakeholders. In this respect, the full involvement of social partners is very important. The Blueprint has been and will continue to be discussed in an open exchange with interested parties, including in the context of sectoral social dialogue committees.

The Blueprint builds on previous work by the European Commission and sectoral partners (in particular the Sector Skills Councils¹ and the European Sector Skills Alliances²) to fight sector skills mismatches. Going forward, it could also support smart specialisation strategies, which help regions choose to specialise in sectors where they can be most competitive.³

All relevant EU and national qualitative evidence and quantitative data produced under the Blueprint will contribute to the Skills Panorama and the new Europass Framework.⁴

In this publication we outline the steps towards cooperation on skills across the six pilot sectors of this initiative. We then review specifically the needs and benefits of the Blueprint in the context of the tourism sector.

For more information about the overall initiative please visit <http://europa.eu/!gc96YU>

Three steps to match skills to sectors' needs

The Blueprint for Sectoral Cooperation on Skills fosters sustainable partnerships among stakeholders to translate a sector's growth agenda into a comprehensive skills strategy and to take action to address sectoral skills needs.

Six Pilot Sectors



AUTOMOTIVE



DEFENCE



MARITIME
TECHNOLOGY



SPACE
(GEO INFORMATION)



TEXTILE,
CLOTHING,
LEATHER AND
FOOTWEAR



TOURISM

The Blueprint will be extended to additional sectors in the future.

1. Is the sector ready for an EU-wide partnership on skills?

In this preliminary phase, skills gaps in the sector and their potential impact on growth, innovation and competitiveness are assessed.

The presence and maturity of the overall growth strategy for the sector is verified, as well as the link to EU policy priorities. On this basis, the decision is taken on whether to move to the next phases or not. This groundwork is carried out by the Commission in cooperation with social partners and stakeholders. It can take place in more or less structured ways, depending on the way the sector is organised.

2. Launching sustainable sectoral partnerships

Once the sectors have been chosen, the Commission supports the set-up and the work of sectoral partnerships at EU-level. Each partnership will develop a sectoral skills strategy to support the objectives of the overall growth strategy for the sector and match the demand and supply of skills.

Partners will look into how major trends, such as global, societal, and technological developments, are likely to affect jobs and skills needs, as well as their potential impact on growth, competitiveness and employment in the sector (e.g. restructuring, hard-to-fill vacancies). It will then identify priorities and milestones for action and develop concrete solutions. The partnership will:

- Revise or create occupational profiles and the corresponding skills needs, drawing on the classification of European Skills, Competences, Qualifications and Occupations (ESCO)⁵ and existing competence frameworks⁶;
- Update or create curricula while promoting sectoral qualifications and certifications;
- Promote benefits of choosing a career in the sector and foster gender balance;
- Promote job-seeker and student mobility across Europe in the sector, capitalising on the use of existing EU tools⁷;
- Identify successful projects and best practices, including effective use of EU funding;
- Design an industry-led action plan for the long-term roll-out of the strategy and its results and ensure sustained cooperation among stakeholders at European, national and regional levels.

The platforms will build on European tools relating to skills and qualifications.⁸

3. Roll-out at national and regional level

Building on the results achieved at EU level, the Blueprint will be **rolled out at national and regional level**, in cooperation with national and regional authorities, and stakeholders. The members of the EU partnerships and the Commission will actively engage in dissemination and awareness raising activities to rally all interested national and regional stakeholders and ensure broad involvement and take up. The main tasks of national/regional partnerships will be to:

- Implement the EU-level sectoral skills strategy and action plan recommendations, while adapting them to national contexts and priorities;
- Implement business-education-research partnerships on the ground, including in the context of smart specialisation⁹;
- Raise visibility and share results widely to influence EU, national and regional policies, initiatives and intelligence tools.

Funding the Blueprint

The Blueprint is a new framework for strategic cooperation between stakeholders and is independent from individual funding instruments. However, a number of funding opportunities are available to support the different steps.

Lessons learned during the pilot phase will help in refining the Blueprint, including funding arrangements.

Step 1

This is a preliminary phase of the Blueprint. It is only at the end of the step that the decision on going ahead with the Blueprint is taken, therefore there is no dedicated funding. However, relevant activities can be funded by existing instruments. Work on step 1 should start with the sector's interest. It should reflect how the sector is organised and take previous work into account. For example, calls for tender on sectoral studies could be launched by the Commission. Or, sectoral stakeholders could apply for projects under Erasmus+ Sector Skills Alliances (E+ SSA) Lot 1. Alternatively, work could be taken forward within existing structures at EU level, such as high level groups or sectoral dialogue committees.

Step 2

For the pilot phase, a specific call, open only to **the six pilot sectors**, will be published in early 2017, under the new **Lot 3 of the Erasmus+ Sector Skills Alliances**¹⁰. The call will make available € 4 million per sector to cover up to 80 % of eligible costs over a 4-year period. Only one European Alliance per sector will be supported. It must ensure good coverage of EU Member States and be representative of the sector. It must be led by representatives of the industry (e.g. companies, chambers or trade associations) and include education and training providers. The presence of social partners and public authorities is highly encouraged.

In 2017, calls for tenders will also be published under the COSME programme¹¹. Other funding opportunities and arrangements could be considered in the future, also taking into account the results of the pilot phase.

Step 3

This step needs to be financed at national and regional level. EU Structural and Investment Funds¹² (ESIF) could support Step 3 of the Blueprint, but this would require a decision by the relevant managing authorities. The EU partnerships will look into replicable models to facilitate the use of EU funding to support this step. Other public and private funding should also be used.

TOURISM
SECTOR

Why a blueprint for cooperation on skills in the **tourism sector**?



Tourism has huge potential to generate economic growth and create jobs. It is an important sector and makes a substantial contribution to the EU economy. In 2014, it directly and indirectly supported over 12 million jobs and contributed to 9.7 % of the total EU GDP.

13 % of tourism employees are aged under 25. Tourism is, in this sense, one of the main entry points to the labour market, providing a concrete answer to youth unemployment.

Tourism is also the largest employer of migrant workers, part-time workers, as well as female workers (58 % of people employed in core tourism activities are women) and it provides large job opportunities to workers re-entering the job market.

International tourism is expected to grow very fast. It will double by 2030, with 500 million potential new tourists from Asia alone. But, at the same time, increasingly fierce competition is expected from new emerging destinations outside of Europe.

The competitiveness of the tourism sector very much relies on the competences and skills of its workforce.

Yet, businesses in the industry, in particular SMEs, struggle to find and retain skilled employees and several challenges have been identified. In particular:

- The sector does not appear high on the list of the most popular graduate jobs, in particular due to a negative perception of job quality, seasonality and limited career prospects;
- Key skill gaps have been identified for the traditional core skills (foreign languages, interpersonal skills, communication, multicultural knowledge);
- New skills are needed for newly developed occupations (e.g. destination management, sustainable tourism, cultural tourism, adventure tourism, accessible tourism, green tourism) and tourism professionals are expected to deliver innovative and customised services for a wider range of target groups, including seniors, or travellers with special needs;
- The explosion and rapid evolution of digitalisation in the tourism sector requires new, specific knowledge not only from employees, but also from tourism entrepreneurs. SMEs often lack the necessary e-management skills to keep up with the developments of online market places and distribution channels, as well as new forms of marketing and communication with customers;
- Education providers have a limited understanding of employers' requirements and travellers' expectations.

The Blueprint for Sectoral Cooperation on Skills will bring together businesses, education and training providers, professional associations, chambers of commerce, social partners and other relevant stakeholders to develop a targeted strategy and concrete action plan to close the skills gap in the tourism sector.

Find out more

Details about European Commission initiatives to develop skills in the tourism sector:

https://ec.europa.eu/growth/sectors/tourism/support-business_en

What can the blueprint achieve?

The Blueprint will enable stakeholders in the tourism sector to:

- **Facilitate cooperation and exchange of good practice.** Tourism is a fragmented sector, made up primarily of SMEs (90 %). Through enhanced cooperation between industry, public authorities and education providers, the partnership will identify common skills needs and define skills development strategies;
- **Overcome mismatch between offer and supply.** Specific actions will address skills gaps, particularly arising from digitalisation, new trends in tourism and challenges linked to an ageing and increasingly multicultural/international population. Impetus will also be given to entrepreneurial skills;
- **Support transnational mobility.** Specific actions will enable and encourage jobseekers and tourism businesses to use existing EU tools and instruments (like Drop'Pin, European Alliances for Apprenticeships and Erasmus+) in order to find and offer apprenticeships, traineeships and jobs in other EU countries;
- **Raise awareness about EU programmes and tools.** Specific actions will provide a tourism angle to existing tools for youth mobility and skills. They will also increase awareness of EU funding opportunities and programmes for investing in people in the tourism sector and provide guidance on how to make better use of such funds;
- **Enhance the image of tourism careers.** Actions will stimulate businesses in pursuing innovative ways to provide more focused training before and after recruitment, including new forms of apprenticeships or business preparation. Actions will showcase interesting aspects of tourism careers (like new exciting occupations and transnational opportunities).



Links to other related projects and initiatives

The Commission has developed a series of dedicated initiatives and tools available to industry, jobseekers and education providers. These include:

- The section dedicated to the hospitality sector in EURES¹³, the European jobseeker mobility network. It provides information, guidance and support to jobseekers wishing to work in other Member States and to employers looking to recruit suitable candidates from other Member States;
- The “Skills Passport in Hospitality and Tourism” within EURES. Specific skills lists for three tourism subsectors (adventure, cultural and blue tourism) were integrated into this passport;
- The Tourism Business Portal¹⁴. It provides information and tools to improve the management of companies in the tourism sector;
- The study “Mapping and Performance check of the supply side of tourism education and training”. It identifies major skills gaps in tourism education and training and the need for specific skills to adapt to new technological developments, customers’ expectations and new occupations;
- The study to map the skills needs to improve the accessibility and safety of tourism services for disabled people and people with special needs¹⁵;
- In the context of the European Skills/Competences, Occupations, and Qualifications (ESCO)¹⁶ the Commission in cooperation with industry and academia, is also developing skills profiles needed in the tourism sector;
- The section dedicated to Tourism in Drop’pin¹⁷, a platform that aims to help young people boost their employability and skills by connecting them to traineeships and apprenticeships across Europe;
- The call for proposals published in April 2016 to facilitate the uptake of high quality jobs, apprenticeships and traineeships in the tourism sector across the EU¹⁸. The call will co-finance one project for a budget of € 500 000.

Endnotes

1. **European Sector Skills Councils:** <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=784>
2. **Projects financed by Erasmus+:** https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/actions/key-action-2-cooperation-for-innovation-and-exchange-good-practices/sector-skills-alliances_en
3. **Smart Specialisation Platform:** <http://s3platform.jrc.ec.europa.eu/home>
4. **Skills Panorama:** <http://skillspanorama.cedefop.europa.eu/en>; Europass: COM(2016) 625
5. **European Skills, Competences, Occupations, and Qualifications(ESCO):** <https://ec.europa.eu/esco/portal/home>
6. **Examples of competence frameworks:** Digital Competence Framework for Citizens, **the** Entrepreneurship Competence Framework **and the** European e-Competence Framework
7. **Examples of EU employability and mobility tools:** Erasmus+, EURES, Drop'Pin, European Alliance for Apprenticeships
8. **Examples of EU skills & qualifications tools:** European Qualifications Framework, ESCO, Europass, ECVET **and** EQAVET
9. **Smart Specialisation Map:** <http://s3platform.jrc.ec.europa.eu/map>
10. **Erasmus+ Sector Skills Alliances:** http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/home/erasmus-plus/actions/key-action-2-cooperation-for-innovation-and-exchange-good-practices/sector-skills_en
11. **COSME Programme:** https://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes/cosme_en
12. **EU Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF):** http://ec.europa.eu/contracts_grants/funds_en.htm
13. **European Jobs Network (EURES):** <https://ec.europa.eu/eures/public/homepage>
14. **The Tourism Business Portal:** http://ec.europa.eu/growth/tools-databases/tourism-business-portal/index_en.htm
15. **Westcott, J. "Improving information on accessible tourism for disabled people", European Commission, Luxembourg. (2004): 2013:** <http://bookshop.europa.eu/en/improving-information-on-accessible-tourism-for-disabled-people-pbNB6004587/>
16. **European Skills, Competences, Qualifications and Occupations (ESCO):** <https://ec.europa.eu/esco/portal/home>
17. **EURES Drop'Pin Service:** <https://ec.europa.eu/eures/droppin/>
18. **Call for proposals, 2016, on "Enhancing quality jobs, apprenticeships and traineeships in the tourism sector across Europe":** http://ec.europa.eu/growth/tools-databases/newsroom/cf/itemdetail.cfm?item_id=8757&lang=en&title=Enhancing-quality-jobs%2Capprenticeships-and-traineeships-in-the-tourism-sector-across-Europe



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The Blueprint for Sectoral Cooperation on Skills is a new framework for strategic cooperation to address short and medium-term skills needs in a given economic sector. This publication focuses specifically on the tourism sector and shows how stakeholders (businesses, trade unions, public authorities, research, education and training institutions etc.) can apply the framework to address challenges, illustrating the steps towards delivering sector-specific skills solutions through sectoral partnerships.

The Blueprint currently focuses on six pilot sectors including: Automotive; Defence; Maritime Technology; Space (geo-information); Textile, Clothing, Leather & Footwear (TCLF); and Tourism. It will be extended to additional sectors in the future.

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