

Analysis of 2025 Global Hospitality Labor Trends

Published June 30, 2025 65 min read



Global Hospitality Workforce Demand in 2025

The hospitality industry is experiencing a **surge in workforce demand in 2025**, as travel and tourism activity rebounds to record levels worldwide. The World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) projects the sector will support **371 million jobs globally in 2025**, accounting for over 10% of the global labor market (Source: [wttc.org](https://www.wttc.org))(Source: [wttc.org](https://www.wttc.org)). This marks an increase of 14 million jobs from 2024, underscoring a robust recovery that has **surpassed pre-pandemic employment levels** in many areas. The sector's total economic contribution is set to reach **\$11.7 trillion (10.3% of global GDP) in 2025**, signaling that hospitality is no longer simply in "recovery" mode but entering a new phase of **growth and innovation** (Source: [wttc.org](https://www.wttc.org))(Source: hospitalityinsights.ehl.edu). However, this expansion comes with significant regional and sectoral variances, and it poses fresh

challenges for employers in attracting and retaining qualified staff. The following report provides a comprehensive overview of [global trends in hospitality employment](#), with spotlights on key regions (U.S., Europe, Asia-Pacific, Middle East), a breakdown by major industry segments, analysis of labor market forecasts and in-demand skills, and an examination of challenges – from labor shortages to automation and sustainability – that are shaping the workforce in 2025.

Global Trends and Outlook for 2025

The **global hospitality and tourism labor market** has rebounded vigorously after the COVID-19 downturn. International tourist volumes in 2024 nearly reached pre-2020 levels, and 2025 is on track to set new records in travel demand (Source: [hospitalityinsights.ehl.edu](#)). According to WTTC, the sector's worldwide GDP contribution will hit *an all-time high* in 2025, and employment will likewise exceed previous peaks (Source: [wttc.org](#)) (Source: [wttc.org](#)). Key indicators illustrate this positive outlook:

- **Worldwide Job Growth:** Travel and tourism jobs are expected to total **371 million** in 2025, up from ~357 million in 2024 and **more than the entire population of the U.S.** (Source: [wttc.org](#)) (Source: [wttc.org](#)). This reflects a sustained recovery trajectory with hospitality employment expanding in all regions. WTTC forecasts the sector will continue to outpace overall economic growth, with a 5.8% annual growth rate over the next decade – far above the 2.7% global GDP growth rate (Source: [hospitalityinsights.ehl.edu](#)).
- **Regional Variations:** Growth is not uniform across the globe. The **Asia-Pacific** region accounts for the largest share of tourism employment (over half of global tourism jobs), fueled by large domestic markets and rising travel demand. For example, **India's tourism industry alone is projected to support 42.3 million jobs by 2025**, including 13 million direct hospitality jobs (tour guides, hotel staff, tour operators), plus a wide ecosystem of indirect roles (Source: [travel.economictimes.indiatimes.com](#)). In the **Middle East**, aggressive tourism investment has made it the fastest-growing region: Travel & Tourism employment there is set to reach **7.7 million jobs in 2025** (Source: [wttc.org](#)), well above 2019 levels, with Saudi Arabia's sector hitting a record **2.7 million workers** (over 10% of national employment) (Source: [wttc.org](#)) (Source: [wttc.org](#)). By contrast, the **United States** – the world's largest tourism economy – is seeing a slower workforce recovery in some aspects (notably in international tourism jobs), as discussed in regional sections below. Overall, *global* hospitality employment has not only recovered but entered a new expansion phase, even as certain countries lag or face headwinds.

- **Transition from Recovery to Expansion:** Industry metrics confirm that 2024 marked a tipping point from recovery to new growth. The global hospitality market expanded to **\$4.9 trillion in 2024** (nearly matching 2019's size) and is poised for further growth in 2025, driven by high pent-up travel demand and higher guest spending (Source: hospitalityinsights.ehl.edu) (Source: hospitalityinsights.ehl.edu). Occupancy rates, average daily rates, and other performance indicators have improved across regions, signaling a healthy business environment for hospitality operators. Crucially, international tourism spending is expected to **surpass pre-pandemic records** in 2025 – for instance, global international visitor spend is forecast to grow ~11% year-on-year to €1.9 trillion (Source: wtcc.org). This surge in travel activity is directly boosting job creation: by one estimate, a new position in hospitality opens up every 2.5 seconds worldwide in the current market (Source: hospitalityinsights.ehl.edu).

Despite these encouraging trends, the global outlook is tempered by **workforce supply challenges**. Virtually all regions report difficulty staffing up to meet demand, as the industry grapples with a diminished labor pool post-pandemic and increasing competition for workers. Many hospitality businesses are operating with significant vacancies even as business returns. The following sections delve into these dynamics in more detail by sector and region.

Sectoral Breakdown: Key Hospitality Segments in 2025

The hospitality sector is broad, encompassing ** [accommodations \(hotels and resorts\)](#)**, **food service (restaurants, bars, catering)**, **travel and tourism services** (transportation, tour operators, attractions), **event management**, and related leisure industries. Each segment faces distinct workforce trends in 2025:

Hotels & Accommodations

Hotels around the world are striving to rebuild their teams as occupancy climbs back toward historic norms. **Staffing shortages remain a defining challenge** in this segment. In many countries, hotel employment has not fully returned to its pre-2020 peak – even as guest bookings surge – due to workers leaving during the pandemic and slower rehiring. For example, in the United States [hotel industry](#), employment in late 2024 was still **nearly 10% below pre-pandemic levels** (Source: ahla.com). Surveys by the American Hotel & Lodging Association (AHLA) at the end of 2024 found **65% of hotels reporting staffing shortages**, with 9% “severely understaffed,” a modest

improvement from earlier in the year but still widespread (Source: [ahla.com](#))(Source: [ahla.com](#)). On average, U.S. hotels had **6–7 unfilled positions per property** that they were actively trying to hire for (Source: [ahla.com](#)) – a pattern echoed in Europe and other regions.

The **roles in highest demand at hotels** are predominantly guest-facing and [operational positions](#). **Housekeeping staff** are the hardest to find – 38% of hotels surveyed cited housekeeping as their top shortage (Source: [ahla.com](#)). **Front desk clerks** are the next biggest gap (26% of hotels struggling to fill these roles), followed by culinary/kitchen staff (14%) and maintenance technicians (13%) (Source: [ahla.com](#))(Source: [ahla.com](#)). These findings align with broader accommodation industry reports: a 2025 U.S. lodging survey likewise found **housekeeping, front desk, and maintenance positions the most difficult to hire**, and noted that **48% of hotel franchisees see staffing issues as their biggest risk** for the year ahead (Source: [asianhospitality.com](#))(Source: [asianhospitality.com](#)). The labor crunch in hotels is forcing operators to **raise wages and expand benefits** to attract workers. AHLA notes that hotels have implemented pay increases, more flexible schedules, and perks like travel discounts in an effort to recruit – with higher wages being the most common strategy (used by ~47% of hotels) (Source: [ahla.com](#))(Source: [ahla.com](#)). These efforts helped reduce the share of hotels calling themselves severely understaffed by the end of 2024 (Source: [ahla.com](#)), yet **71% of hotels still could not fill all open jobs** (Source: [ahla.com](#)). Hotel employers are increasingly emphasizing **career development and advancement pathways** to improve retention, recognizing that long-term solutions must go beyond one-time pay boosts (Source: [ahla.com](#))(Source: [ahla.com](#)). As one hospitality HR expert observed, *“the industry faces a dual challenge: staffing shortages... coupled with the need to retain existing talent”* (Source: [ahla.com](#)) – signaling that investing in training and clear promotion pathways is crucial to prevent employee turnover.

Another notable trend in the hotel segment is **greater adoption of technology and automation to alleviate labor gaps**. Many hotel brands are turning to solutions like **mobile check-in/check-out systems, self-service kiosks, and AI-powered customer service chatbots** to handle routine tasks and supplement front-line staff. In a 2025 U.S. accommodation industry survey, 17% of businesses said they had introduced more self-service options (e.g. lobby kiosks), and 12% deployed AI chatbot assistants to help with customer inquiries, as part of their strategy to manage staffing challenges (Source: [asianhospitality.com](#)). Some hotels have even cut back certain labor-intensive services – for instance, 13% reported reducing daily housekeeping frequency and 12% reduced front desk hours – to cope with limited staff (Source: [asianhospitality.com](#)). **Robotics** are gradually making inroads as well: in some innovative properties, robots now assist with luggage delivery, room service, or cleaning, and **automated check-in kiosks** are an increasingly familiar sight at reception. A decade ago, this level of automation in hotels might have seemed far-fetched,

but today robots greeting guests or AI personalizing room settings is becoming reality (Source: hospitalityinsights.ehl.edu). While these technologies are not yet ubiquitous, the trend indicates that **tech-savvy talent is highly valued in modern hotel operations**. Employees comfortable with property management software, mobile apps, and other digital tools are in demand to help implement these innovations. At the same time, hotels emphasize that **human touch and service remain paramount**: automation is used to streamline basic transactions, freeing up staff to focus on personalized guest interaction and problem-solving. The net effect is that hotel workers' roles are evolving – with less manual paperwork and more emphasis on **customer experience, cross-functional skills, and technical literacy**.

Restaurants & Food Service

The **restaurant and food service sector** – encompassing restaurants, cafés, bars, and catering – is one of the largest employers within hospitality and continues to be a major engine of job growth in 2025. Globally, food service has rebounded strongly as consumers return to dining out and travel. In the United States, for instance, **restaurant industry sales are projected to reach \$1.5 trillion in 2025**, and operators plan to expand their workforce by a net **200,000 jobs**, bringing U.S. food service employment to **15.9 million by the end of 2025** (Source: restaurant.org)(Source: restaurant.org). This would surpass the pre-pandemic peak headcount. Notably, according to U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics data, **two-thirds of all new leisure and hospitality jobs over the next decade are expected to be in food and beverage** rolesblog.dol.gov. The demand for restaurant workers – from fast-food counter staff to chefs and managers – is being driven by consumers' sustained appetite for dining experiences. Even in an era of high inflation, surveys find that a strong majority of consumers globally (and about 9 in 10 Americans) *enjoy going to restaurants* and will prioritize restaurant spending if they have disposable income (Source: restaurant.org)(Source: restaurant.org). This bodes well for continued job opportunities in the food service segment.

However, **labor shortages and labor costs are pressing concerns** for restaurants worldwide. Many eateries have struggled to rehire to full staffing levels, mirroring the trends in hotels. A 2024 survey of 330 restaurant operators across the U.S. found that **89% expect labor costs to keep rising into 2025**, and virtually all respondents agreed that escalating wages are squeezing profit margins (Source: soundhound.com)(Source: soundhound.com). Over 90% of restaurant operators had faced significant wage inflation in the prior year (Source: soundhound.com). This reflects a global pattern: competition for cooks, servers, and kitchen staff is forcing wages upward across markets. In 2023–2024, many restaurants raised pay, offered hiring bonuses, or improved working conditions to entice staff back. For example, in the U.S., average hourly earnings in leisure and hospitality jumped markedly as employers vied for workers. Even so, **turnover remains high**. The

food service industry historically has high churn, and post-pandemic *"quit rates remain higher than other industries,"* indicating that retention is an ongoing battle (Source: asianhospitality.com). With workers in short supply, restaurants have pivoted to **focus on retention and productivity** of existing staff rather than solely on new hiring. One widespread tactic has been **cross-training employees**: nearly half (48%) of operators said they have cross-trained their staff to handle multiple roles, enabling the restaurant to run with a leaner headcount (Source: soundhound.com) (Source: soundhound.com). Cross-training helps cover shifts and tasks when there are unfilled positions, but it can also **overburden employees** if taken too far. Operators acknowledge the risk of burnout – common staff pain points include having to do extra side work, cover for absent coworkers, or juggle too many tables at once (Source: soundhound.com) (Source: soundhound.com). This is pushing restaurants to find a balance: *"maintain a steady headcount and cross-train,"* but without exhausting the team (Source: soundhound.com) (Source: soundhound.com).

Technology and automation are increasingly seen as *"need-to-have"* components of restaurant labor strategy going forward (Source: soundhound.com). **Self-order kiosks**, table-side ordering tablets, mobile app ordering, and drive-thru voice AI systems are all being adopted to enhance efficiency and reduce reliance on labor, especially in limited-service and fast-food segments. For example, many quick-service restaurants now let customers order via touchscreen kiosks or smartphone apps, enabling one cashier to oversee multiple kiosks rather than manually taking every order. **Voice AI** for drive-thrus (an area where companies like SoundHound are providing solutions) can handle routine ordering interactions, allowing staff to focus on food preparation and customer issues (Source: soundhound.com) (Source: soundhound.com). Kitchen automation is also making headway – from robotic fryers and burger-flipping robots to automated dishwashers – aiming to perform repetitive tasks and alleviate back-of-house labor shortages. While full automation of restaurants is not here yet, these technologies are helping restaurants operate with fewer staff or reallocate staff to more value-added roles (like improving the guest experience). The result is that **digital skills are increasingly important for food service workers** too; employees need to be able to operate POS systems, delivery platforms, and maybe even collaborate with AI systems. In 2025, more restaurants consider tech investments not just as efficiency boosters but as essential to addressing the labor gap and improving job quality (by taking away some drudgery) (Source: soundhound.com).

Overall, the restaurant sector in 2025 is characterized by **strong growth in demand for labor** but also a strain to supply that labor. The sector's ability to meet the projected employment growth (e.g. reaching 15.9 million in the U.S.) will depend on making restaurant jobs attractive and sustainable. Industry groups like the National Restaurant Association emphasize *"cautious optimism,"* noting that

recruitment will rely on highlighting the **career opportunities and improving work-life balance** in an industry often seen as having unsocial hours (Source: [restaurant.org](https://www.restaurant.org))(Source: [restaurant.org](https://www.restaurant.org)). Many restaurants are also tapping non-traditional labor pools (such as older workers or those seeking flexible gig-like roles) and increasing training to bring in employees with little experience. Despite the hurdles, the consensus is that **food service will continue to be a leading job creator** in hospitality, given consumers' enduring love of dining experiences.

Travel & Tourism Services

Beyond hotels and restaurants, the **broader travel and tourism services** segment encompasses a wide variety of employers: airlines and airports, cruise lines, travel agencies and tour operators, destination management companies, theme parks, museums, casinos, and tourism boards, to name a few. This segment is somewhat diffuse, but collectively it represents a significant portion of hospitality employment, especially in destinations where tourism is a major economic pillar. In 2025, travel & tourism services are largely in expansion mode, rebounding from the pandemic shock:

- **Global Scale:** According to WTTC's Economic Impact Research, travel & tourism (including direct and indirect jobs) supports about **1 in 10 jobs worldwide** (Source: [wttc.org](https://www.wttc.org)). Many of these are outside hotels/restaurants – for example, **cultural and recreational services, transportation, and retail tied to tourism**. As of 2024, WTTC estimated ~330 million travel and tourism jobs globally (Source: hospitalityinsights.ehl.edu), and this is expected to rise to 371 million in 2025 as noted. The growth is a clear sign of a sector not just recovering but expanding into new areas (like bleisure travel, ecotourism, etc.), which opens up **new job niches**.
- **Tour Operators & Travel Agencies:** After a deep downturn in 2020–2021, tour companies and travel advisors are seeing business bounce back thanks to renewed international travel. Many had downsized staff during COVID; now they are hiring again to meet demand for packaged tours, guided experiences, and personalized travel planning. **Multilingual tour guides, travel consultants, and customer service agents** are in demand, especially those adept with modern booking systems and who can cater to health/safety-conscious travelers. Travel agencies have also transformed – there is increased need for **digital marketing specialists** and **data analysts** who can target customers online and analyze travel trends (since a lot of trip planning has shifted digital). The integration of technology means even smaller tour operators seek employees who can manage online booking platforms and social media engagement.

- **Airlines and Cruise Lines:** These industries were hit hardest by the pandemic but are now **massively recruiting** to staff back up for full schedules. Airlines worldwide have been hiring pilots, flight attendants, ground crew, and support staff. A shortage of pilots in some regions (U.S., Europe) has been a constraint, leading to training academies expanding capacity. Similarly, cruise lines – after mothballing ships – have relaunched nearly all vessels and need thousands of crew (from hospitality staff on board to port agents). Many cruise companies in 2023–2024 ran recruitment drives in countries like the Philippines, Indonesia, and India to source talent, since cruises rely on international crews. The result is that **hospitality skills with a global, multicultural edge are prized** – speaking multiple languages, adaptability to living on board or in different countries, etc. However, these transportation-related sectors also face the challenge of some workers being slow to return (due to early retirements or career changes during the hiatus). This has occasionally led to service disruptions (e.g. flight delays from crew shortages). The sectors are tackling this with better incentives (signing bonuses for pilots, wage hikes for flight attendants, etc.).
- **Attractions and Events:** Theme parks, casinos, museums, and event venues form a critical part of tourism services. By 2025, most theme parks (Disney, Universal, etc.) report attendance near or above 2019 levels, leading them to hire seasonal workers at scale, but many parks have noted labor shortages particularly in peak seasons. Some have raised starting wages significantly to compete with other employers in local labor markets. Major casino resorts, especially in places like Las Vegas, Macau, and Singapore, are similarly hiring for roles ranging from gaming dealers to hotel operations, as visitor volume returns. *Event tourism* is another bright spot – the **Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions (MICE)** industry has largely returned to in-person events. Convention centers and event management firms are staffing up event planners, audiovisual technicians, and sales managers to handle a backlog of conferences and new corporate events. Recent data show **the business events industry's recovery picking up**; for instance, global trade show and conference organizers reported in 2024 that business was ~85–90% back to pre-pandemic levels and growing (Source: [workstaff.app](#))(Source: [workstaff.app](#)). Consequently, **event planning jobs are on the rise**. Industry analysis projects the event sector's job market will expand by about **11%**, potentially reaching around *5.9 million jobs worldwide* as it rebounds from the pandemic slump (Source: [workstaff.app](#)). Many of these roles are being filled by newcomers to the field (with two-thirds of event positions being taken by people new to the industry, according to one analysis) (Source: [meetings.skift.com](#)), suggesting fresh talent is entering to replace those who left.

A **notable trend across travel & tourism services** is the growing emphasis on **technology integration and sustainability**, which we will explore more later. For now, within this sector breakdown, consider that **online platforms and data** are transforming how travel services operate. For example, the rise of online travel agencies (OTAs) and booking apps has created roles for IT specialists, but it has reduced the number of traditional brick-and-mortar travel agent jobs. Meanwhile, sustainability trends (like carbon offsets for flights, eco-friendly tours, etc.) are creating new jobs such as sustainability analysts and environmental managers within tourism companies.

Event Planning and Meetings Industry

Event planning deserves special focus as a distinct segment (though it overlaps with hotels, tourism, and restaurants). The events industry – including professional conferences, trade shows, festivals, concerts, and corporate meetings – underwent dramatic swings: a near-total halt in 2020, a pivot to virtual formats in 2021, and then a resurgence of in-person events in 2022–2023. By 2025, the industry is in a phase of **“resilience and recovery”** where in-person events are largely back and even exceeding pre-2020 activity in some areas (Source: workstaff.app). This resurgence is creating strong demand for event professionals. Key points include:

- **Return to In-Person:** Approximately **70% of events are now being held in person** (versus virtual) as of 2024, reflecting a widespread desire to return to face-to-face interaction (Source: workstaff.app). Many organizations that experimented with virtual events have shifted to hybrid models or fully in-person gatherings for the added impact. This has reopened jobs for **venue managers, event coordinators, caterers, audiovisual crews, and hospitality staff** that support these events.
- **Job Growth and Hiring:** As mentioned, the event sector’s job market is projected to grow ~11% from 2023 to 2024/25, which is a rapid expansion. The **United States event industry alone supports about 1.3 million jobs annually** in roles such as planners, technicians, and support staff (Source: workstaff.app). Globally, the figure is several million more. In 2024, industry surveys found that **85% of event professionals feel optimistic about their job security** and career prospects (Source: workstaff.app) – a dramatic turnaround from the uncertainty of 2020. Many event companies are actively recruiting again, and new event-focused startups have emerged (particularly in areas like virtual event tech and experiential marketing), further driving job openings.
- **Skills in Demand:** The modern event planner’s skillset has evolved. **Technology proficiency is crucial** – an estimated 78% of event planners are using more technology now than pre-pandemic, whether for event management software, virtual streaming platforms, or data

analytics to measure event ROI (Source: [workstaff.app](https://www.workstaff.app)). The widespread adoption of hybrid events (with both in-person and online audiences) means planners need skills in coordinating both physical logistics and digital experiences. There is also an increased focus on **health & safety expertise** (ensuring venues meet health guidelines, etc.) and on **attendee engagement strategies** to combat “Zoom fatigue” and entice people to attend live events. Furthermore, **creative skills** are valued since events are becoming more experience-driven (themes, interactive elements, etc., partly influenced by millennials’ and Gen Z’s preference for unique experiences over material goods (Source: [workstaff.app](https://www.workstaff.app))).

- **Persistent Challenges:** Despite the positive momentum, event organizers face some hurdles that impact workforce needs. One is **attendance volatility** – about 52% of event planners say increasing event attendance is a key challenge (Source: [workstaff.app](https://www.workstaff.app)) (people have many options and are selective about travel). This means **marketing and sales roles** in the event industry (to promote events and secure exhibitors/sponsors) are important and in demand. Another challenge is the shortage of skilled labor in technical roles (like stage production, lighting, IT support for events). Many experienced technicians left during the pandemic, so there is a push to train new entrants. Additionally, events are increasingly focusing on **sustainability**, leading to roles such as “*green event coordinator*” who ensure events minimize waste and carbon footprint – a role we will touch on in the sustainability section.

Resorts and Recreation

The **resorts and recreation** segment includes destination resorts (beach resorts, ski resorts, all-inclusive resorts), recreational facilities (theme parks, golf resorts, cruise resorts), and integrated resort complexes that combine hotels, casinos, entertainment, and more. This segment overlaps with hotels and tourism but is worth noting for its own trends:

- **Integrated Resorts & Casinos:** Many countries (especially in Asia and the Middle East) are investing in large integrated resorts as tourist attractions. Examples include new mega-resorts under development in **Saudi Arabia’s Vision 2030** (such as the Red Sea Project and NEOM’s luxury resorts), continued expansion in **Dubai’s resort scene**, and new casino resorts in Asia (Japan has approved plans for its first casino resort in Osaka, aiming to open by 2029). These projects are **major job creators** over the coming years. In 2025, the ramp-up of these developments is driving demand for a wide range of roles: construction and design in the short term, and in the longer term **hotel managers, chefs, front-of-house staff, spa and wellness professionals, entertainment coordinators, and casino gaming staff**. For instance, Saudi Arabia’s tourism drive is not only contributing to 2.7 million travel/hospitality jobs by 2025 (Source: [wttc.org](https://www.wttc.org)), but is also prompting new training programs to prepare Saudi nationals for

careers in hospitality (since historically much of the Gulf's hospitality workforce has been foreign labor). Similarly, Macau and Singapore continue to hire heavily for their resort casinos as tourism rebounds.

- **Vacation Resorts:** Traditional vacation resorts (tropical island resorts, ski lodges, etc.) have mostly recovered and are seeing high occupancy thanks to “revenge travel” (travelers making up for lost vacations). Many resort operators report difficulties staffing housekeeping, food service, and adventure recreation roles (e.g. dive instructors, ski instructors) in remote locations. Some are offering higher wages or accommodations for staff to attract them to these locales. The **cruise industry** – which offers a resort-like experience at sea – is also effectively part of this segment. As of 2023, the cruise industry had relaunched full operations and cruise lines were **restoring their workforce** of onboard service crew, entertainers, and officers. By 2025, cruise passenger numbers may exceed 2019 levels, implying cruise lines will employ tens of thousands more staff, often from developing countries where they source crew. This has positive employment impacts in those labor-supplying regions as well.
- **Outdoor Recreation and Parks:** The pandemic boosted interest in outdoor travel, benefiting national parks, campgrounds, and outdoor adventure outfitters. Many of those saw record visitors in 2021–2022 and are continuing strong. This has led to more jobs for park hospitality (lodges, camp staff) and adventure tourism guides (rafting guides, safari guides, etc.). Some countries are investing in eco-tourism initiatives that create local jobs (e.g., community-run lodges, guided nature tours), tying into sustainability trends.
- **Seasonal Workforce Issues:** Resorts often have pronounced seasonality, requiring large numbers of seasonal workers (e.g. ski resorts in winter, beach resorts in summer). In 2025, a common issue is a **shortage of seasonal workers**, exacerbated by immigration and visa constraints in some regions. For example, European alpine resorts and North American ski resorts have cited shortfalls in ski instructors and hospitality staff due to fewer foreign students traveling for seasonal work. This has led some resorts to raise pay or provide incentives like free ski passes and housing to lure workers. Governments have also been called upon to adjust visa quotas (for instance, the U.S. H-2B visa cap for seasonal workers) to help resorts fill roles. Until those structural issues are resolved, resorts will continue competing hard for seasonal labor each peak season.

In summary, every segment of the hospitality industry – from urban hotels and restaurants to cruise ships and remote resorts – is seeing **heightened workforce demand in 2025**, but also contending with a smaller labor pool and new skills requirements. The next sections will examine these **labor**

market trends, skills, and challenges in a cross-cutting manner, and then provide regional deep dives.

Regional Spotlights

While global trends set the backdrop, hospitality labor dynamics can vary significantly by region. This section highlights the current state of hospitality employment in four key regions – the **United States, Europe, Asia-Pacific, and the Middle East** – noting regional growth patterns, shortages, and initiatives:

Leisure and hospitality employment in the U.S. (1993–2023) with projected growth to 2033. The U.S. leisure/hospitality sector recovered to 16.6 million jobs by 2023 and is forecasted to reach ~17.4 million by 2033, reflecting steady post-pandemic growth[blog.dol.gov](#)[blog.dol.gov](#). Food service roles (green) constitute the largest share, followed by arts/entertainment (blue) and accommodation/hotels (red).

United States

The **United States** hospitality sector is large and diverse, and it has been rebounding strongly, albeit with some lingering weaknesses in certain segments. By late 2023, U.S. *leisure and hospitality employment had fully recovered the jobs lost in 2020*, reaching about **16.6 million workers** – and it is projected to continue growing to ~17.4 million by 2033[blog.dol.gov](#)[blog.dol.gov](#). In fact, government projections show that **about 1 in 8 new U.S. jobs in the coming decade will be in leisure and hospitality**, one of the highest growth contributions of any sector[blog.dol.gov](#)[blog.dol.gov](#). This positive outlook stems from Americans' sustained demand for dining, travel, and recreation services. For 2025 specifically, industry forecasts are upbeat: the National Restaurant Association expects U.S. foodservice employment to reach **15.9 million** (adding 200k jobs in 2025 alone) (Source: [restaurant.org](#))(Source: [restaurant.org](#)), and the hotel industry is similarly aiming to fill thousands of open positions as travel continues to increase.

However, the U.S. faces **persistent labor shortages** in hospitality, making it something of a paradox: high demand for workers, but not enough workers willing or able to fill the roles. As discussed earlier, **65% of U.S. hotels reported staffing shortages** at the end of 2024 (Source: [ahla.com](#)). Fast-food and full-service restaurants have likewise struggled – many operated with shorter hours or limited menus in 2022–2023 due to lack of staff. *Why does this shortage persist?* A combination of factors: During the pandemic, millions of hospitality workers were laid off; many found jobs in other industries (such as retail, warehousing, or gig economy) and did not return.

Others retired or went back to school. The industry also has an image problem in the U.S.: many see hospitality jobs as low-paid, stressful, and with limited advancement, so labor force participation in this sector remains below pre-pandemic rates. This is why **recruitment and retention have become top priorities** for U.S. hospitality employers. They have raised wages significantly – hotel wages in 2023 were at record highs, and **92% of restaurant operators said labor costs had risen in the past year** (Source: [soundhound.com](https://www.soundhound.com)). They are also offering creative perks and bonuses, and partnering with organizations to find new talent pools (such as targeting younger workers or underemployed groups). The AHLA has launched a **Hospitality Apprenticeship program** in partnership with the National Restaurant Association Education Foundation to bring in and train workers with a clear career path (Source: [ahla.com](https://www.ahla.com)). These efforts aim to communicate that, as 72% of surveyed U.S. hoteliers believe, **“career opportunities in hospitality are better than ever”** in the post-pandemic era (Source: [ahla.com](https://www.ahla.com)).

A critical issue specific to the U.S. is the **mix of domestic vs. international tourism**. The U.S. travel and tourism sector is huge – it contributed about **\$2.6 trillion to GDP in 2024 and supported over 20 million jobs** when including indirect effects (Source: [wttc.org](https://www.wttc.org)). But the rebound has been uneven. Domestic leisure travel has been extremely robust (Americans traveling within the U.S. hit record levels, effectively “keeping the lights on” for the industry (Source: [wttc.org](https://www.wttc.org))), whereas **inbound international tourism remains below pre-2019 levels**, partly due to slow visa processing and strong U.S. dollar values. WTTC warned that the U.S. is uniquely lagging in restoring international visitation, with 2025 international visitor spending projected to **fall \$12.5 billion short** of 2019 levels (Source: [wttc.org](https://www.wttc.org)). This shortfall not only impacts revenue but also *puts jobs at risk* – nearly 100,000 tourism jobs could be affected if inbound travel doesn’t pick up (Source: [travelandtourworld.com](https://www.travelandtourworld.com))(Source: [wttc.org](https://www.wttc.org)). As of 2019, international tourists directly and indirectly supported about **18 million U.S. jobs** (Source: [wttc.org](https://www.wttc.org)); today that “legacy” is under threat. In practical terms, this means segments like city hotels, attractions, and airlines that rely on foreign tourists have recovered more slowly and may be **staffing more conservatively**. For example, big-city hotels in markets like New York or San Francisco have been slower to rehire fully because international and business travel (key for weekdays) are not fully back. The U.S. Travel Association and WTTC have been urging measures to stimulate inbound travel (like boosting marketing, reducing visa wait times, etc.) to capitalize on the global tourism boom and protect those jobs (Source: [wttc.org](https://www.wttc.org))(Source: [wttc.org](https://www.wttc.org)).

Another regional aspect is **wage pressure and automation** in the U.S. As minimum wages rise in many states (and some localities mandate \$15+ per hour) and as workers push for better pay (e.g., through unionization efforts in some hotel chains), labor costs are increasing. The data showed nearly **90% of U.S. restaurant operators anticipate higher labor costs in 2025** (Source:

[soundhound.com](https://www.soundhound.com)). To maintain margins, more U.S. hospitality businesses are turning to tech: fast-food outlets adopting AI drive-thrus, hotels giving guests mobile apps to request services (reducing call volume to front desks), and even experimenting with robot room-service delivery. The U.S. has a relatively high cost of labor, so the incentive to automate certain tasks is strong. Still, given the service-oriented nature of hospitality, these moves are cautious and aimed at augmenting rather than replacing staff. The focus remains on hiring and *upskilling* enough people to deliver quality service. In summary, the U.S. hospitality job market in 2025 is **hot** – abundant openings and projected growth – but it's a **job-seeker's market** where employers must work hard to entice workers. Many positions remain unfilled even as the industry prospers, making labor arguably the **limiting factor** for full recovery and growth.

Europe

Europe's hospitality industry has likewise recovered a great deal of ground, although it varies by country and sub-region. Across the **European Union (EU)**, travel and tourism in 2024 exceeded 2019 output, and employment reached **24.5 million jobs (about 1 in 9 jobs in the EU)** (Source: [wttc.org](https://www.wttc.org)). That momentum continues into 2025: WTTTC forecasts that in 2025 the EU's travel & tourism sector will contribute nearly €1.9 trillion to GDP (10.5% of the economy) and **employ almost 26 million people**, representing 12% of all EU employment (Source: [wttc.org](https://www.wttc.org))(Source: [wttc.org](https://www.wttc.org)). This means **roughly 1 in 8 jobs in Europe is tied to tourism** – a substantial impact, and a higher share than in 2019. Notably, Europe as a whole has regained or surpassed its pre-pandemic tourism jobs count, with 2024 sector jobs actually about 6% above 2019 levels (Source: [wttc.org](https://www.wttc.org)). Tourist travel within Europe rebounded strongly in 2022–2023 (helped by EU coordination on reopening), and by 2024 many European destinations saw record domestic and regional tourists. This translated into brisk hiring in hotspots like Spain, France, Italy, and Greece, which had faced severe labor shortages during the rebound.

Despite the healthy aggregate figures, **staffing shortages are a critical issue in Europe's hospitality workforce**. Many European hospitality businesses struggled in 2022 and 2023 to recruit enough workers as travel demand roared back. Two primary factors contributed: (1) like elsewhere, many former workers had left the industry; (2) in some countries, **Brexit or changes in foreign labor movement** reduced the supply of migrant workers who traditionally filled hospitality roles. For instance, the UK – no longer in the EU – reported tens of thousands of unfilled hospitality jobs and had to launch campaigns to recruit domestic youth and even older workers into the sector. In continental Europe, countries like **France and Spain** reported record vacancies in hotels and restaurants in mid-2022. An industry survey in late 2022 indicated that as many as ****1 in 3 hospitality businesses in Europe were restricting operations due to staff shortages** (e.g.,

closing some days or cutting services). By 2024, the situation eased slightly as more seasonal workers returned and wages rose, but it remained common to see European restaurants reducing hours for lack of staff or hotels shortening their service offerings (like not opening all rooms). **Roles particularly scarce** in Europe include chefs (skilled cooks are in global short supply), housekeeping staff (considered a difficult, lower-paid job, many locals avoid it and migrant labor supply was disrupted), and service staff in high-cost cities (where living costs outpace wages). To illustrate, in mid-2023 **hotels in Italy** reported needing to hire thousands of workers ahead of the summer season, with industry associations noting domestic interest in these jobs was low, pushing hotels to hire from abroad or raise pay significantly. **Germany** similarly saw a shortfall, with its hotel & restaurant association estimating 65,000 fewer hospitality workers than pre-pandemic, and companies calling for easier immigration for service workers.

European governments and industry groups have responded with various initiatives. For example, **France's tourism ministry** launched campaigns to improve the image of hospitality careers and provide faster training, after estimating a shortfall of 100,000 workers. **Spain** approved labor reforms to allow more flexibility in hiring part-time and seasonal staff, to attract students and others into hospitality work. Across the EU, there's a push for **better working conditions** – including more stable contracts and work-life balance – to make the sector appealing. These measures are slowly helping: by 2025, many hospitality employers in Europe report slightly improved staffing levels compared to the worst of the shortage, but it's still a tight labor market.

On the positive side, Europe is a leader in hospitality innovation, which influences workforce needs. The EU has appointed its first **Commissioner for Tourism (and Sustainable Transport)**, reflecting the sector's strategic importance (Source: [wttc.org](https://www.wttc.org)). This means more policy support for tourism training and sustainable tourism projects. Europe also leads in **sustainability and skills training**, with programs like apprenticeships in Switzerland's and Germany's famed hotel schools, and EU-wide funding for upskilling workers in digital tools and sustainable operations. European hospitality businesses are increasingly focused on **sustainability skills** (as many must meet EU Green Deal targets), and we see more roles like sustainability manager or energy efficiency officer at hotel chains in Europe.

In terms of **regional differences within Europe**: Southern Mediterranean countries (Spain, Italy, Greece, Portugal) heavily depend on tourism and thus have some of the highest hospitality workforce concentrations; they saw steep dips in 2020 and strong rebounds now, but also are the ones facing acute seasonal hiring crunches. Northern Europe (UK, Ireland, Scandinavia) recovered somewhat more slowly in tourism, partly due to stricter initial travel restrictions and less reliance on tourism overall; by 2024–2025 they are nearing normalcy, but places like the UK still have

thousands of open hospitality jobs post-Brexit. Eastern Europe, on the other hand, has a smaller tourism sector, and some countries (like Poland, Romania) actually supplied workers to Western Europe's hospitality industry; post-COVID, fewer Eastern Europeans returned to work in the West, creating gaps there but perhaps easing unemployment at home.

In summary, Europe's hospitality labor demand in 2025 is robust – the sector is contributing strongly to job creation (outpacing overall EU job growth with a 1.8% CAGR forecast for the next decade (Source: [wttc.org](https://www.wttc.org))). Yet virtually all European hospitality markets cite **labor shortage as a top risk** to growth. This has spurred action to make hospitality careers in Europe more **attractive, sustainable, and skilled**, which if successful will not only fill jobs but also improve service quality across the region.

Asia-Pacific

The **Asia-Pacific** region encompasses a huge range of hospitality markets, from the massive domestic industries of China and India to the resort economies of Southeast Asia and the Pacific. Overall, Asia-Pacific is the **world's largest travel and tourism employer** by region – even pre-pandemic, it supported around 185 million jobs in 2019 (Source: [wttc.org](https://www.wttc.org)), and despite losses in 2020–2021, it has roared back. By some forecasts, Asia-Pacific's travel & tourism sector is expected to support on the order of **200+ million jobs in 2025**, far exceeding other regions, thanks to its large population and rapid growth (Source: [itij.com](https://www.itij.com)). For instance, WTTC's outlook (preliminary) anticipated **203 million tourism jobs in APAC in 2025**, alongside a \$3.5 trillion GDP contribution (Source: [itij.com](https://www.itij.com)). The region's share of global tourism employment is over 50%, reflecting how critical hospitality is for many APAC economies.

China, the region's giant, is a special case. China's domestic tourism market is enormous (billions of trips annually), and it sustains tens of millions of hospitality jobs (in hotels, transport, attractions). During 2020–2022, China's "zero-Covid" policies severely impacted its hospitality workforce – hotels and travel agencies downsized or shuttered. In late 2022 and 2023, China finally reopened; domestic travel surged almost immediately, providing relief to the industry. By 2024, China's domestic tourism and hospitality employment had largely rebounded, and even **international spending in China surpassed pre-pandemic levels in 2023** (Source: [wttc.org](https://www.wttc.org)). However, WTTC expects **China's travel growth to slow in 2025** due to economic headwinds (Source: [wttc.org](https://www.wttc.org)). This could moderate job growth a bit. Still, the Chinese government has initiatives to bolster tourism jobs, especially in rural areas (e.g., promoting rural tourism to alleviate poverty, which creates local hospitality jobs). *One challenge in China* is that many migrant workers who left cities during

lockdowns have been slow to return to hospitality jobs, causing labor shortages in major cities' hotels and restaurants in early 2023. Wages in Chinese hospitality have risen, and employers are improving conditions to lure workers back from factory or delivery jobs.

India, as noted earlier, is seeing a tourism boom with significant job creation. The Indian government has identified tourism as a key driver for employment and growth, aiming for **42.3 million tourism-supported jobs by 2025** (Source: travel.economictimes.indiatimes.com). India's hospitality workforce spans from luxury hotels in big cities to small homestays and tour operators. There is high demand for skilled hotel managers and chefs, often outpacing supply (India's hotel schools are expanding but talent often gets poached by Middle Eastern or Western employers offering higher pay). At the lower end, India has a large labor pool for entry-level hospitality jobs, but training and language skills are areas needing improvement. In 2023–2024, as foreign tourists returned and domestic travel stayed strong, Indian hotels faced staff shortages especially in high-skill areas like culinary and in regions like Kashmir or the Northeast that are newly popular. The industry is tackling this with intensive training programs. It's also worth noting that many international chains are opening new hotels in India (and across Asia), each needing to hire and train hundreds of employees, adding to the demand.

Southeast Asia (Thailand, Indonesia, Vietnam, etc.) is a vital part of APAC hospitality. These countries rely heavily on international tourists and had a slower recovery since borders reopened later (Thailand, for example, fully reopened in mid-2022, and China – a key tourist source – only reopened outbound travel in 2023). As a result, 2023 was the big bounce-back year for jobs in these nations' hospitality sectors. By 2025, most Southeast Asian destinations expect to be near or at pre-pandemic tourist volumes, if not higher. For instance, **the Philippines** projects its tourism sector will support **11.7 million jobs by 2025**, nearly one-quarter of all jobs in the country (Source: hotelnewsresource.com) – a huge figure underscoring tourism's importance. This includes new jobs in hotels, resorts, transport, and ancillary services as the country experiences record inbound and domestic tourism growth. Similarly, Vietnam and Indonesia see tourism as an engine for rural job creation (e.g., community-based tourism in villages). A common challenge in Southeast Asia is ensuring service quality – training is a big focus, often with help from foreign partners (e.g., hotel chains establishing academies). In terms of workforce, many Southeast Asian hospitality workers migrated to work in Middle Eastern or cruise line jobs; post-Covid some haven't returned, causing local shortages. Governments are thus keen on retaining talent by raising hospitality pay and career prospects at home.

East Asia & Pacific developed markets (Japan, South Korea, Australia, etc.) have their own dynamics. **Japan** had a significant hospitality labor crunch in 2023 after reopening – with an aging population and historically low unemployment, Japan lacked young workers to staff hotels and restaurants when tourists poured back in. Japanese hotels responded by hiring more foreign workers and using technology (Japan is famous for experimenting with robot-run hotels, though with mixed results). As of 2025, Japan is streamlining work visa processes to welcome foreign hospitality workers, and companies are raising wages (the major hotel chains in Japan offered some of the biggest raises in decades in 2023). **Australia** and **New Zealand** also saw chronic shortages in hospitality post-Covid because they previously relied on backpacker and student workers; their strict border closures caused many to leave. By 2025, those countries have reopened to working holiday travelers, but businesses are still finding it challenging to fill roles, especially in remote tourism areas. Pay rates have gone up accordingly.

In Asia-Pacific broadly, there is also significant **investment in mega-events and tourism infrastructure**, which creates jobs. For example, Expo 2025 is in Osaka, Japan – expected to draw millions and require a large event workforce. **International sports events** like upcoming Olympics (Brisbane 2032) have long lead-ups where hospitality workers get hired for preparation. These events leave a skills legacy as well.

In summary, Asia-Pacific's hospitality workforce in 2025 is characterized by **rapid growth and high volume**, with some countries outpacing their capacity to supply skilled labor. Many APAC countries are doubling down on **hospitality education and training**. There's also an interesting flow of labor: countries like the Philippines, India, and Indonesia supply a lot of workers to other regions (cruise ships, Gulf hotels, etc.), which can create domestic shortages but also means remittances and global experience. Technology uptake in Asia varies – some places are very high-tech (South Korea's hotels, Singapore's integrated resorts) which needs IT-proficient staff, while others are more labor-intensive. But across the board, **customer service excellence and language skills** are key focus areas, since Asian hospitality often caters to a mix of domestic and international guests. And as Asia-Pacific leads in tourism numbers, its role in shaping global hospitality trends – including labor practices – will only grow.

Middle East

The **Middle East** is one of the most dynamic regions for hospitality growth in 2025. Long reliant on oil, many Middle Eastern countries (especially in the Gulf) have targeted tourism and hospitality as crucial sectors for economic diversification. This political and financial backing has led to a boom in hotel construction, attraction development, and mega-events, which in turn drives *soaring demand*

for hospitality labor. According to WTTC, the Middle East's Travel & Tourism sector will support **7.7 million jobs in 2025**, a significant rise, and contribute around \$367 billion to regional GDP (Source: [wttc.org](https://www.wttc.org)). This marks the Middle East as the fastest-growing region in percentage terms; for perspective, that job count is already **24% above 2019 levels** in terms of visitor spending and associated employment (Source: [wttc.org](https://www.wttc.org)).

The poster child is **Saudi Arabia**, where top-down initiatives under "Vision 2030" aim to develop world-class tourism destinations virtually from scratch. Saudi Arabia's travel and tourism employment is projected to hit **2.7 million in 2025**, more than double what it was just a few years ago (Source: [wttc.org](https://www.wttc.org)). The Kingdom is investing heavily in luxury Red Sea resorts, a new airline, entertainment complexes, and cultural heritage sites – all of which need staff. It has even launched its own hospitality training institutes and partnered with international hotel schools to train Saudis, as it wants to create jobs for citizens (Saudi historically relied on foreign labor in service jobs). There's an intense drive to recruit tens of thousands of workers for projects like NEOM (a futuristic city with tourism components) and the Red Sea Project (100+ new hotels being developed). The **scale of hiring** is unprecedented – international hotel companies working in Saudi have massive recruitment campaigns across Asia and Africa to source housekeepers, waiters, and other staff, while simultaneously the government incentivizes locals to join the sector. This creates a unique blend of workforce: a **multinational hospitality workforce** in Saudi and the Gulf, with cultural integration and training being key to maintaining service standards.

United Arab Emirates (UAE), especially Dubai and Abu Dhabi, is another major hospitality employer. Dubai has essentially fully recovered to record tourist numbers by 2022–2023 and is opening new attractions (Museum of the Future, Ain Dubai, etc.). Dubai's hotel occupancy and rates rebounded strongly, and hotels have been scrambling for staff. As an established market, Dubai had a large expat workforce; many left in 2020, but a lot returned or were replaced by new recruits as the city reopened. By 2025, Dubai is hosting major events and has a pipeline of new hotels, so it continues to hire. A challenge in the UAE is the *cost of living* – Dubai has become expensive, and lower-salary workers sometimes struggle, leading to turnover. Employers often provide housing and other benefits to mitigate this. **Qatar** had a big push leading up to the 2022 FIFA World Cup, hiring thousands of hospitality workers for new hotels and the event itself. Post-World Cup, Qatar's tourism has slowed slightly, but many of those workers are being retained as Qatar markets itself more as a tourism destination (though some excess capacity is present).

Other Middle Eastern countries like **Egypt** and **Jordan** rely on tourism too (e.g., for Egypt the Red Sea resorts and heritage tourism are big employers). They saw tourism jobs vanish in 2020 and roar back by 2022–2023; by 2025, these countries are near full recovery in job terms. They face their

own issues: Egypt has an oversupply of tourism graduates but not all with practical skills needed, so paradoxically some areas have shortages of experienced staff. Jordan similarly has high unemployment overall, yet Petra's hotels might be short-staffed – pointing to internal mismatches and the need for training and perhaps better pay to attract locals to hospitality work (many prefer higher-paying sectors or government jobs).

One defining feature of Middle East hospitality is the **dependence on expatriate labor**. In the Gulf states (Saudi, UAE, Qatar, Oman, Bahrain, Kuwait), a majority of hospitality employees are from abroad – commonly South or Southeast Asia, Africa, or other Arab countries. For example, a luxury hotel in Dubai might have staff from 50+ nationalities. This requires robust training (to get everyone on the same brand service standards) and poses retention challenges (workers may move to another country or return home). There's also increasing pressure to localize some positions (e.g., Saudi wants more Saudis in customer-facing roles). So hotel companies are balancing sourcing globally with nurturing local talent. Wages in the Gulf are tax-free but often lower for line-level jobs than in Western countries, which has traditionally been acceptable due to lower living costs and the appeal of remittances – but as Gulf cities get pricier, they too see wage pressures. For instance, some Dubai restaurants had to hike salaries ~10-20% in 2022 to attract back chefs from Asia.

Another trend: **mega-events and entertainment**. The Middle East is hosting and bidding for many events (Dubai Expo 2020 – held in 2021, Doha World Cup 2022, Riyadh perhaps a future Expo, etc.). These create temporary surges in hospitality employment (e.g., Qatar brought in thousands of temporary staff for the World Cup). Post-event, some workers move on, but others are absorbed into the local industry. Additionally, **religious tourism** is huge – Saudi's annual Hajj and Umrah pilgrimages bring millions to Mecca and Medina, requiring a large seasonal hospitality workforce. By 2025, as travel normalizes, these pilgrimages are at capacity again, so Saudi's hospitality labor demand isn't just new resorts, but also staffing pilgrim accommodation and services (often seasonally).

Finally, Middle Eastern tourism is increasingly focusing on **luxury and experience**, which means **higher skill requirements**. Tourists expect top-tier service, and destinations want to differentiate with unique cultural experiences. So roles like *experience curators*, *concierge (with multilingual abilities)*, *wellness instructors*, and *chefs specializing in international cuisine* are all in demand. The Middle East, especially Gulf, can often import such talent (celebrity chefs, etc.), but there's also a push to train locals (e.g., Arab culinary programs, Arabic-speaking tour guides for heritage sites). The interplay of technology is present too: many Gulf hotels are early adopters of tech (e.g., mobile apps, digital concierge services), so they need IT and digital marketing staff behind the scenes.

In summary, the Middle East in 2025 stands out as a region of **ambitious growth in hospitality employment**, underpinned by heavy investment and strategic national goals. The workforce is international and rapidly expanding, and while in pure numbers the region's tourism jobs (~7–8 million) are smaller than Asia or Europe, the growth rate and capital investment per job are very high. The main challenges are ensuring sufficient skilled labor supply, managing the multicultural workforce, and gradually building up local human capital to sustain the sector in the long run.

Labor Market Trends, Job Roles, and Skills in Demand

Across all regions and sectors, several **labor market trends and in-demand skill sets** are emerging in 2025 that characterize the evolving nature of hospitality work:

- **Persistent Labor Shortages and High Turnover:** As detailed, many hospitality businesses are operating understaffed. The industry historically had high turnover, and that has been exacerbated since COVID-19. For example, U.S. accommodation and food service quit rates spiked in 2021–2022 and remain elevated. Employers now prioritize not just hiring but *retaining* talent. This has led to greater focus on **employee engagement, career progression, and quality-of-life improvements** (e.g. flexible scheduling, better hours). It's a mindset shift: rather than viewing staff as easily replaceable, employers realize they must invest in their workforce to reduce churn. Strategies like mentorship programs, clear promotion tracks, and recognition/reward systems are being used to keep staff motivated. In parallel, governments in some places support retention through grants for training incumbent workers and upskilling (so employees can move up rather than out). The overall trend is that **hospitality is striving to become a more attractive long-term career** to stabilize the labor pool.
- **Rising Wages and Labor Costs:** The flipside of labor scarcity is that wages are climbing. In many countries, **hospitality wage growth has outpaced inflation in 2022–2024**, as businesses compete for a limited talent pool. For instance, in the U.S. over 74% of restaurant operators expect to further increase wages in 2025 (Source: [soundhound.com](https://www.soundhound.com)). Europe and Asia see similar trends in tourist hotspots. While higher pay helps draw workers, it also squeezes profit margins for operators and sometimes leads to higher prices for consumers. Thus, a concurrent trend is an emphasis on **labor productivity** – getting more output per employee through better training and technology (so that higher wages are sustainable). Some businesses are adjusting their service models to be less labor-intensive (for example, switching from fine dining with lots of table service to more casual concepts where customers do more

self-service). Nonetheless, the overall effect is positive for workers: hospitality jobs are, on average, paying more and offering improved benefits now than a few years ago. This may gradually entice more workers back, helping alleviate shortages over time.

- **Changing Job Roles and New Positions:** The hospitality job landscape is broadening. While traditional roles like **housekeeper, front desk agent, server, bartender, cook, concierge, tour guide** etc. remain the backbone of the industry, new roles are emerging and some roles are evolving significantly. A few notable examples:
 - **Digital and IT Roles:** With technology integration, hospitality companies now employ more **IT specialists, systems analysts, and digital marketing professionals**. Hotels hire IT managers to maintain property management systems and cyber security; travel companies employ data analysts to crunch booking data and personalize offerings; restaurants might hire a social media manager to boost their online presence. These are roles that barely existed in hospitality decades ago.
 - **Revenue Management and Analytics:** Particularly in hotels, **revenue managers** who use algorithms and data to set prices (RevPAR optimization) are crucial. Similar analytical roles exist in airlines (yield management) and even restaurants (optimizing menu mix and delivery pricing). These require strong analytical and technical skills.
 - **Guest Experience and Wellness Roles:** Many upscale operators have created roles like **Guest Experience Manager** or **Chief Experience Officer**, whose job is to ensure guests have a memorable, personalized stay. They analyze feedback, coordinate special touches, and troubleshoot issues for VIPs. In resorts and cruises, roles like **Wellness Coordinator** or **Activities Director** (for fitness, kids programs, etc.) are more prominent now to cater to experience-seeking travelers.
 - **Sustainability and CSR Roles:** As sustainability becomes core to business, **Sustainability Coordinators/Managers** are increasingly employed by hotel chains and tourism boards. Their duties include implementing eco-friendly practices, tracking carbon footprint, and ensuring compliance with green certifications (Source: hospitalityinsights.ehl.edu)(Source: hospitalityinsights.ehl.edu). Similarly, **Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) managers** in hospitality firms focus on ethical practices, community engagement, and workforce diversity initiatives (Source: hospitalityinsights.ehl.edu)(Source: hospitalityinsights.ehl.edu). These roles require knowledge of sustainable technologies, reporting standards, and strong communication to lead change internally.

- **Hybrid and Remote Services:** Post-pandemic, some roles can be done remotely or in hybrid form. For example, **remote concierges or customer service agents** who assist guests via chat or phone from a centralized call center (rather than on-site) are more common. This has opened hospitality employment to people who might not be in the hotel's location. Also, **virtual event producers** and technicians have become key in the events industry to manage the online component of hybrid events.
- **High-tech Maintenance:** With more tech in properties (from IoT devices to electronic locks to AV systems), the need for skilled **maintenance technicians** with IT/electronics knowledge is higher. The classic "engineer" at a hotel now might need to troubleshoot Wi-Fi or a digital climate control system as often as plumbing or HVAC.
- **Security and Health Safety:** Roles focusing on health security (especially after COVID) and physical security have grown. Many large hotels have a **Hygiene Manager** or similar, responsible for sanitation protocols, and more on-site medical staff or partnerships for guest health needs. Also, tourist venues have beefed up security personnel training given global security concerns.
- **Creative and Social Content Roles:** Tourism boards and resorts are employing content creators, photographers, "Instagram concierges" to generate social media content that can attract visitors. These creative roles blend marketing and hospitality.

In essence, **traditional hospitality jobs are not disappearing (most are in fact in shortage), but a variety of new specialist roles are being added to the industry's employment mix.**

- **Skills in Demand:** Given the above changes, what skills are hospitality employers looking for in 2025? Both **technical and soft skills** are critical:
 - **Digital Literacy:** Almost every hospitality role now benefits from comfort with technology. Whether it's a front desk agent using a property management system, a waiter using a tablet POS, or a tour guide promoting services on social media, being **tech-savvy** is a major asset. Employers want staff who can quickly learn new software or devices. Familiarity with things like mobile check-in apps, CRM databases, or AI chatbots is increasingly noted in job descriptions (Source: [abtalent.co.uk](https://www.abtalent.co.uk)). The ability to adapt to and leverage technology to enhance guest service is a top skill for advancement.
 - **Communication and Language Skills:** **Exceptional communication** remains a timeless requirement in this people-centric industry (Source: [abtalent.co.uk](https://www.abtalent.co.uk)). Clear, polite, and effective communication with guests is fundamental for front-line staff, and teamwork

communication is vital internally. Multilingualism is a huge plus – hotels and cruise lines love staff who can speak, say, English + Chinese, or Arabic + Russian, etc., to cater to diverse guests (Source: abtalent.co.uk). Cultural sensitivity and the ability to communicate across cultures is very important, especially in cosmopolitan cities and globally staffed teams (Source: abtalent.co.uk).

- **Adaptability and Problem-Solving:** Hospitality environments are fast-paced and unpredictable. Employers highly value **adaptability** – the ability to stay calm under pressure and adjust to rapidly changing circumstances (Source: abtalent.co.uk). For instance, handling a sudden large group check-in or a last-minute event change requires quick thinking. **Problem-solving** skills are key: employees should be able to think on their feet and resolve guest issues or operational snags independently when possible (Source: abtalent.co.uk). This ties into having good judgement and critical thinking, rather than needing a manager for every decision.
- **Customer-Centric Mindset:** At the heart of hospitality is service. A **customer-centric attitude** – genuinely striving to exceed guest expectations and pay attention to details – is a skill that employers actively seek and cultivate (Source: abtalent.co.uk). This includes empathy, patience, and the **emotional intelligence** to gauge guests' moods and needs (Source: abtalent.co.uk). Emotional intelligence also helps in handling the emotional labor of service jobs (dealing with complaints, etc.) with grace.
- **Leadership and Teamwork:** With leaner teams and cross-functional roles, even junior staff often need to take on leadership or mentoring at times. **Leadership skills** (initiative, accountability, positivity) and **teamwork** capability are therefore prized at all levels (Source: abtalent.co.uk). Being able to work collaboratively with a diverse team, help train newcomers, and step up when managers are not around can set employees apart for promotion.
- **Sustainability Awareness:** As noted, **sustainability consciousness** is becoming a valued skill trait (Source: abtalent.co.uk). Employers appreciate staff who understand eco-friendly practices – for example, bartenders who minimize waste, housekeepers who know proper recycling procedures, or event planners who can organize green events. Knowledge of sustainable hospitality trends and a personal commitment to them can even be a hiring differentiator, since companies want ambassadors for their green initiatives.
- **Attention to Detail:** Especially in luxury and event sectors, **meticulous attention to detail** is critical (Source: abtalent.co.uk). A small oversight (a smudge on a glass, a misspelled guest name) can impact the perceived quality. Thus, precision and thoroughness in tasks

are emphasized in training and recruitment.

- **Cultural Competence:** With global travel, hospitality workers encounter customers from all backgrounds. Being culturally aware and respectful – e.g., understanding different dietary laws, greeting customs, or what might offend someone from a particular culture – is very valuable. It helps prevent service faux pas and enhances guest comfort.

To summarize, hospitality employers in 2025 seek a **blend of modern technical capabilities and classic interpersonal finesse**. As one UK hospitality recruiter put it, the top skills include *“tech savviness, exceptional communication, adaptability, customer-centricity, cultural awareness, leadership, sustainability consciousness, problem-solving, attention to detail, and emotional intelligence.”* (Source: [abtalent.co.uk](https://www.abtalent.co.uk)) This comprehensive skill set reflects an industry that is rapidly modernizing while still rooted in human interaction.

- **Training and Career Development:** In response to skill demands, there is a trend of more structured **training programs and career development initiatives**. Large hotel groups have management trainee programs, culinary apprenticeships are seeing a resurgence (to grow more chefs internally), and industry associations are offering certifications (like Certified Hotel Administrator, etc.). Governments too are investing in hospitality training; for example, in 2024 the Indian government highlighted tourism as a major job avenue and invested in skill development for hospitality jobs as part of its budget (Source: pib.gov.in). Additionally, more educational institutions are partnering with industry (like internships and co-op programs in hotel schools). All of this is to ensure the pipeline of skilled labor matches the evolving needs.

In essence, the hospitality labor market in 2025 is in a state of flux: **high demand, not enough supply** in many roles, which puts workers in a favorable position if they have the right skills. For employers, it's about both filling immediate vacancies and **future-proofing their workforce** by hiring for adaptability and willingness to learn, so that as technology and guest expectations change, their teams can keep up.

Challenges and Drivers Shaping the Hospitality Workforce

Several overarching **challenges and transformative factors** are shaping workforce needs in hospitality. These intersect with the trends discussed, but are important to address directly as they pose both **risks and opportunities** for the industry in 2025 and beyond:

Labor Shortages and Demographic Challenges

The **labor shortage** in hospitality has been a recurring theme and remains perhaps the *single biggest challenge* in 2025. Surveys consistently show hospitality businesses ranking staffing as their top risk. For instance, a 2025 industry report found about **48% of accommodation businesses (hotels) cite staffing issues as their biggest operational risk**, ahead of other concerns like rising costs (Source: [asianhospitality.com](https://www.asianhospitality.com))(Source: [asianhospitality.com](https://www.asianhospitality.com)). This sentiment is echoed globally. The causes are multi-faceted:

- **Post-COVID Labor Shift:** The pandemic caused an exodus of workers. Many found alternative jobs in sectors with more stable hours or remote work options (which hospitality generally cannot offer). Others left urban areas or returned to home countries. As a result, hospitality had to rebuild its workforce from a shrunken base.
- **Reputation and Conditions:** Long hours, relatively low pay (especially at entry level), and sometimes stressful working conditions (demanding guests, physical work) have historically plagued the industry's reputation as an employer. Younger generations have more career options and often shy away from perceived "tough" service jobs unless they have a passion for it. Hospitality also competes with gig economy flexibility; some potential workers prefer driving for rideshare or doing freelance work over a fixed hotel shift.
- **Demographics:** In many Western and some Asian countries, aging populations mean fewer young people entering the workforce, which disproportionately affects industries like hospitality that rely on entry-level youth labor. For example, Japan and some European countries simply have smaller cohorts of young adults to take up hospitality jobs. Conversely, countries with youthful populations (India, Philippines, parts of Africa) often supply workers abroad, but need to create good jobs at home to keep them.
- **Migration and Mobility:** Hospitality traditionally filled gaps with migrant workers (e.g., Europeans working ski seasons in Switzerland, Filipinos working on cruise ships, Latin Americans working in U.S. resorts on J-1 visas, etc.). COVID interrupted these flows and some immigration policies have tightened. For instance, the U.S. cap on H-2B seasonal work visas means many resorts can't get all the foreign staff they want. In the UK, Brexit ended free movement from the EU, cutting off a large source of hospitality workers (e.g., many Polish, Spanish, Italian workers in UK hotels left). Until migration channels are adjusted to industry needs, shortages persist.

- **Geographic Mismatch:** Often the jobs are in high-cost tourist cities (London, NYC, Paris, Dubai) but the unemployed workers are elsewhere or can't afford to live in those cities on hospitality wages. This mismatch means some jobs go unfilled while in other regions there might be surplus labor but not enough tourism to employ them.

To tackle shortages, as discussed, the industry is raising pay and promoting career growth. Some governments have intervened; for example, the Spanish government facilitated recruiting 50,000 young people to hospitality training, and Germany has looked at recruiting workers from abroad (they signed agreements with e.g. Indonesia and Vietnam to bring trainees for nursing and hospitality). **Improving job quality** is crucial – offering more full-time positions with benefits (rather than just seasonal or part-time gigs) and ensuring safe, respectful workplaces (dealing with issues like harassment, which can drive people away). There's also an emphasis on **automation to reduce labor dependence**, which we'll discuss next.

Technological Automation and Innovation

Technology and automation are both a response to and a driver of change in hospitality employment. In recent years, we have seen a swift uptick in the use of automation technologies to perform tasks that were traditionally done by people. The motivations are clear: reduce costs, improve efficiency, cater to guest preferences for tech, and mitigate labor shortfalls. Key points include:

- **Self-Service and AI:** Many routine guest service tasks are being offloaded to self-service platforms or AI. We've covered examples like self-check-in kiosks at hotels and quick-service restaurants implementing self-ordering kiosks or QR code order systems. Similarly, some airports have fully self-service check-in and bag drop for passengers. **AI chatbots** and voice assistants are handling customer inquiries – from answering common questions on hotel websites to taking room service orders via an in-room smart speaker. These AI agents are becoming more sophisticated, capable of natural language and available 24/7, which can improve guest satisfaction for basic requests. A survey noted around **14% of accommodation businesses have increased reliance on mobile apps and 5% started using AI chatbots** for customer communication, as part of coping with staffing issues (Source: [asianhospitality.com](https://www.asianhospitality.com)).
- **Robotics:** While still somewhat novelty, robots are gradually entering public-facing roles. **Robot concierges and butlers** can deliver items to guest rooms (some hotels have lobby robots that navigate elevators to bring you towels or meals). **Cleaning robots** – from vacuum robots cleaning corridors to pool cleaning robots – assist housekeeping departments. In Japan, there's the famous Henn-na "robot hotel" where dinosaur robots staffed the front desk, illustrating a

concept (though in practice human oversight was still needed) (Source: [youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com)). In restaurants, robotic arms that can fry, flip, or assemble simple dishes have been tested to support kitchen staff. Even in events, robots have been used for things like information guides or roaming beverage servers at trade shows. The adoption of robotics is uneven, but where labor is very costly or unavailable, robots become attractive. They also generate marketing buzz as a futuristic amenity.

- **Data Analytics and Personalization:** Big data and AI-driven analytics on the backend are changing how hospitality businesses deploy staff and target services. **Predictive analytics** can help forecast busy periods more accurately, so managers can schedule staff optimally (reducing both over- and under-staffing). On the marketing side, personalized offers based on data can drive demand in off-peak times, smoothing out labor needs. Hotels using CRM data may prepare personalized in-room amenities for VIP guests, which then becomes an additional task for staff (like customizing minibars or notes) – so it's a slight increase in labor per guest, but aimed at better reviews and loyalty.
- **Efficiency Tools:** A lot of technology adoption is not about replacing workers but making their jobs easier. For example, **task management apps** for hotel staff can dispatch guest requests directly to an employee's smartphone (housekeeping, maintenance, etc.), eliminating time spent walking back and forth to a base office for assignments. Digital keys let guests skip front desk lines, reducing the peak load on front desk staff so they can do other work or engage more with guests instead of paperwork. Restaurants use **kitchen display systems** to show orders to chefs instantly, improving speed and accuracy. All these boost productivity, meaning each staff member can handle more output than before.
- **Impact on Jobs:** The big question is, does automation reduce the number of hospitality jobs in the long run? So far, the evidence suggests technology in hospitality often *changes the nature* of jobs more than eliminating them. For example, when check-in kiosks are installed, a hotel might reduce the number of front desk agents per shift – but those agents may shift into more concierge-like roles, greeting guests and solving issues rather than doing clerical check-in. A restaurant might employ one less cashier due to kiosks, but it might redeploy that person to expedite food or maintain dining areas if business volume grows. In some cases, automation does allow trimming staff (some economy hotels operate at night with no front desk clerk, just automated check-in). But any such reductions are currently being counterbalanced by the overall growth in travel demand creating more jobs. It is likely in the long term some low-skill roles (like telephone operators, ticketing agents, etc.) will decline, whereas demand for tech-maintenance roles and high-touch customer service roles will rise. Essentially, hospitality may gradually shift some labor from *transactional* tasks to *interactive* or *technical oversight* tasks.

- **Training for Tech:** The infusion of tech requires training existing workers to use it. Many companies have had to invest in **digital skills training** for older staff or those not initially comfortable with new systems. The workforce, therefore, needs continuous learning agility. On the flip side, younger employees often come tech-ready but need to learn the interpersonal nuances of service – so training is twofold: tech for one group, soft skills for the other.

The bottom line is that **technology is both a solution to some workforce challenges and a factor creating new workforce needs**. The most successful hospitality organizations in 2025 are those that integrate tech in a balanced way – using it to improve service efficiency and employee satisfaction (taking away drudgery), not just to cut costs at the expense of guest experience. As the SoundHound analysis noted, *technology has moved from a “nice-to-have” to a “need-to-have”* in hospitality operations now (Source: [soundhound.com](https://www.soundhound.com)), especially in tackling labor shortages.

Post-COVID Guest Expectations and Service Delivery

Another challenge-cum-driver stems from lasting effects of the pandemic on guest expectations and how services are delivered:

- **Health and Safety Standards:** Guests in 2025 remain more conscious of cleanliness and safety. Many expect visible hygiene practices – e.g., housekeeping on demand, sanitized rooms, maybe contactless services if desired. This means hospitality operations must maintain rigorous cleaning regimens (increasing housekeeping workload per room in some cases) and training staff in health safety protocols. Some hotels continue to space out room usage or keep buffers to allow deep cleaning. Also, staff have to be trained to handle situations like a guest falling ill (not necessarily COVID, could be anything) swiftly and with proper protocol. These add layers of responsibility and sometimes stress for employees, who must enforce things like any remaining mask rules or vaccination checks where applicable (though by 2025 most destinations have dropped such requirements).
- **Service Customization:** After the pause in travel, guests returning often have higher expectations for personalized and exceptional service – they want their trip to be “worth it.” This puts pressure on staff to go the extra mile. Combined with staffing shortages, this can be challenging – fewer staff must deliver more personalized attention. It requires smarter service design (using technology or streamlining tasks) so staff can focus on high-value interactions. It also raises the bar for staff training in **soft skills and emotional intelligence** to cater to guests who might be more anxious or demanding.

- **Surges and Seasonality:** Post-COVID travel patterns have seen some unpredictability – sudden surges during holiday “revenge travel” periods, etc. Some destinations have struggled with over-tourism at peaks (e.g., a European city getting too many visitors at once in summer 2022, overwhelming hospitality staff). Managing these spikes without burning out staff is a challenge. It emphasizes the need for flexible staffing models (keeping a pool of on-call or gig workers, for instance, or multi-skilling staff to redeploy them as needed).
- **Hybrid Events and Remote Work Trends:** The line between business and leisure travel blurred with the rise of “workcations” and remote workers traveling. Hotels have adapted by offering co-working spaces and better Wi-Fi, etc. Serving these “bleisure” travelers requires staff to have knowledge of both leisure and business amenities. It’s a chance to get mid-week occupancy up (good for jobs), but also means staff might handle requests like setting up a private office space or arranging long-term stays, which differ from normal tourist needs. Similarly, meetings and conferences are coming back, but often with a virtual component – hotel AV and conference services teams must handle complex tech setups now, often requiring outside specialists or upskilling of in-house staff.

In short, COVID’s legacy is an environment where **service quality and safety can’t be taken for granted** – they must be delivered consistently even with lean teams, requiring smart management and resilient employees.

Sustainability and Environmental Factors

Sustainability is not just a buzzword but a significant driver altering how the hospitality workforce operates:

- Many hospitality companies have made **sustainability commitments (ESG goals)** that directly impact operations. Examples: reducing single-use plastics (so staff must implement new practices like refillable dispensers), cutting energy usage (engineering teams focusing on energy management systems), sourcing local food (chefs working with new suppliers, which can change procurement jobs), and aiming for green building certifications (affecting maintenance routines).
- **Sustainable operations often require staff training and sometimes new roles.** As mentioned, roles like **Sustainability Coordinator or Green Team Lead** are appearing (Source: hospitalityinsights.ehl.edu). But even without a dedicated role, existing staff must carry out sustainable practices. For instance, kitchen staff need to implement food waste reduction

programs (tracking waste, composting), front desk staff might need to explain the hotel's green initiatives to curious guests, housekeeping might use different (eco-friendly) cleaning chemicals and methods. This is a broad upskilling of the workforce in environmental awareness.

- **Consumer demand for green travel** is rising, and younger employees also care about their employer's sustainability values. Demonstrating leadership in sustainability can help attract talent who want meaningful work. It's noted that hospitality employers now look for candidates with a "*sustainability consciousness*" – individuals who naturally support eco-friendly practices (Source: abtalent.co.uk). These employees can be champions in their teams for green initiatives.
- **Climate change and resilience:** There's a practical side too – climate events (heatwaves, hurricanes, etc.) are a threat to hospitality. The workforce in some regions must be trained in emergency response and resilience. Hotels in hurricane zones routinely train staff on evacuation procedures, etc. If climate change leads to new regulations (e.g., limits on water use in drought areas), staff have to adapt operations around those (like linen change policies). Some destinations might even face a need to retrain hospitality workers for new roles if climate impacts tourism flows (for example, ski resort employees learning summer tourism skills due to shorter winters).
- On a larger scale, sustainability drives **innovation in tourism offerings** – e.g., eco-tourism, community-based tourism. These often require specialized knowledge: **eco-tour guides** with biology knowledge, or community liaisons who can work with local populations. Training locals in hospitality in sustainable ways (guiding with minimal impact, etc.) is an employment growth area in some developing regions.
- Many international hotel companies have signed on to carbon reduction targets that imply significant changes by 2030. We can expect *even more integration of sustainability goals into job descriptions and KPIs* for managers in the near future.

In summary, **sustainability is both a moral imperative and a business strategy** that is reshaping hospitality jobs. Employees in 2025 are not only service providers but also stewards of environmental and social responsibility on behalf of their organizations.

Conclusion and Outlook

The **hospitality workforce landscape in 2025** is marked by vigorous demand and transformational change. Globally, the sector is adding jobs at a rapid clip – millions of new opportunities as travel, tourism, and dining flourish again. Regions like the Middle East and Asia are driving much of this

growth, while established markets in the U.S. and Europe are solidifying their recoveries. There is **optimism in the industry's trajectory**: by all accounts, travel and hospitality will continue to be a major engine of job creation over the next decade, with WTTC predicting the sector could employ **over 460 million people by 2035 worldwide** (Source: [wttc.org](https://www.wttc.org)) if current trends hold. Hospitality remains a gateway for youth employment, a vital source of income in developing nations, and a sector where entrepreneurial individuals can rise quickly through the ranks due to the abundance of roles and clear skills progression.

Yet, the industry also faces a **reckoning with its old models**. Labor shortages have exposed the vulnerabilities in how hospitality has managed human resources. The current scenario is compelling employers to **improve job quality, embrace innovation, and invest in people** more than ever before. Many are learning that to deliver the service excellence guests expect, they must offer employment conditions that meet workers' expectations. This includes competitive pay, work-life balance, clear career paths, and a positive workplace culture. These improvements, while increasing costs in the short run, can pay off through higher retention, better guest satisfaction, and more resilient operations. In a sense, there is a drive to make hospitality jobs more **sustainable** (in the human sense) just as there is to make operations environmentally sustainable.

Automation and technology will undoubtedly continue to reshape the workforce, but the consensus is that hospitality will always be a people business at its core. The roles may evolve – fewer manual transactions, more curated experiences – but the need for **warm, competent, and empathetic staff** will remain a key differentiator. As one industry CEO put it, *"We can deploy all the chatbots and robots we want, but at the end of the day, people are at the heart of the hospitality industry"* (Source: [asianhospitality.com](https://www.asianhospitality.com)). Success will come from empowering those people with the right tools and training, and by **"prioritizing their well-being from recruitment through to promotion"** (Source: [asianhospitality.com](https://www.asianhospitality.com))(Source: [asianhospitality.com](https://www.asianhospitality.com)), as experts advise.

Finally, external factors like economic swings, geopolitical events, or health crises remain wildcards that can rapidly impact travel demand and thus employment. The experiences of the pandemic have prepared the industry to be more agile in reallocating and retraining staff if needed. The push for **smarter tourism management** – doing more with less impact – is growing (Source: [wttc.org](https://www.wttc.org)) (Source: [wttc.org](https://www.wttc.org)). This will call for a workforce that is not only skilled in traditional hospitality, but also in **innovation, sustainability, and resilience**.

In conclusion, the hospitality sector in 2025 offers abundant opportunities for employees – from entry-level to highly specialized roles – amid a climate of growth and change. Those employees, in turn, are the linchpin of the industry's recovery and future. By addressing the challenges of labor supply, investing in skills, and harnessing technology responsibly, the global hospitality industry

aims to not just meet the **soaring demand for its services**, but to elevate the quality and sustainability of the jobs that make those services possible. The road ahead points to a hospitality workforce that is **more skilled, more valued, and more adaptable**, ensuring that this vibrant sector continues to thrive economically while delivering the memorable experiences that travelers and guests seek.

Sources:

- WTTC – Global and regional tourism economic impact data (Source: [wttc.org](https://www.wttc.org))(Source: [wttc.org](https://www.wttc.org)) (Source: [wttc.org](https://www.wttc.org))
- EHL Hospitality Insights – Industry recovery statistics and jobs outlook (Source: hospitalityinsights.ehl.edu)(Source: hospitalityinsights.ehl.edu)
- AHLA (American Hotel & Lodging Association) – U.S. hotel staffing survey, 2025 (Source: ahla.com)(Source: ahla.com)
- National Restaurant Association – U.S. restaurant industry forecast for 2025 (Source: restaurant.org)(Source: restaurant.org)
- SoundHound/Restaurant Business – Restaurant labor cost and technology trends, 2024–25 (Source: soundhound.com)(Source: soundhound.com)
- Asian Hospitality/Expert Market – Accommodation industry staffing risks and responses (Source: asianhospitality.com)(Source: asianhospitality.com)
- U.S. DOL/Bureau of Labor Statistics – Leisure and hospitality employment projections (2024 report)blog.dol.govblog.dol.gov
- WTTC Press Releases – U.S. tourism jobs and spending, Europe tourism jobs outlook (Source: [wttc.org](https://www.wttc.org))(Source: [wttc.org](https://www.wttc.org))
- Economic Times Travel (India) – India tourism job creation projections (Source: travel.economictimes.indiatimes.com)
- Workstaff App – Event industry employment and technology adoption stats (Source: workstaff.app)(Source: workstaff.app)
- EHL Insights – Sustainability in hospitality careers (in-demand green jobs) (Source: hospitalityinsights.ehl.edu)(Source: hospitalityinsights.ehl.edu)

- AB Talent (UK) – Top skills hospitality employers seek in 2024 (Source: abtalent.co.uk)(Source: abtalent.co.uk)
- Additional data from industry news (Hotel News Resource, HospitalityNet) and organizational reports as cited above.

Tags: hospitality industry, labor market analysis, workforce planning, job growth forecast, tourism economics, labor shortages, wttc

About ClearlyIP

ClearlyIP Inc. — Company Profile (June 2025)

1. Who they are

ClearlyIP is a privately-held unified-communications (UC) vendor headquartered in Appleton, Wisconsin, with additional offices in Canada and a globally distributed workforce. Founded in 2019 by veteran FreePBX/Asterisk contributors, the firm follows a "build-and-buy" growth strategy, combining in-house R&D with targeted acquisitions (e.g., the 2023 purchase of Voneto's EPlatform UCaaS). Its mission is to "design and develop the world's most respected VoIP brand" by delivering secure, modern, cloud-first communications that reduce cost and boost collaboration, while its vision focuses on unlocking the full potential of open-source VoIP for organisations of every size. The leadership team collectively brings more than 300 years of telecom experience.

2. Product portfolio

- **Cloud Solutions** – Including *Clearly Cloud* (flagship UCaaS), **SIP Trunking**, **SendFax.to** cloud fax, **ClusterPBX OEM**, **Business Connect** managed cloud PBX, and **EPlatform** multitenant UCaaS. These provide fully hosted voice, video, chat and collaboration with 100+ features, per-seat licensing, geo-redundant PoPs, built-in call-recording and mobile/desktop apps.
- **On-Site Phone Systems** – Including CIP PBX appliances (FreePBX pre-installed), ClusterPBX Enterprise, and Business Connect (on-prem variant). These offer local survivability for compliance-sensitive sites; appliances start at 25 extensions and scale into HA clusters.

- **IP Phones & Softphones** – Including CIP SIP Desk-phone Series (CIP-25x/27x/28x), fully white-label branding kit, and *Clearly Anywhere* softphone (iOS, Android, desktop). Features zero-touch provisioning via Cloud Device Manager or FreePBX "Clearly Devices" module; Opus, HD-voice, BLF-rich colour LCDs.
 - **VoIP Gateways** – Including Analog FXS/FXO models, VoIP Fail-Over Gateway, POTS Replacement (for copper sun-set), and 2-port T1/E1 digital gateway. These bridge legacy endpoints or PSTN circuits to SIP; fail-over models keep 911 active during WAN outages.
 - **Emergency Alert Systems** – Including **CodeX** room-status dashboard, **Panic Button**, and **Silent Intercom**. This K-12-focused mass-notification suite integrates with CIP PBX or third-party FreePBX for Alyssa's-Law compliance.
 - **Hospitality** – Including **ComXchange** PBX plus PMS integrations, hardware & software assurance plans. Replaces aging Mitel/NEC hotel PBXs; supports guest-room phones, 911 localisation, check-in/out APIs.
 - **Device & System Management** – Including **Cloud Device Manager** and **Update Control (Mirror)**. Provides multi-vendor auto-provisioning, firmware management, and secure FreePBX mirror updates.
 - **XCast Suite** – Including Hosted PBX, SIP trunking, carrier/call-centre solutions, SOHO plans, and XCL mobile app. Delivers value-oriented, high-volume VoIP from ClearlyIP's carrier network.
-

3. Services

- **Telecom Consulting & Custom Development** – FreePBX/Asterisk architecture reviews, mergers & acquisitions diligence, bespoke application builds and Tier-3 support.
 - **Regulatory Compliance** – E911 planning plus **Kari's Law**, **Ray Baum's Act** and **Alyssa's Law** solutions; automated dispatchable location tagging.
 - **STIR/SHAKEN Certificate Management** – Signing services for Originating Service Providers, helping customers combat robocalling and maintain full attestation.
 - **Attestation Lookup Tool** – Free web utility to identify a telephone number's service-provider code and SHAKEN attestation rating.
 - **FreePBX® Training** – Three-day administrator boot camps (remote or on-site) covering installation, security hardening and troubleshooting.
 - **Partner & OEM Programs** – Wholesale SIP trunk bundles, white-label device programs, and ClusterPBX OEM licensing.
-

4. Executive management (June 2025)

- **CEO & Co-Founder: Tony Lewis** – Former CEO of Schmooze Com (FreePBX sponsor); drives vision, acquisitions and channel network.

- **CFO & Co-Founder: Luke Duquaine** – Ex-Sangoma software engineer; oversees finance, international operations and supply-chain.
 - **CTO & Co-Founder: Bryan Walters** – Long-time Asterisk contributor; leads product security and cloud architecture.
 - **Chief Revenue Officer: Preston McNair** – 25+ years in channel development at Sangoma & Hargray; owns sales, marketing and partner success.
 - **Chief Hospitality Strategist: Doug Schwartz** – Former 360 Networks CEO; guides hotel vertical strategy and PMS integrations.
 - **Chief Business Development Officer: Bob Webb** – 30+ years telco experience (Nsight/Cellcom); cultivates ILEC/CLEC alliances for Clearly Cloud.
 - **Chief Product Officer: Corey McFadden** – Founder of Voneto; architect of EPlatform UCaaS, now shapes ClearlyIP product roadmap.
 - **VP Support Services: Lorne Gaetz** (appointed Jul 2024) – Former Sangoma FreePBX lead; builds 24x7 global support organisation.
 - **VP Channel Sales: Tracy Liu** (appointed Jun 2024) – Channel-program veteran; expands MSP/VAR ecosystem worldwide.
-

5. Differentiators

- **Open-Source DNA:** Deep roots in the FreePBX/Asterisk community allow rapid feature releases and robust interoperability.
 - **White-Label Flexibility:** Brandable phones and ClusterPBX OEM let carriers and MSPs present a fully bespoke UCaaS stack.
 - **End-to-End Stack:** From hardware endpoints to cloud, gateways and compliance services, ClearlyIP owns every layer, simplifying procurement and support.
 - **Education & Safety Focus:** Panic Button, CodeX and e911 tool-sets position the firm strongly in K-12 and public-sector markets.
-

In summary

ClearlyIP delivers a comprehensive, modular UC ecosystem—cloud, on-prem and hybrid—backed by a management team with decades of open-source telephony pedigree. Its blend of carrier-grade infrastructure, white-label flexibility and vertical-specific solutions (hospitality, education, emergency-compliance) makes it a compelling option for ITSPs, MSPs and multi-site enterprises seeking modern, secure and cost-effective communications.

DISCLAIMER

This document is provided for informational purposes only. No representations or warranties are made regarding the accuracy, completeness, or reliability of its contents. Any use of this information is at your own risk. ClearlyIP shall not be liable for any damages arising from the use of this document. This content may include material generated with assistance from artificial intelligence tools, which may contain errors or inaccuracies. Readers should verify critical information independently. All product names, trademarks, and registered trademarks mentioned are property of their respective owners and are used for identification purposes only. Use of these names does not imply endorsement. This document does not constitute professional or legal advice. For specific guidance related to your needs, please consult qualified professionals.