

WP2: National Report Spain

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1.0 Introduction

Faculty of Tourism (FT) at University of Girona undertook a review of national policies in Spain, focusing mainly in the region of Catalonia, in relation to soft skills in the workplace. Moreover, FT content analyzed the curricula of tourism higher education institutions (HEI) in Spain.

FT held in-depth interviews and a focus group discussion from May to September of 2018, respectively. FT also administered two survey questionnaires, both from June to September of 2018, to former T&H students and to current undergraduate students in T&H.



The face-to-face interviews (Appendix 1) in June and September 2018 involved two representatives from the T&H sector (one from the accommodation sector and one from the tourism office sector) and two HEI T&H instructors.

The focus group (Appendix 2) involved, as well, representatives of the T&H sector and HEI educators. One of the focus group was held in May 2018 with the participation of different stakeholders involved in tourism during the celebration of a tourism event in Girona; the other focus group was held in September 2018 with different representatives from the HEI from different universities, mainly Catalan.

Finally, FT surveyed former and current T&H undergraduate students via two e-surveys (Appendix 3). Through in-depth interviews, focus group, and two survey questionnaires, the FT gathered information to help T&H faculty, administrators, consultants, and industry practitioners in Spain narrow the soft skills gap between the requirements of the T&H Industry and Tourism Curricula adopted by HEI's. The in-depth interviews, focus group, and survey questionnaires were conducted as part of the FT involvement in the INCOME Tourism project.

2.0 Findings

2.1 Overview of National Policies on Soft Skills

The construction of the European Space of Higher Education surfaces from a series of conferences of the responsible ministers of the higher education of the main European countries. Especially important was the Statement of Bologna in which, in 1999, the responsible ministers of 29 European countries established the common frame for this reform of the European higher education. The main aims were focused on (1) Structure of titles, (2) an international system of credits, (3) promote the mobility, (4) foster cooperation to guarantee the quality and (5) promote a European dimension of the higher education system.

The main disposals linked to the aims of the EEES split of the Organic Law of Universities (LOU) that, in its first edition in 2001, in article 87, says that will adopt the necessary measures for the full integration of the Spanish system in the European space of higher education.

This law also argues that one of the main aims of the university politics consists in the promotion and the evaluation of the quality to national and international level and, for this reason; in 2002 it was created the National Agency for the Evaluation of the Quality and Accreditation (ANECA). The purpose of ANECA, as it establishes the law, is to contribute to the measurement of the performance of the higher education by means of reports of evaluation and others that bring to the certification and the accreditation of the different program studies. The Agency also treats to reinforce the transparency and the comparison between studies as means for the promotion and the evaluation of the quality. ANECA is member of the European Association for the Guarantee of the Quality in the Higher Education (ENQA).



The first concrete step is the definition of the European system of credits (Real Decreto 1125/2003). It defines credit as the unit of measure that represents the quantity of work of the student to fulfil the aims of the study program. Article 4.3 specifies that the number of hours must include the number of hours of work required including teaching, theoretical or practical, the hours of study, hours devoted to the realisation of seminars, works, practical or projects, and the number of hours needed for the preparation and realisation of the exams and evaluation proofs. The average number of hours fixed is between 25 and 30 hours by credit, and each student will take between 36 and 40 weeks every academic course. This same decree, establishes the qualification system, including quantitative and qualitative qualification.

In the next grid we can see the different laws adapted by the Spanish Government.

Real Decreto 1509/2008	Regulation of the Register of Universities, Centres and Degrees
Real Decreto 1892/2008	Access conditions and process of entering the public universities as regulated
Real Decreto 1393/2007,	Ordination of Official University Studies
Ley Orgánica 4/2007,	Modification of Ley Orgánica 6/2001, de Universidades.
Real Decreto 285/2004	Establish the rules for recognising and validation of foreign studies. Modified by Real Decreto 309/2005.
Real Decreto 1125/2003	Establishes the European system of credits and the evaluation system in the HEI
Real Decreto 1044/2003	Establishes the procedure for having the “European” Degree as a complement of the “national” Degree
Ley Orgánica 6/2001	de Universidades

Legislation approved in Spain for the development of the EEES

The new Law of Universities establishes, in article 37, the structure of the official degrees. HEI studies will structure in three cycles: Degree, Master and Doctorate. One of the main aims is to focus on the acquisition of competences by the students, without excluding the traditional approach based in contents and teaching hours.

Undergraduate programs (Bachelor program or first level) will have the purpose of obtaining a general education in one or several disciplines by the student, oriented to the preparation for the exercise of professional activities. They will give rise to the title of Graduated in “T” by University “U” (where T is the name of the title and U the university). Each of these titles will belong to a branch of knowledge: (a) Arts and Humanities; (b) Sciences; (c) Health Sciences; (d) Social and Legal Sciences and (e) Engineering and Architecture. The branch of knowledge will be indicated in the European Supplement to the Title.

Undergraduate study plans will have 240 ECTS credits (unless determined by community standards), of which at least 60 ECTS credits will be basic training (36 related to the subjects of the Branch) in subjects with a minimum of 6 ECTS credits distributed in the first two courses. In the structure, a maximum of 60 ECTS credits of external internships can be considered and all the degrees will conclude with the elaboration and defense of a final project of between 6 and 30 ECTS credits and it must be oriented to the evaluation of the competences associated to the Title.

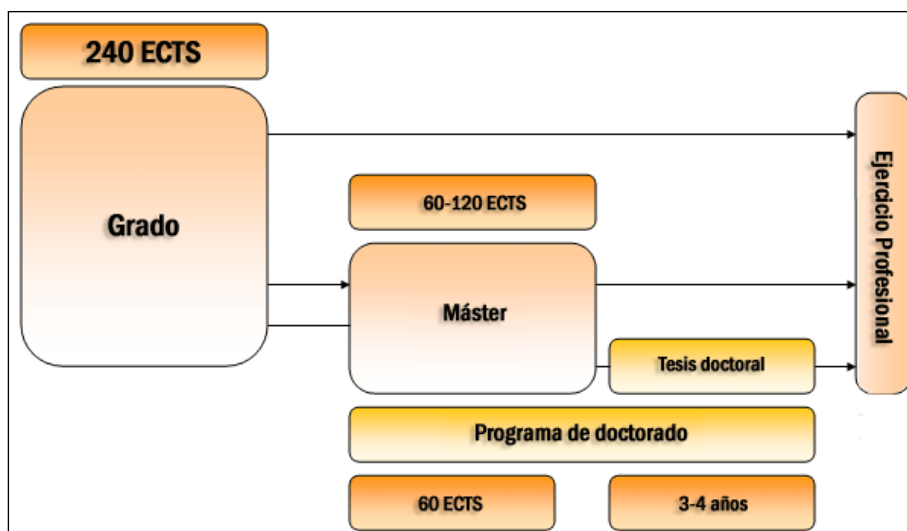
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Regarding this fixed establishment of 240 ECTS credits has been debated a lot. Therefore, on the website developed by the Ministry to explain the Bologna process, the question has been raised: Why do the degrees in Spain last four years instead of three? In response, in addition of the fact that there are other countries that have opted for this model, propose five arguments among which can be highlighted: (1) for greater adequacy to other systems of importance to Spain (USA, Latin America, Asia, ..); (2) that in Spain the university is accessed at 18 instead of at 19; and (3) to allow greater presence of practical lessons, external practices and mobility.

On the other hand, the teachings of Master (Bachelor program or second level of ISCED) are aimed at the acquisition by the student of advanced training, specialized or multidisciplinary, oriented to academic or professional specialization, or to promote the initiation in research tasks. The overcoming of the teachings will give right to the obtaining of the title of University Master in T by the university U (where T is the name of the title and U the university).

These studies will have a load of between 60 and 120 ECTS credits and will conclude with the elaboration and defense of the Final Master's Project of between 6 and 30 ECTS credits.



Spanish Structure of the EEES

(Source: <http://www.educacion.es/educacion/universidades/educacion-superior-universitaria/>)

Once the curricula for obtaining official degrees have been drawn up by each university, they must be verified by the University Council (in which ANECA participates) in accordance with the established rules. Once authorized, it will be registered in the RUCT (Register of Universities, Centers and Titles). The official university degrees must undergo an evaluation procedure every 6 years from the date of their registration in the RUCT in order to maintain their accreditation.

Regarding soft skills, they are not mentioned in all these processes (it's referred to competences in general) but there are several authors that have analyzed in depth the situation. There are several works that intend to define which are the competences that develop (or should develop) a university student (Garcia, 2006; Instituto Tecnológico de Monterrey, 2001; Livas, 2000; Marcelo, 2001, 2005; Poblete & Garcia, 2006). The most important ones are:

Responsibility: Ability to establish a commitment or obligation in which a student is to respond of their actions. University students are responsible, in a broad sense, from the moment they decide to enroll in a university degree, since it is not a compulsory education stage. Students should be responsible for their own learning, understanding this concept as the ability to make decisions, weighing and assuming the possible consequences.

Self-confidence: Ability to trust one's own possibilities. The student who develops this ability is able to feel that he can learn with his effort, with his ability, with his own work. In the university context this competence can be promoted or developed through all those techniques in which the student sees his effort rewarded, in which he obtains the expected results. It is very important that the teacher assess the evolution of student learning and the development of their skills in each of the techniques used.

Problem solving ability: Ability to make decisions in a situation where there are two or more alternatives to achieve a certain goal. This capacity requires a series of implicit capacities such as the identification or understanding of the problem, the identification or generation of possible alternatives, the deliberation on the most appropriate option, the planning or adoption of the decision and finally the execution.

Communication skills (Interpersonal comprehension): Ability to understand and be understood by speakers of a linguistic community, which implies more specific competences (linguistic, pragmatic, psycholinguistic and sociolinguistic). This capability includes the mastering of different processes (encoding and decoding) and their application to different speakers and contexts. It is convenient to differentiate between the ability to express and the ability to understand the interlocutor, as the two axes that make up the communication process between the sender and receiver.

Flexibility: Capacity to adapt to different situations, contexts or people, in which a minimum level of success must be obtained, according to the proposed objectives. The university student possesses this competence insofar as he is able to apply different skills or strategies to adapt to the different ways of teaching of the teachers with whom he interacts, when he is capable of performing several tasks at once, without too much effort, etc.

Teamwork: Conduct of a group as a whole, or behavior of an individual insofar as it is influenced by their belonging to a group. It assumes the ability to organize various situations or problems that arise, the ability to feel belonging to a group and participate in the proposed tasks.

Initiative: Availability to take on and carry out different activities. Ability to persist in the execution of an activity or in the achievement of an objective despite the obstacles that may arise. The student with initiative is able to give more than the teacher demands. He is able to take advantage of opportunities and anticipate problems that may arise.

Innovation / creativity: Ability to create new possibilities or solutions to a problem, according to new or non-conventional lines. When a university student goes beyond the analysis of a problem and tries to implement a solution, a change occurs, the ability to



innovate, to create something new or to transform existing possibilities is being implemented, with a new approach.

2.2 Content Analysis of HEIs' Tourism Curricula

Tourism as a subject of university education is not incorporated into the university until 1997. Previously, and since 1980 there was the title of Technician in Business and Tourist Activities (TEAT) approved by Real Decreto 865/80 of April 14. This title (predictably provisional and experimental), remained in force until it was replaced by the Diploma in Tourism.

In the decree of approval of the TEAT the transformations in the field of tourism and the need to adapt the teachings to the new reality to strengthen the image of the country were recognized. The objective was to improve the international role of tourism through the improvement of the qualification of the staff of T&H.

The main objective of the TEAT was to learn how to manage a company well, obviating certain humanistic knowledge. The new technician had to be an effective entrepreneur, rather than a tourist technician; and had to know how to face the difficulties of the economic structure of the late seventies. With more stringent and concrete conditions of access, to obtain the degree, three academic courses must be passed, as well as a Final Evaluation Test (according to the Order of March 22, 1983) made by the Official Tourism Schools. In the year 1980, at the time of the implantation of the TEAT plan, there were 37 schools attached to the EOT of Madrid (Official Tourism School).

In a synthetic way we can summarize the evolution in the following chronological data:

1957	Creation of private tourism studies by the Spanish Center for New Professions in Madrid (CENP)
1963	The Official School of Tourism is created and the TET (Technician of Tourist Companies) begins to be organized
1980	The Title of TEAT (Technician of Companies and Tourist Activities) is established with Real Decreto 865/1980
1989	The control of the TEAT studies is decentralized, creating other official schools starting in Catalonia with the creation of the Official School of Tourism of Girona.
1996	Tourism studies are no longer dependent on tourism departments and depend on universities. First with the definition of the Diploma in Tourism Companies and Activities (university degree bridge between the TEAT and the Diploma in Tourism) (Real Decreto 259/1996) The core subjects for the new university degree of Diploma in Tourism are fixed (Real Decreto 604/1996)
2001	First titles of second cycle in anticipation of the future degree
2003	The role of official tourism schools disappears Some university incorporates the first doctorates in tourism



2004	Guidelines (Libro Blanco) for the degree in tourism of ANECA is presented
2006	First university masters in the context of the new EHEA (some followed by a doctorate)
2008	Start of the first Graduate Promotions in Tourism within the framework of the new EHEA

It is important to note that with the new degrees among which tourism studies are scheduled, there will be no impediment for the postgraduate program to contain university masters of tourism specialization and, if they meet the research requirements, give rise to doctorates in tourism for students who have completed all their training in subjects related to tourism. This simple fact had not been achieved until now and this fact is especially shocking in a country where tourism has an importance strongly contrasted both by its contribution in GDP (above 10%) and by the number of arrivals and departures of tourists.

The main change in tourism studies is marked by the analysis that has been developed of the needs of professionals in the sector. Both the competences and the study programs are more adapted to the real needs of future tourism professionals. This process, which is described below, has consisted essentially of two phases: a first of joint reflection among all the universities with the support of the sector and the students, and a second phase developed by each university.

To boost the transformation to the EHEA, ANECA launched in 2003 a process for the development of the so-called "white papers" for the new university degrees. Among the projects that were carried out in the first phase, the one corresponding to tourism studies was elaborated.

In the elaboration of this White Paper of Degree in Tourism of ANECA, the 47 universities (representing 67 schools or faculties) that had the title of Diploma in Tourism at that time participated. This working group discussed in depth the training needs of the tourism sector, as well as the necessary training profiles. The main element of debate was focused on establishing the competences that should mark the academic curriculum of the student of tourism.

During its preparation, three major work phases were considered (ANECA, 2004). The first one focused on the evaluation of the current situation of tourism studies. Based on the study of the different European degrees in tourism, the implementation of the current Diploma in Tourism (and the recent history of tourism studies) and the study of job placement of the Diploma in Tourism, the radiography of the situation was obtained current.

The second part was focused on the professional profiles and the study of the necessary competences for each profile, starting the analysis in the transversal competences to get to validate and approve a consensual proposal of specific competences for this title.

Finally, in the third phase, based on the information gathered in the two previous phases, the title of degree in tourism was defined based on some objectives and some training strategies. As a result, a distribution in blocks of subjects by competences is proposed.

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Of all of them it seems important to highlight three important aspects that have been used as a reference in many of the new degrees in tourism proposed by Spanish universities: (1) professional profiles, (2) competencies and (3) the scheme of blocks of subjects by competences.

Definition of the professionals profiles

A determining aspect to define the professional profiles was the constant confusion between the profiles coming from the training cycles (which often propose professional opportunities beyond the competences that are acquired in it) and the profiles with university character. This confusion, which is still very present in the sector, often generates disagreements in the apparent training received by a graduate in the face of the need for basic professionals. The selection of the profiles aimed to promote university tourism training as the main axis for the improvement of the tourism industry. Four large blocks were considered and for each of these levels a list of possible professional outings that determined them was made.

Corporate and institutional management	Professionals who are responsible for top management or who do not base their work on the operations management.
Direction of operations	The set of professionals who have a direct responsibility in their organization linked to a specific area of the same. Unlike the previous one, it is directly related to the different exploitation units and, therefore, to the usual operations of the tourism sector.
Intermediate positions	We can find a wide range of professionals with different levels of responsibility. Its task covers a specific area of competence from which they develop their activity and supervise, as the case may be, the basic personnel.
Basic personnel	The basic personnel mainly includes professionals, normally qualified, who are responsible for the direct provision of services. In most cases, the management component is low, although they require a certain specialization.

Levels of vertical segmentation (Source: adapted from LBGT-ANECA-2004)



Levels of responsibility of the titled (Source: LBGT-ANECA, 2004)

At the training level, in general, for the last block, the Middle and Higher Level Training Cycles have been developed. To cover the intermediate positions and part of the management positions of operations, we have the Degree in Tourism. For the rest of positions of management of operations and corporate and institutional management, the need for the second cycle in tourism covered by the university masters was raised.

The detail of the professional figures is marked by a horizontal segmentation that identifies the main sectors and sub-sectors that tourism training should cover. At the end of the process, 7 different areas were established with homogeneous profiles

Field	Description	N. professional figures
Accommodation	It covers all hotel and non-hotel establishments, including camping, rural residences, apartment rentals, holiday clubs and many more. It is a very varied field where professional profiles can change, not only because of the type of establishment, but also because of its category and specialization.	9
Restaurant	It includes the work related to the management of the different types of restaurants, as well as catering companies of collectives or catering companies, as well as in the business units corresponding to the field of accommodation.	7

Intermediation	It includes tour operators, wholesalers, travel agencies (receivers and broadcasters) and other types of tourist intermediaries such as CRS (reservation centers), independent intermediaries, etc.	8
Transports and Logistical	Tourism by definition implies a displacement. Thus, we group in this area all those companies related to transport, whether air, sea, river, road or rail. In addition we include those of logistic services. In this same field, car rental companies are included because of their link with transport, although their management differs from previous ones.	9
DMO	It includes all those institutions, generally of a public nature, that, through various instruments, are in charge of defining a tourist destination at a local, regional, autonomous and national level and establishing the bases for their management, planning and promotion.	9
Products and Tourist Activities	It includes what is usually called complementary offer. This area is often framed within everything related to culture, leisure and recreation.	13
Training, Investigation and Consulting	It incorporates the needs of professors for the different levels, whether for the training cycles, University and for the, increasingly important, continuing education. This same area includes the needs of professionals both to participate in projects to support companies and institutions, as well as to obtain real data on tourism and its future prospects.	3

Professional Fields of the tourism (Source: adapted of LBGT-ANECA-2004)

Competences to be developed in the Tourism Studies

Once the delimitation of the professional figures for the areas mentioned in the previous point was made, for each field their competences were proposed. As a starting point, these competences came from academic proposals and the needs set for the agents of each sub-sector.

A list with 32 specific competences was created for which a definition based on two epigraphs was developed: Disciplinary knowledge (knowledge) and professional knowledge (know-how). To these specific competences, finally, 3 transversal competences were united.

The specific competences in the Degree of Tourism are:

1. Understanding of the tourism principles in the different dimensions: geographic and spatial, social, cultural, juridical, politic and economic.
2. Analyze the economic dimension of tourism.
3. Understand the dynamic character of tourism and the new leisure society.
4. Know the main political and administrative tourism structures.
5. Convert an empirical problem into a research objective and elaborate conclusions.
6. Marked customer service orientation
7. Recognize the main tourism agents

8. Evaluate tourism potentials and do the prospective analysis of their exploitation
9. Analyze, synthesize and critically summarize the economic-patrimonial information of tourism organizations
10. Manage financial resources
11. Define objectives, strategies and commercial policies.
12. Direct and manage the different types of tourism organizations
13. Manage communication techniques.
14. Understand the legal framework that regulates tourism activities
15. Work in English as a foreign language
16. Communicate orally and in writing in a second foreign language
17. Communicate orally and in writing in a third foreign language.
18. Identify and manage spaces and tourist destinations
19. Manage the tourism territory in accordance with the principles of sustainability
20. Know the operating procedure of the accommodation sector
21. Know the operating procedure in the field of food and restaurants
22. Knowledge about the operating procedures of the intermediation companies
23. Analyze the impacts generated by tourism
24. Analyze and use information and communication technologies in the different areas of tourism
25. Understand a public plan and the opportunities that are derived for the private sector
26. Plan and manage the human resources
27. Understand the functioning of destinations, tourist structures and their business sectors worldwide
28. Know the objectives, strategy and public planning instruments
29. Work in different sociocultural environments
30. Know the initiatives to enhance the value of cultural heritage
31. Understand the characteristics of cultural heritage management
32. Detect needs for technical planning of infrastructures and tourist facilities

A part from this list, 3 transversal competences was added, related to creativity, entrepreneurial spirit and quality. The transversal competences are divided into instrumentals ones, personal ones and systemic ones.

Instrumental competences refer to:

- Capacity for analysis and synthesis
- Organization and planning capacity
- Oral and written communication in native language
- Knowledge of a foreign language
- Computer skills related to the field of study
- Ability to manage information
- Problem resolution
- Decision making

The personal competences are:

- Teamwork
- Team work of an interdisciplinary nature
- I work in an international context
- Habits in interpersonal relationships



- Recognition of diversity and multiculturalism
- Critical thinking
- Ethical commitment

And, the systemic ones are:

- Autonomous Learning
- Adaptation to new situations
- Creativity
- Leadership
- Knowledge of other cultures and customs
- Initiative and entrepreneurial spirit
- Motivation for quality
- Sensitivity to environmental issues

We can see that although they are not mentioned as soft skill, many of them coincide with some of the project outcomes.

Degree structure

A structure articulated in Blocks of Subjects by Competences is also proposed. Among these Blocks are grouped the basic axes of operation of the tourist system and with them the skills that the profiles that are intended to cover, as shown in the following table.

Management of tourist services companies	Know the basics of service companies. Application of the basic principles of the management of the different functional areas of the tourist companies, as well as the adaptation to the factors that determine the changes of their environment.
Fundamentals and dimensions of tourism	General principles of tourism identifying the different agents involved in the configuration of tourism activity, its analysis, evolution, impacts and potential.
Accommodation and restoration management	Exploitation and management of the different lodging and catering companies applying the theories of business management. Introduction to the knowledge of the operative procedures associated with said management.
Tourist distribution and transport	Know the principles of distribution management and tourism transport, taking into account space, infrastructure, legal framework, ICT, operating procedures and all with a focus on improving communication and customer service.
Tourist resources and products	Analysis and diagnosis of resources as a basis for tourist activity. Learning and application of methods to create, innovate and consolidate products from an integrated perspective.
Touristic destinations	Analysis of the different types and strategies of tourist destinations. Its organization, planning and the tools that allow its management and commercialization. Main agents involved. Principles of sustainability.
Foreign languages applied to tourism	Improvement and intensification of English and at least a second foreign language for an adequate professional development.

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	Understanding of their linked cultural environments.
Practicum Internship /	Deepening knowledge, skills and attitudes linking students to the business reality of the tourism sector, completing and complementing their theoretical training with practical experience.

The Degree in tourism in the Spanish universities

In the 2008-2009 academic year, the first implementations of the new degree in tourism began in some universities. But the biggest implantation has been developed in the 2009-2010 academic year in which the majority of universities have made an important push in the change of model and with it, the change in tourism education. At the beginning of the 2009/2010 academic year, 33 degrees have already been verified by the Council of Universities (although some titles have pending mandatory authorization from their Autonomous Community) to finish enrolled in the RUCT (Register of Universities, Centers and Titles). Of these 33 titles the majority (in total 26) maintain the generic denomination proposed by ANECA of "degree in Tourism".

Name of the degree	University	Type of University
Grado en Dirección Internacional de empresas de turismo y ocio	Universidad Europea de Madrid	Private
Grado en Gestión Turística	Universidad Politécnica de Valencia	Public
Grado en Gestión Turística	Universitat de València (Estudi General)	Public
Grado en Gestión Turística y Hotelera	Universidad Ramon Llull	Private
Grado en Turismo	Universidad a Distancia de Madrid	Private
Grado en Turismo	Universidad Alfonso X El Sabio	Private
Grado en Turismo	Universidad Antonio de Nebrija	Private
Grado en Turismo	Universidad Autónoma de Madrid	Public
Grado en Turismo	Universidad Carlos III de Madrid	Public
Grado en Turismo	Universidad Complutense de Madrid	Public
Grado en Turismo	Universidad de A Coruña	Public
Grado en Turismo	Universidad de Alcalá	Public
Grado en Turismo	Universidad de Cantabria	Public
Grado en Turismo	Universidad de Deusto	Private
Grado en Turismo	Universidad de La Laguna	Public
Grado en Turismo	Universidad de Málaga	Public
Grado en Turismo	Universidad de Murcia	Public
Grado en Turismo	Universidad de Sevilla	Public
Grado en Turismo	Universidad de Vigo	Public
Grado en Turismo	Universidad Europea Miguel de Cervantes	Private
Grado en Turismo	Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia	Public
Grado en Turismo	Universidad Rey Juan Carlos	Public
Grado en Turismo	Universidad San Pablo-CEU	Private
Grado en Turismo	Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona	Public
Grado en Turismo	Universitat de Barcelona	Public

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Grado en Turismo	Universitat de Girona	Public
Grado en Turismo	Universitat de las Illes Balears	Public
Grado en Turismo	Universitat Jaume I de Castellón	Public
Grado en Turismo	Universitat Oberta de Catalunya	Public
Grado en Turismo	Universitat Rovira i Virgili	Public
Grado en Turismo - Administración de Organizaciones y Recursos Turísticos	Universidad de Extremadura	Public
Grado en Turismo / Tourism Management	IE Universidad	Private
Grado en Turismo y Gestión del Ocio	Universitat Pompeu Fabra	Public

Four degrees in tourism from different Spanish universities have been analyzed to see the weight of the different competences in the tourism field. Of each title are detailed: the skills to acquire and the structure of their studies.

University 1

The basic objective is to train highly qualified personnel to perform their job functions in the tourism sector directly or in any other economic activity related to tourism or using the same professional skills that it needs.

Therefore, from the student's point of view, the following objectives are stated: (1) Respond to the needs of the business world and the Public Administration [...], (2) Obtain a corpus of basic knowledge of a superior nature that allows technical specialization; (3) Master management skills of different companies or tourist institutions; (4) - Know the essential aspects that enable the development of competitive advantages [...]; (5) Acquire adequate training profiles at a level of degree that deepen the tourist use of natural and cultural resources (6) Achieve adequate training profiles at a level of degree for the administration and management of companies and other organizations of type tourist; and (7) To make all the stated objectives compatible with the knowledge, development and respect of Human Rights, democratic principles, the principles of equality between men and women, principles of solidarity, environmental protection, universal accessibility and design for all and for the promotion of the culture of peace.

To do this they have adapted the competences by grouping them into two types: 5 generic or transversal competences and 14 specific competences.

GENERIC COMPETENCES
CG-1: Demonstrate, possess and understand fundamental knowledge of the matters related to tourism from the different scientific disciplines, their epistemological evolution and the relationship of each one with the other scientific disciplines that deal with it, starting from the knowledge acquired in secondary education and up to a level that guarantees the knowledge of the vanguard in the study of this discipline.
CG-2: Know how to apply the technical and methodological knowledge to your work in a professional way integrating the different fields of study you have seen, related to tourism, and possess the competences that must be demonstrated through the

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elaboration and defense of arguments and the resolution of problems within their subject of study.
CG-3: Have the ability to gather and interpret relevant quantitative, qualitative and spatial data, to make judgments that include critical reflection on relevant issues of territorial, social, economic, legal, scientific or ethical, related to tourism.
CG-4: To be able to transmit information, ideas, problems and solutions of any of the thematic fields related to tourism to a specialized or non-specialized public.
CG-5: Having developed the necessary learning skills that allow to undertake professional work and postgraduate studies in Tourism with a high degree of autonomy
SPECIFIC COMPETENCES
CE-1 Knowledge of the English language that allows the understanding, expression and application of specific terminology related to tourism at an intermediate level.
CE-2 Acquire an integral vision of the tourist phenomenon and understand the relationships between the different subsystems and disciplines that make it up.
CE-3 Recognize the ways in which the social and territorial organization of societies influence in the tourist modalities, the forms of development of the tourist stations and in the impacts that the tourist activity causes on the natural and human environment of the territories in which it develops.
CE-4 Be able to conceptualize patterns, processes, interactions and changes in the tourism world understood as a system within a wide range of spatial scales
CE-5 Demonstrate a global knowledge of the different forms taken by tourism spaces worldwide, as well as being able to analyze the different factors that have intervened in their configuration.
CE-6 Acquire a critical awareness of the importance of economic processes, business relations, market policies and global economic developments that greatly influence tourism flows.
CE-7. Learn to collect, process, analyze and interpret information and address tourism issues through the deployment of specific skills for the worker in the different tourist branches, including the appropriate use of information and communication technologies (ICT).
CE-8. Demonstrate knowledge and understanding in different languages, different from the mother tongue, as well as achieve mastery of the technology associated with the general tourism market, with the acquisition and analysis of data, statistical data, online reservation techniques, qualitative analysis and of computer applications.
CE-9 Apply the main technologies dedicated to the study of the reciprocal relationships established between the physical and human environment in the different tourist activities, particularly those aimed at assessing the environmental impact of these activities, their consequences on the landscape and the transmission of scientific content in a way that facilitates its application in academic and professional environments.
CE-10. Apply concepts, techniques and knowledge of the different scientific areas to solve problems (with the appropriate legislative knowledge), promote development, create wealth and improve the quality of life of people (both tourists and residents) through public sector planning and private, territorial planning, risk prevention,



conservation and sustainability and equality policies, always seeking the quality of life and the tourist experience.
CE-11 Know and apply the concepts, methods and instruments that allow the responsible management of natural resources, the protection of the environment and the sustainable use of the territory in a manner compatible with the responsible satisfaction of the growing needs of the indigenous population and the tourists.
CE-12. Being able to properly manage a tourist establishment at any stage of the process (travel agency, wholesaler, accommodation, complementary offer, etc.)
CE-13. Demonstrate mastery of a wide range of analytical and observation strategies developed from the methods of research contributed by the different scientific branches throughout its academic stage and the concretion in the corresponding work.
CE-14. Apply in the professional environment the knowledge, methodologies and techniques acquired throughout the undergraduate academic formation and develop them with a high degree of responsibility, ethical commitment and capacity for integration in multidisciplinary teams

To establish the curricular structure, they have established 3 modules that share mandatory and optional training. Each of these modules is made up of subjects of 6 ECTS credits. Within these modules are collected as subjects the blocks of subjects by competencies that were defined in the LBGT / ANECA.

The optionality has been designed to reinforce the 2 itineraries defined through subjects based on different professional outputs that slightly reinforce the most common employability profiles for this type of studies: (1) Management (based on deepening the differential aspects of administration) of companies in the tourism sector, in their private sector) and (2) Planning (expanding aspects to carry out their professional activity in public administrations or other national or supranational institutions in jobs related to tourism or consultants).

Competences		Subject	ECTS	
			OB	OP
Module I Company Tourist	CG1 / CG3 CE2 / CE4 CE6 / CE13	Direction of tourism services companies	36	24
		Business management tools	42	18
		Accommodation management and food and restaurants		12
		Tourist distribution and transport	6	6
Module II Instrumental subjects	CG2 / CG5 CE1 / CE7 CE8 / CE12 CE14	Foundations and dimensions of tourism	42	18
		Foreign languages applied to tourism	36	6
		Practicum and final project	24	
Module III Tourism planning	CG2 / CG3 CG4 / CE3 CE5 / CE9 CE10 / CE11	Tourism resources and products	24	30
		Tourist destinations		18

**University 2**

The objectives proposed for this title are: (1) To offer a training corpus, of superior, basic character in a tourism from a transdisciplinary perspective; (2) Respond to existing training needs in the context of tourism, facilitating knowledge of specific tourism instruments; (3) Present and analyze the tourism phenomenon and the processes that comprise it; and (4) Generate specific knowledge profiles in the fields of tourism business management, destination management, tourism resources and products ..., and emerging areas of tourism.

According to the approach that can be observed in his memory, the modules respond to two major areas of learning (1) knowledge (conceptual modules that pose definitions, concepts but also the theoretical substrate of tourism) and (2) instrumental modules (concrete tools for the planning and management of tourism and its areas). In these modules there is a professional vocation.

In the competences proposal there is no difference between general and specific and it is an adaptation of the proposals by ANECA:

	Competences
C1	Acquire basic knowledge in the disciplines that study tourism
C2	Analyze, synthesize and interpret in tourism
C3	Evaluate the activity itself and the learning itself and develop strategies for its improvement
C4	Use the English language and another foreign language
C5	Select and use the most appropriate information and communication technologies for each situation
C6	Collect and select information efficiently and efficiently
C7	Prevent and solve problems, conflicts and make decisions
C8	Work as a team, establishing those relationships that can help to bring out cooperation potentials and maintain them continuously.
C9	Have ability for personal relationships in any context and situation
C10	Analyze the ethical implications of tourism
C11	Design creative proposals, have initiative and enterprising spirit.
C12	Coordinate and lead work projects or other activities
C13	Identify relevant elements from other cultures and the diversity of existing customs.
C14	Analyze and reflect on the transversal dimension of tourism and its evolutionary nature.
C15	Identify and understand the main tourism agents
C16	Define aims, strategies and policies in the tourism
C17	Communicate orally and in writing
C18	Analyze the impacts generated by tourism
C19	Analyze processes and operations in the diverse fields of the tourist activity
C20	Analyze the characteristics and initiatives of direction, management and tourism planning
C21	Use the terminology and the language of the diverse tourist fields
C22	Analyze with critical spirit the different activities of tourism
C23	Use techniques, methods and basic models of tourism disciplines
C24	Read, understand and comment scientific texts

Project No. 588476-EPP-1-2017-1-PT-EPPKA2-KA

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C25	Evaluate the sustainability of the own proposals
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For the definition of the modules, it is detected that they follow the general scheme proposed by ANECA with its Subject blocks by competences. In the modules, more than one field of knowledge is represented; in this way it is tried to guarantee the multidisciplinary and the transversality that claim the majority of the tourist subjects and the studies of tourism in general.

MODULES		Credits ECTS
Module I	Dimensions of tourism	30
Module II	Financial and commercial techniques of tourism companies	12
Module III	Tourism techniques	12
Module IV	Management of tourism companies	12
Module V	Management of accommodation, intermediation and tourist distribution	12
Module VI	Strategic management of tourist businesses	12
Module VII	Tourism destinations	24
Module VIII	Resources and tourist products	24
Module IX	Foreign languages applied to the tourism	36
Module X-XI	Optional subjects	33
Module XII	Final Degree Project	15
Module XIII	Practicum / Internship	12
Module XIV	Academic recognition	6

University 3

Following the proposal of ANECA, the Degree of Tourism in this University is defined with the same objectives and training strategies aimed for the management of tourism businesses and the management of destinations and tourist products.

In order to achieve these objectives, they have adopted the competences proposal prepared by ANECA (32 specific competences and two of the transversal ones). To these competences, they have added the proposals by the Commission for the Branch in Economic and Business Sciences of Andalusia, which incorporated eight other specific competences and three cross-cutting.

SPECIFIC COMPETENCES	
C1-C32	The ones collected in the White Book of ANECA (2004)
C33	Know and apply the basic concepts of law

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C34	Know and apply the basic concepts of business management
C35	Know and apply the basic concepts of statistics
C36	Know and apply the basic concepts of economy
C37	Know and apply the basic concepts of geography
C38	Understand the processes of appearance, innovation and development of the company and promotion of the entrepreneurial spirit, as well as business ethics.
C39	Carry out activities aimed at the applicability of theoretical, methodological and technical knowledge acquired throughout the training, working as a team and developing the skills and abilities of a professional of this profile of studies
C40	Know the methods and techniques for the formulation, realization, presentation and defense of a Final Project
TRANSVERSAL COMPETENCES	
CT1	Acquire creative skills and abilities
CT2	Acquire skills and initiatives for the development of entrepreneurship
CT3	Understand and identify the elements inherent to quality and its importance in tourism
CT4	Know and understand social responsibility derived from economic and business actions
CT5	Acquire skills and master computer tools applied to different subjects

For the planning of the structure of this title, the common subjects established among all Andalusian universities for the title of degree in tourism have been followed. With this, the intensification of this University is focused on compulsory university studies (36 ECTS), among which Computer Tools (12 + 6 ECTS) stand out, which are an element of quality assessment of this University.

TYPE OF SUBJECTS	MODULES	ECTS
COMPULSORY BASIC SUBJECTS	Basic training in economic, business and tourism sciences	60
COMPULSORY COMMON SUBJECTS (Fixed by the government of Andalusia)	Professional projection	24
	Tourism Economy	12
	Management of Tourist Companies	18
	Law applied to the tourist sector	6
	Territorial planning and sustainable tourism	6
	Modern language	12
	Modern language applied to tourism	18
	Heritage	12
COMPULSORY BY THIS UNIVERSITY	IT for the tourist management	6
	Economic indicators of tourism	6
	Computer tools for the analysis and management of tourism companies and institutions	12

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	Social psychology of tourism	6
	Tourism marketing	6
	Tourist geography of Andalucia	6
OPTIONAL SUBJECTS	Complementary Training Module	30

University 4

The objectives of the Degree in Tourism, following explicitly those proposed by ANECA, are defined taking into account the characteristics and evolution of the tourist activity developed in a context of rapid transformation and demands for quality, competitiveness and sustainability and a growing internationalization.

Its proposal is based directly on the set of competences defined by ANECA. For the definition of their structure they propose as subjects the Subject blocks by competences defined by ANECA assigning different weights according to the compulsory module or the optional module.

MODULES	SUBJECT	Credits ECTS
Basic Common Knowledge Module		24
Basic Knowledge Module of Branch		36
Compulsory Knowledge Module	Resources, products and tourist destinations	18
	Foreign languages applied to tourism	30
	Fundamentals and dimensions of tourism	24
	Management of tourist service companies	30
	Accommodation and restauration management	6
	Tourist distribution and transport	12
	Legal framework of tourist activities	6
Optional Knowledge Module (Choose 18ECTS)	Management of tourist services companies	24
	Resources, products and tourist destinations	6
	Fundamentals and dimensions of tourism	12
	Foreign languages applied to tourism	6
	Legal framework of tourist activities	6
Practices Module	External practices	24
Academic Recognition of Credits Module		6
Final Project Module		6

2.3 In-Depth Interviews

The face-to-face interviews were designed to gather information from T&H employers and HEI instructors in regards to a battery of discussion questions. In order to prepare the interviewees for the actual interview and to optimize the interview process, a few days prior to the interview each interviewee was emailed a one-page list comprising 30 soft skills organized under three soft skill dimensions, i.e. 10 conceptual/creative, 10 leadership, and 10 interpersonal skills. The interviewees had to rank order the 10 skills in each of the three dimensions and hand it in at the beginning of their scheduled interview.

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The interviews were designed to gather information from T&H employers and HEI instructors in regard to the following outcomes:

1. To understand how important are soft skills in the modern T&H workplace?
2. To rank the 10 most relevant conceptual/creative skills in the contemporary T&H workplace in order of their perceived importance.
3. To rank the 10 most relevant leadership skills in the contemporary T&H workplace in order of their perceived importance.
4. To rank the 10 most relevant interpersonal skills in the contemporary T&H workplace in order of their perceived importance.
5. To divulge how satisfied are T&H employers with the soft skills that, in their experience, graduate employees have? Which are best & which worse developed?
6. To uncover what emphasis is given to learning these skills in the T&H curricula today? Is it satisfactory and why (not)?
7. To unveil how are soft skills now learned and evaluated in the HEI system (methods, frequency, importance/weight, in which courses)?
8. To propose how should soft skills be learned and evaluated in the HEI system (methods, frequency, importance/weight, in which courses)?
9. To rank the 10 most relevant methods of learning soft skills by T&H undergraduate students in order of their perceived effectiveness.
10. To understand what are the main assumptions/obstacles/challenges in achieving these learning methods and how can these be assured/resolved?
11. To propose how can T&H employers facilitate the process of learning soft skills by undergraduate students?

2.3.1 Participant demographics

Two T&H employer representatives and two T&H HEI instructors took part in the face-to-face interviews. Of the four interviewees, there were two men and two women.

In the T&H interviewee there is a manager of a company that manages several hotels and camping-site in la Costa Brava. The other interviewee is in charge of one of the Tourism Offices managed by the Catalan Government together with the municipality of Girona.

The first interview made at the HEI instructors was made at one of the deans of the FT of the University of Girona, as one of the person really involved in all the process of planning the Degree in Tourism and the promotion of several masters of specialization. The second interview was made to the student affairs coordinator at a private school offering T&H undergraduate degrees based in Barcelona.

Regarding the educational background of the interviewees, two of them have a degree in Tourism; one of the has a PhD in tourism and the other one has a degree in Business Administration.

All four interviewees have more than 10 years of professional experience in T&H.

2.3.2 Results / participant perspectives

Interview Question (IQ) 1: What are soft skills and how important are they in the modern T&H workplace?

The four interviewees agree on the importance of soft skills today. In general it is difficult to establish a definition of soft skills; most of the interviewees know what they are but do

not make a clear definition. The E3 defines them as those skills that a person must have, beyond academic training, that help in the development of their daily tasks and it's clearly related to emotional intelligence.

The E1 highlights the value that human resources have in the tourism sector, being a key element in customer satisfaction. Therefore, all those skills that improve the quality of customer service are fundamental.

At the same time, E2 highlights that we are in the communication era, and that this is a key element for all companies. When talking about communication, reference is made to internal and external communication; so it is very important to promote all aspects related to this field.

IQ 2-4: Rank the 10 most relevant conceptual/creative skills, the 10 most relevant leadership skills, and the 10 most relevant interpersonal skills in the contemporary T&H workplace in order of their perceived importance.

Apart from listing or classifying the list of 30 personal skills, the interviewees were asked about which they considered to be most important.

While all competencies are considered important, there is a difference between E1 and E2; according to E1, the most important are those related to leadership ability, while E2 emphasizes those related to interpersonal skills. On the other hand, among the interviewees among HEI instructors, the importance of personal skills stands out.

In general, from the conceptual or creative soft skills, the two that are considered the most important ones are “consider customer needs when making decisions” and “bring together different perspectives and approaches and combine them in a creative way”. E1 emphasized again the idea that human resources are a key element in customer satisfaction and that it's really important to foster a customer-based approach. Both, E1 and E2 affirm that, even all competences are important, the level of development of them will also depend on the job position and the type of tasks assigned to each job.

From the group of leadership soft skills, as it was said, is considered one of the most relevant one, mainly for E1. Some of the soft skills that were highlighted were to “steer conflicts away”, “to operate effectively and calmly under pressure and in crisis situations” and “to build networks”. E2 also agrees on the importance of knowing how to work under pressure, as it's a quite common situation in the tourism companies, especially during the high season. She considers also really important to know how to deal with crisis. HEI instructors also mentioned as important “to promote respect and appreciation for diversity and individual differences” as it's considered a key issue in the team building strategy.

Those competences related to interpersonal soft skills are considered, in general terms, the most important ones for the tourism sector. E2 focused on those related to communication (communicate efficiently); but also stresses the importance of dealing with guests requests with understanding and sensitivity and acting courteously and respectfully. E1, together with HEI instructors, emphasizes also “manifest intercultural sensitivity” as a key element taking into account the diversity of people that compose, both, the teams of the companies and also the guests' profile.

E4 mentioned the importance of having negotiating skills, closely related to the communication skills.

IQ 5: How satisfied are T&H employers with the soft skills that, in their experience, graduate employees have? Which are best & which worse developed?

In general, some weaknesses are detected in this area. The E1 and E2 coincide in the fact that the graduates (or trainees) perform well with many of the hard skills or competencies but some shortcomings are identified in the area of soft skills.

The E1 highlights some aspects that in recent years has been detected, and not previously, related to punctuality, the level of commitment and lack of flexibility and adaptation to changes. These aspects have worsened, which is why emphasis is placed on them during the recruitment process.

E2 highlights the fact that graduates have shortcomings in the field of personal communication. In general, different foreign languages are spoken and written correctly, but in oral communication techniques (verbal and non-verbal) there are difficulties. For example, the difficulty of controlling non-verbal language is mentioned, as well as the fact that sometimes they don't dress appropriately according to the workplace. She points out the possibility that ICTs have modified the patterns of behavior and communication among young people, making it more difficult to communicate orally.

Another element that highlights E2 is that, due to the mobility among students, they receive more and more internships students from other countries, and that sometimes supposes a barrier because they know little the territory where they are (remember that it is a person in charge of a tourism office).

The E3 and E4 practically did not respond to this question. The E3 contributed its vision from the management of the practices and corroborated some of the aspects mentioned by the E1 in relation to punctuality and lack of commitment.

IQ 6: What emphasis is given to learning soft skills in the T&H curricula today? Is it satisfactory and why (not)?

The four interviewees agree on two aspects, the first is that there is a gap in the learning of soft skills in tourism, especially between what is needed by the sector and what is taught in the HEI. On the other hand, they coincide in the fact that in recent years a slight change has been perceived in which some soft skills are beginning to be present in the T&H curricula.

E4 highlights the fact that the importance of soft skills and customer service in different subjects is mentioned on numerous occasions but there is no specific subject where these aspects are worked on.

E3 recognizes that in the definition of competences in the studies some of these soft skills appear but, in truth, sometimes they do not develop enough.

The E1 and E2 coincide in the reflection that they do not know, really, how these competences should be taught.

IQ 7: How are soft skills now learned and evaluated in the HEI system (methods, frequency, importance/weight, in which courses)?

E1 and E2 have not answered this question, they do not know how soft skills are taught and evaluated.

In general, the contributions of E3 and E4 coincide. There are no concrete proposals on the competences that teachers should have and how to train them, so it is not surprising that it is not clearly defined how to teach and evaluate soft skills. Many of the soft skills are

learned during the 3rd and 4th years of the Degree, in the 3rd year in some subjects but mainly in the training module; and in the 4th year mainly through the optional courses that focus on specific areas. Even this, every teacher decides what to teach, how to teach and how to evaluate it.

In this sense, the teaching activity must acquire new approaches (tutoring and more personalized attention to students, monitoring and evaluation of non-classroom activities, coordination between classroom and non-face-to-face teaching, etc.). There is no optimal teaching method with which to achieve the best results but each teacher must adapt their teaching to different situations, different groups of students, different subjects, etc.

E3 highlights the importance of some of the competences assessed as those related to communication. These are developed in different subjects of the Degree in Tourism, and especially in some such as the Final Degree Project in which the presentation and oral defense of the work is equivalent to 20% of the final grade obtained by the student.

E4 highlights the fact, also, that some of the competences should be acquired, precisely, in the module of practices; in contact with companies. It shows a lack of coordination between companies and educational centers, in the sense that companies expect trainees to have knowledge but there is a part of them that should be learned during their tenure in the company.

It's also mentioned that in both institutions they have a program of invited professors that welcome professionals and tourism stakeholders as well. This offers a framework in which students can learn directly from professionals.

E3 and E4 coincide in the importance of the exits outside the university, and also in the fact that professionals from the sector can be invited.

Another of the elements that stand out is the importance of the module of practices, which allows students to get in touch with the business world, despite the fact that many of the students already have work experience.

On the other hand, E3 highlights the need to introduce some subjects that introduce some of the soft skills as well as specific evaluation methods.

Both agree on the importance of introducing soft skills in the first courses, now they focus on the latter. And, in general, it is found that the evaluation methods used are not very innovative and are based on exams, exercises and papers, case studies and oral presentations (roughly speaking).

IQ 8: How should soft skills be learned and evaluated in the HEI system (methods, frequency, importance/weight, in which courses)?

Some of the aspects were already answered in the previous question. In general, the interviewees agree that systems should be found to introduce and evaluate soft skills in the field of tourism since they have a great relevance.

IQ 9: Rank the 10 most relevant methods of learning soft skills by T&H undergraduate students in order of their perceived effectiveness. C

There are several methods to learn the different soft skills, but they should be used combining ones and the others. As mentioned before, soft skills should be incorporated into the existing subjects.

Interviewees were asked to mention some of the most relevant methods, and the result was:

- Group exercises (E1, E2, E3, E4)
- Simulations, role-playing games (E3)
- Portfolio or project work (E2, E3, E4)
- Guest professors (E1, E2, E3, E4)
- Field trips and visits (E1, E2, E3, E4)
- Oral presentations (E3, E4)
- Debates / participatory classes (E3, E4)
- Learning based on problem solving (E3, E4)
- Internship stays in companies (E1, E2, E3, E4)
- Workshops (E2, E4)

IQ 10: What are the main assumptions/obstacles/challenges in achieving these learning methods and how can these be assured/resolved?

According to the results obtained, the two main challenges are the interrelation between the professional sector and the HEIs and the training and qualification of the teaching staff.

First, the four interviewees agree that there should be a closer approximation of the two areas, but when asked how the answer is not clear.

In general, E1 and E2 affirm that there should be greater interest on the part of HEIs to know the needs of each of the sectors. They consider that they should be invited to participate in the design of the subjects and competences (E1) as well as to have the possibility of participating actively, for example, through workshops and meetings.

E3 and E4, on the contrary, believe that the involvement of companies should pass, beyond the positions of practices they can offer, by having common projects. Thus, participation in projects (like this one) is a good opportunity to work closely, in the same way that the transfer of knowledge should be promoted at all levels.

Another element, identified above all by E3, is the lack of openness of some teachers. In this sense, the requirements to access to be a professor do not contemplate the fact of introducing new models of learning, for example, but they are based a lot on research and publications.

For this reason, many of the teachers have closed visions and are limited to doing what is most comfortable and works well and do not dare to experiment with new teaching methods.

IQ 11: How can T&H employers facilitate the process of learning soft skills by undergraduate students?

The four interviewees agree on the importance of internships in companies to actively collaborate in the training of students in soft skills.

In this sense E4 highlights the importance of having a personalized internship plan for each student and each work site that details the skills to be learned.

On the other hand, E3 highlights the fact that each student should, at least, make two stays in companies; of different typology, to learn from different sectors and different competences.

The four interviewees highlight the importance of doing the practices outside the high season, especially the E1 and E2, in order to teach and better serve the students.

2.4 Focus Groups

The discussion was designed to gather information from T&H employers and HEI educators in regard to the following discussion questions:

1. To understand how important are soft skills in the modern T&H workplace?
2. To generate a list of up to 10 most relevant conceptual/creative skills in the contemporary T&H workplace and to rank them in order of their perceived importance.
3. To generate a list of up to 10 most relevant leadership skills in the contemporary T&H workplace and to rank them in order of their perceived importance.
4. To generate a list of up to 10 most relevant interpersonal skills in the contemporary T&H workplace and to rank them in order of their perceived importance.
5. To propose how should soft skills be learned and evaluated in the HEI system (methods, frequency, importance/weight, in which courses)?
6. To generate a list of up to 10 methods of learning soft skills by T&H undergraduate students and rank them in order of their perceived effectiveness.
7. To understand what are the main assumptions/obstacles/challenges in achieving these learning methods?
8. To propose how can these be assured/resolved?

2.4.1 Participant demographics

Excluding the focus group administrators, twelve participants took part in the focus group. One focus group was held among people involved in T&H sector in different sections, accommodation (2), restaurant (1), tourist services and tourism office (2). The second focus groups was held among different HEI instructors from different departments (4) and include, also, the participation of both, graduates (2) and current students (1) of the Degree of Tourism.

2.4.2 Results / participant perspectives

The participants of both focus group coincided in the importance that soft skills have today.

In the focus group with T & H stakeholders, the importance of soft skills was repeatedly mentioned, since in the tourism sector human resources are one of the most important elements.

In the focus group with HEI teachers and students this importance was also confirmed, although it was not clear how these soft skills should be taught or learned.

Both focus groups began with a debate on the definition of soft skills and, from here, it was requested that the lists of the most important competences and learning methods be drawn up.

The results obtained for the HEIs Focus Group when asking for the competences and soft skills are:

Conceptual/Creative soft skills:

1. Critical thinking
2. Innovation
3. Creativity
4. Organization
5. Problem solving
6. Inspiration
7. Global understanding
8. Team work
9. Assertiveness
10. Proactivity

Leadership soft skills

1. Team building
2. Leadership
3. Communication skills (oral and in written)
4. Motivation
5. Commitment
6. Responsibility
7. Conflict management
8. Stress management
9. Flexibility
10. Being respectful

Interpersonal soft skills

1. Communicate efficiently
2. Respect to the others
3. Empathy
4. Emotional intelligence
5. Intercultural vision
6. Multidisciplinary approach
7. Listening to the others
8. Customer approach / understanding the needs of customers
9. Confidence
10. Team work

And the results obtained in the T&H stakeholders focus groups are:

Conceptual/Creative soft skills:

1. Creativity
2. Global understanding of the tourism sector
3. Interdisciplinary approach
4. Problem solving
5. Flexibility
6. Proactivity
7. Develop new ideas
8. Being respectful to others

9. Adaption capacity
10. Capacity to improve

Leadership soft skills

1. Leadership
2. Resilience
3. Act respectfully
4. Communicate efficiently
5. Team building capacity
6. Motivation
7. Organization
8. Commitment
9. Flexibility
10. Critical thinking

Interpersonal soft skills

1. Emotional intelligence
2. Communication skills
3. Self-confidence
4. Empathy
5. Being respectful
6. Listening to others
7. Positive thinking
8. Willing to help/attend others
9. Tolerance
10. Intercultural approach

In terms of the methods of teaching and learning proposed, there were no significant differences between the two focus group. The main methods proposed were:

- Internships
- Role-playing and simulations
- Field trips and visits
- Case studies, based on best practices or solving problems
- Oral presentations
- Group works and assignments
- Debate classes
- Seminars and workshops
- Networking

In terms of identifying the main difficulties for the implementation of new models of teaching soft skills, the ones identified were related to closed systems were changes are difficult to introduce. In some cases people tend to be close-minded.

From the two focus groups it is clear that there are numerous challenges in the field of soft skills. There is evidence of the importance they have but we must work more, and together, to really achieve learning model that takes into account the needs of companies. We should think in innovative ways of teaching and learning, together, HEIs and T&H companies.

2.5 Survey Questionnaires

From the FT both questionnaires, for former students and current students were distributed.

Graduate Students	57 questionnaires
Current Students	58 questionnaires

2.5.1 Survey of former students (n = 57)

The 57 questionnaires were collected between June and October 2018. Most of them were answered in June, as there was an academic event where graduates from the last year were invited to come and they were asked to answer the questionnaire.

The rest of the questionnaires were disseminated via social media and to Alumni, an association of former students from the University of Girona. Nevertheless, the number of questionnaires collected was very few.

2.5.1.1 Respondent demographics

If we analyze the demographics features of the respondent, we can appreciate that most of them are females (almost 70%). If we take a look at the profile of the students of HEI in Tourism we can appreciate that this is a common trend.

Most of the respondents have more than 3 years of work experience; but we can remark that there's a difference of 20% between the ones that have more than 3 years of experience in any field and those that have it in the field of T&H; this means that before there were employed in another fields.

Interesting data to know, for further research, could be when they finished their studies in tourism or if they worked during their studies.

Mainly of the graduates working in the area of T&H are employed in hotel and restaurants (42%). In "others" some of the answers were related also to the field of accommodation, for example, camping and apartment. So, almost 50% are working in accommodation and restaurant.

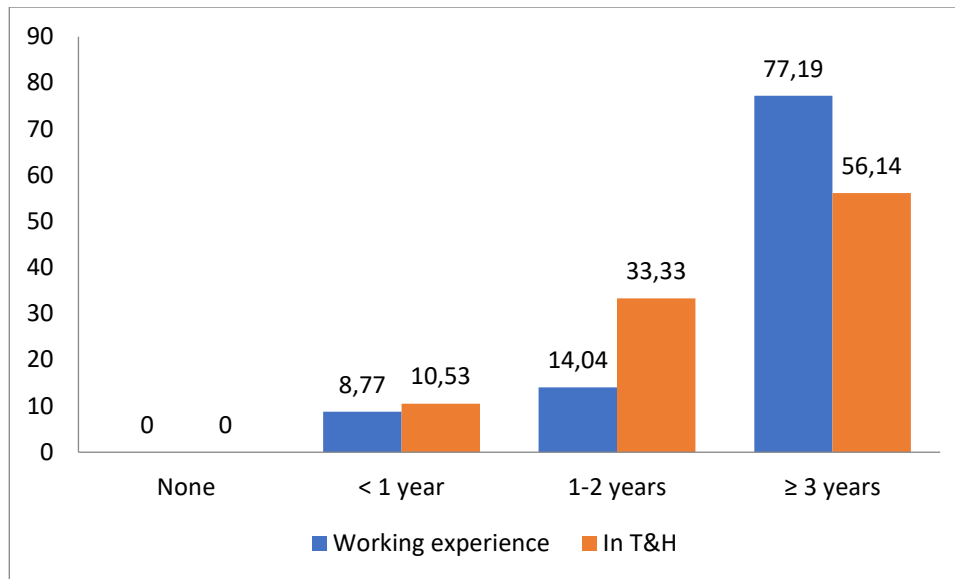
We have to highlight the fact none of the respondents are working in cruises and in events; and very few, in transport and marketing.

If we look at the current position, more than 50% are at an entry level; which may be surprising if we compare it with that data obtained from the working experience. An interesting data to collect could be the average time in each company.

Table 1. Respondent Demographics

Variable	%
<i>Gender</i>	
Female	69,5
Male	30,5
<i>Combined length of any work experience (in years)</i>	
Highest	373
Lowest	4
Mean	88.93
Mode	78
Standard Deviation	83.53
<i>Length of work experience in T&H (in years)</i>	
Highest	244
Lowest	0
Mean	49.98
Mode	50
Standard Deviation	47.47
<i>Current field of employment</i>	
DMO / tourism board (national, regional or local)	5,26
Hotel / restaurant (including catering)	42,11
Cruising / nautical (including charter)	0
Travel agency / tour operator	17,54
Transportation (air, sea, rent a car, etc.)	1,75
Event / congress organization	0
Marketing / PR	1,75
Consulting agency	8,77
Other	22,81
<i>Current position</i>	
Entry level	54,39
Assistant manager	7,02
Department manager / supervisor	21,05
Other	17,54

Graph 1. Global working experience and in the T&H sector



2.5.1.2 Results

As follows the results for the study of the soft skills competence are presented. In this section results obtained from Q6 and Q7 are presented together in order to be able to compare them. In this sense, we present the results of asking “the importance each soft skill have related to their current jobs” and “the level of satisfaction obtained in acquiring this soft skill during their studies”.

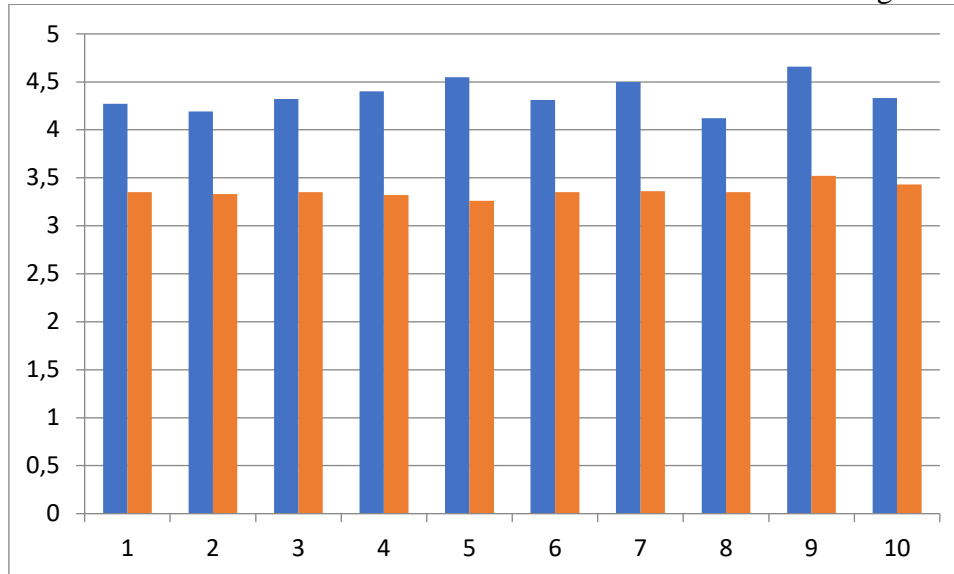
Table 2. Comparing the importance of Conceptual / Creative Soft Skills at the Current Job and the level of satisfaction with the learning.

CONCEPTUAL / CREATIVE SOFT SKILLS	importance	Satisfaction
Maintain the "big picture" while working on a specific property-management, layout, and design component	4,27	3,35
Manifest critical thinking	4,19	3,33
Demonstrate an understanding of the organization's interaction with the larger external environment	4,32	3,35
Develop new ideas	4,4	3,32
Develop adaptation responses to unexpected changes	4,55	3,26
Exhibit knowledge of related job roles - peers, subordinates, others	4,31	3,35
Manifest development and adaptation of innovation or improvements	4,5	3,36
Understand the agendas and perspectives of owners, staff members, managers, and other parties	4,12	3,35
Consider customer needs when making decisions	4,66	3,52

Bring together different perspectives and approaches and combine them in creative ways	4,33	3,43
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*5-point scale ranging from 1=*not very important* to 5=*critically important*

Graph 2. Comparing the importance of Conceptual / Creative Soft Skills at the Current Job and the level of satisfaction with the learning.



Related to Conceptual and Creative soft skills, we can observe that they are well valued, as they obtain a score over 4. The soft skills considered the most important are:

- Develop adaptation responses to unexpected changes
- Consider customer needs when making decisions

And, the two soft skills that are considered the less important for their current job are:

- Manifest critical thinking
- Understand the agendas and perspectives of owners, staff members, managers, and other parties

If we compared the level of importance with the level of satisfaction, we can say that there is a gap between what they need and what they learned during their HEI studies. If we just look at the mean, we can see that is lower, none of the respondents valued in more than 3.5 their level of satisfaction.

The two soft skills in which they obtained a major satisfaction are:

- Consider customer needs when making decisions
- Bring together different perspectives and approaches and combine them in creative ways

The two soft skills that were less acquired during the studies are:

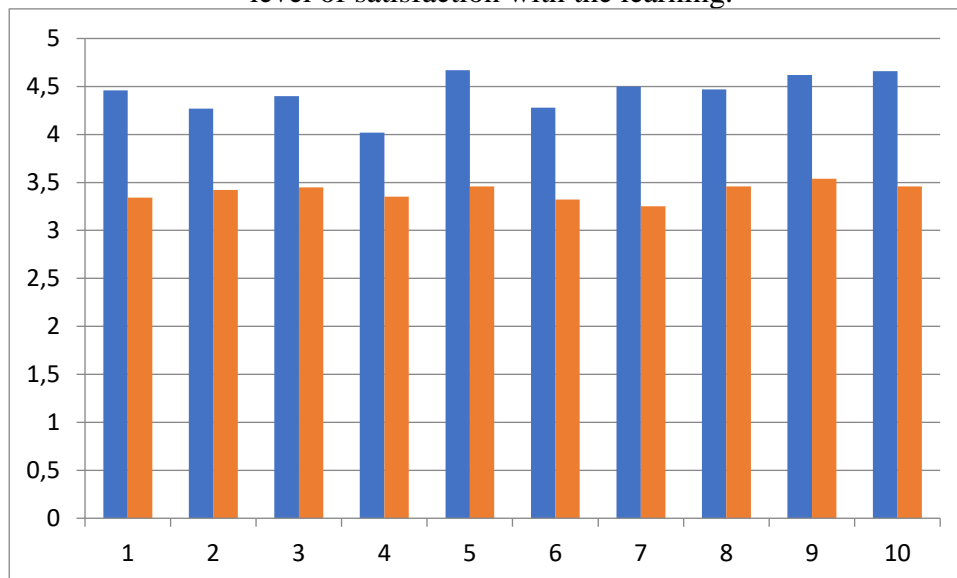
- Develop new ideas
- Develop adaptation responses to unexpected changes

Table 3. Comparing the importance of Leadership Soft Skills at the Current Job and the level of satisfaction with the learning.

LEADERSHIP SOFT SKILLS	importance	Satisfaction
Steer conflicts away from personalities and toward issues	4,46	3,34
Present ideas in a convincing manner	4,27	3,42
Expresses disagreement in a tactful and sensitive manner	4,4	3,45
Works to understand why others resist change instead of forcing others to accept change	4,02	3,35
Operate effectively and calmly under pressure or in crisis situations	4,67	3,46
Build networks with people inside and outside the firm	4,28	3,32
Confront problems early before they become unmanageable	4,5	3,25
Employ a team approach to solve problems when appropriate	4,47	3,46
Listen carefully to input and concerns expressed by others	4,62	3,54
Promote respect and appreciation for diversity and individual differences	4,66	3,46

*5-point scale ranging from 1=*not very important* to 5=*critically important*

Graph 3. Comparing the importance of Leadership Soft Skills at the Current Job and the level of satisfaction with the learning.



If we analyze the results obtained for the Leadership soft skills, in general terms, they are very similar to those obtained for the Conceptual Soft Skills. In general, the average score obtained when asking for the importance is more than 4 and the score obtained for when asking the level of satisfaction is between 3 and 3,5.

Even this, we can observe that they are slightly best valued. The soft skills considered the most important in this section are:

- Operate effectively and calmly under pressure or in crisis situations
- Promote respect and appreciation for diversity and individual differences

And, the two soft skills that are considered the less important for their current job are:

- Present ideas in a convincing manner
- Works to understand why others resist change instead of forcing others to accept change

If we compare the level of importance with the level of satisfaction, we can say that there is a gap between what they need and what they learned during their HEI studies, exactly the same as in the previous group of soft skills. If we just look at the mean, we can see that is lower, none of the respondents valued in more than 3.5 their level of satisfaction.

In this case, there are three soft skills that are considered the most important, as competences 8 and 10 obtained the same average score:

- Listen carefully to input and concerns expressed by others
- Employ a team approach to solve problems when appropriate
- Promote respect and appreciation for diversity and individual differences

The two soft skills that were less acquired during the studies are:

- Confront problems early before they become unmanageable
- Build networks with people inside and outside the firm

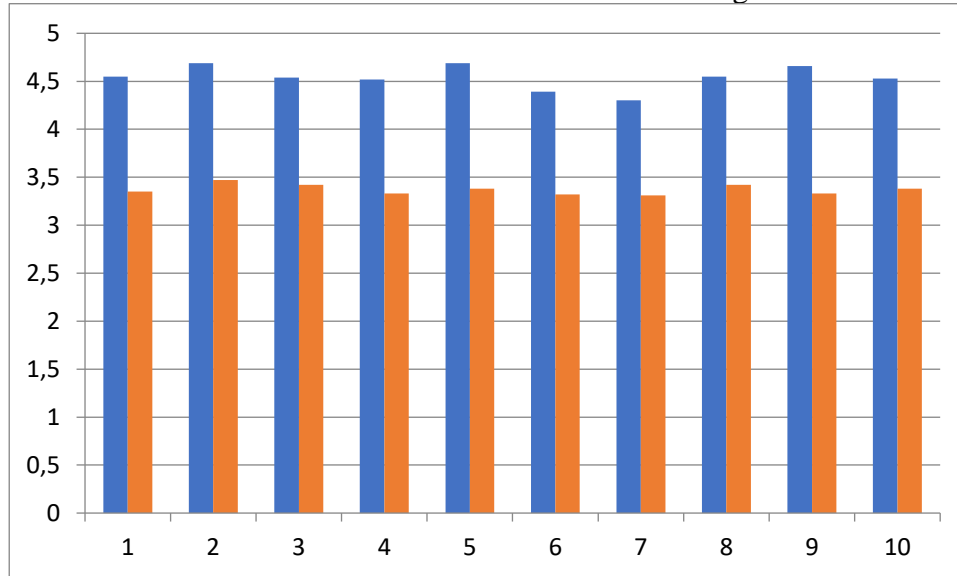
Table 4. Comparing the importance of Interpersonal Soft Skills at the Current Job and the level of satisfaction with the learning.

INTERPERSONAL SOFT SKILLS	importance	Satisfaction
Manage guest requests with understanding and sensitivity	4,55	3,35
Communicate efficiently (orally and in writing) with other employees, clients, and customers	4,69	3,47
Exhibit emotional intelligence, such as emotional control and passion	4,54	3,42
Effectively handle staff grievances and complaints	4,52	3,33
Act courteously and respectfully	4,69	3,38
Demonstrate awareness of others' feelings	4,39	3,32
Exhibit negotiating skills	4,3	3,31
Provide effective feedback	4,55	3,42
Demonstrate empathy in dealing with customers and staff	4,66	3,33

Manifest intercultural sensitivity	4,53	3,38
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*5-point scale ranging from 1=*not very important* to 5=*critically important*

Graph 4. Comparing the importance of Interpersonal Soft Skills at the Current Job and the level of satisfaction with the learning.



If we analyze the results obtained for the Leadership soft skills, in general terms, they are very similar to those obtained for the previous groups of soft skills. But, this group obtains an average score a bit more high, as it moves around 4,5 when talking about the importance they have in their current job. But, the numbers are almost the same when looking at the level of satisfaction obtained.

The soft skills considered the most important in this section are:

- Communicate efficiently (orally and in writing) with other employees, clients, and customers
- Act courteously and respectfully

And, the two soft skills that are considered the less important for their current job are:

- Demonstrate awareness of others' feelings
- Exhibit negotiating skills

If we compare the level of importance with the level of satisfaction, we can say that there is a gap between what they need and what they learned during their HEI studies, exactly the same as in the previous groups of soft skills. In this case, there are three soft skills that are considered the ones where they obtained a major satisfaction or a higher level of knowledge:

- Communicate efficiently (orally and in writing) with other employees, clients, and customers
- Act courteously and respectfully
- Manifest intercultural sensibility

In this case we can notice that the competence related to “efficient communication” is considered important for the current job and it’s also one of the best values in terms of

knowledge learnt during the studies. The two soft skills that were less acquired during the studies are:

- Demonstrate awareness of others' feelings
- Exhibit negotiating skills

In general terms, there are very few differences between the three groups of soft skill competences. Even this, we can see that the competences related to “interpersonal” skills are the ones considered the most important, with an average score of 4,54 and a deviation of 0.73.

The next group, in terms of importance, are the “leadership” skills, with an average score of 4,43 and a deviation of 0,70; and the last group is the “creative” soft skills, with an average score of 4,36 and a deviation of 0.87.

If we compare these ratios with the level of satisfaction obtained, data differ a little it. The group that's considered the best in terms of learning objectives acquired during the studies is the group related to “leadership” skills, with an average score of 3,40 and a deviation of 1,33. The second group of soft skills is the one related to “interpersonal” skills, with a 3,37, and the one of “creative” skills with an average score of 3,36 (there is almost no difference). The deviation, for those groups is 1,4 and 1,36 respectively. It means that there are important differences between the different respondents.

2.5.2 Survey of current students (n = 58)

The 58 questionnaires were collected, also, between June and October 2018. Most of them were answered in June, as there was a period exam and students were asked to answer the questionnaire. The rest of the questionnaires were disseminated via social media.

For the rest of Spain, the questionnaire was spread through the Redintur, a network that involves several universities in Spain that teach tourism.

2.5.2.1 Respondent demographics

If we analyze the demographics features of the respondents, in the case of the current students we can appreciate, again, that most of them are females (almost 80%) and their major field of study is “tourism and hospitality”. In the case of Spain, at HEI level the focus is on T&H for the graduate in tourism. The rest of the fields (restaurant, hotel...) are master degrees or vocational training.

Regarding the working experience of the graduate students, most of the respondents have more than 3 years of work experience (62%) and more than 40% have more than 3 years of working experience in the field of tourism. The profile of students is very divers, including people that come from other studies and, most of them, work during summer or even during the course. We have to add, also, that in the 3rd and 4th year of the Degree they have to do the internship, which is compulsory in the 3rd course and optional in the 4th.

Interesting data to know, for further research, could be at what year of their current studies are they, or the age.

If we analyze the areas where they have worked, the main sector is hotel and restaurant with almost 80% of the answers (it's a multiple choice answer). This coincides with the data collected from the graduates, where this sector was around 50%. The second area that got more answers was the DMO area, with more than 30% of the answers. Other important areas are Tour Operators and Event Organizers.

We have to highlight the fact none of the respondents are working in cruises and in events; this data is the same for the graduates.

If we look at the job assignment, most of them work or have worked in front desk and receptions (80%); followed by waiters (40%). Other job assignments that are common are hostess, marketing and social media.

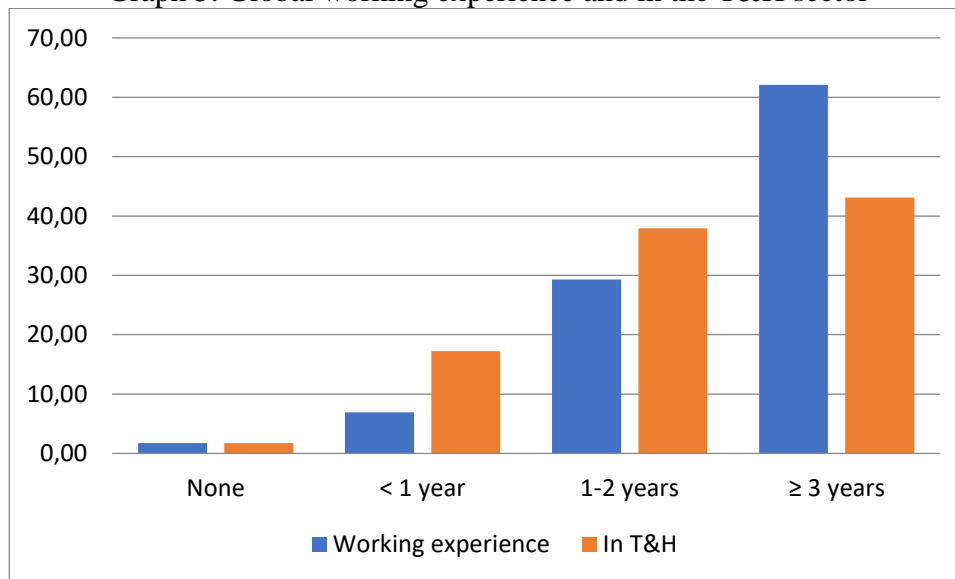
From the data collected we can see that the sector of accommodation and restaurant is the most important one in terms of employability, but other sectors like DMO, tourism offices, travel agencies have to be taken into account as well.

Table 5. Respondent Demographics

Variable	%
<i>Gender</i>	
Female	79,3
Male	20,7
<i>Major field of study</i>	
Tourism and/or hospitality	96,56
Hotel/lodging management	1,72
Restaurant management	0
Destination management	1,72
Other	0
<i>Combined length of any work experience</i>	
Highest	293
Lowest	0
Mean	46.81
Mode	72
Standard Deviation	41.65
<i>Length of work experience in T&H</i>	
Highest	126
Lowest	0
Mean	32.74
Mode	5
Standard Deviation	24.50
<i>T&H field(s) in which you worked so far (multiple answers are possible)</i>	
DMO / tourism board (national, regional or local)	31,03
Hotel / restaurant (including catering)	82,76
Cruising / nautical (including charter)	0,00
Travel agency / tour operator	15,52
Transportation (air, sea, rent a car, etc.)	5,17
Event / congress organization	18,97

Marketing / PR	8,62
Consulting agency	3,45
Other	10,34
<i>Job assignment(s) – multiple answers possible</i>	
Waiter / waitress	39,66
Kitchen worker	15,52
Bar worker	18,97
Host / hostess	27,59
Social media	15,52
Front desk / reception	81,03
Housekeeping	6,90
Travel agent	12,07
Event planner	15,52
HR	1,72
Sales & marketing	20,69
Guest relations	8,62
Tour guide	12,07
Other	8,62

Graph 5. Global working experience and in the T&H sector



2.5.2.2 Results

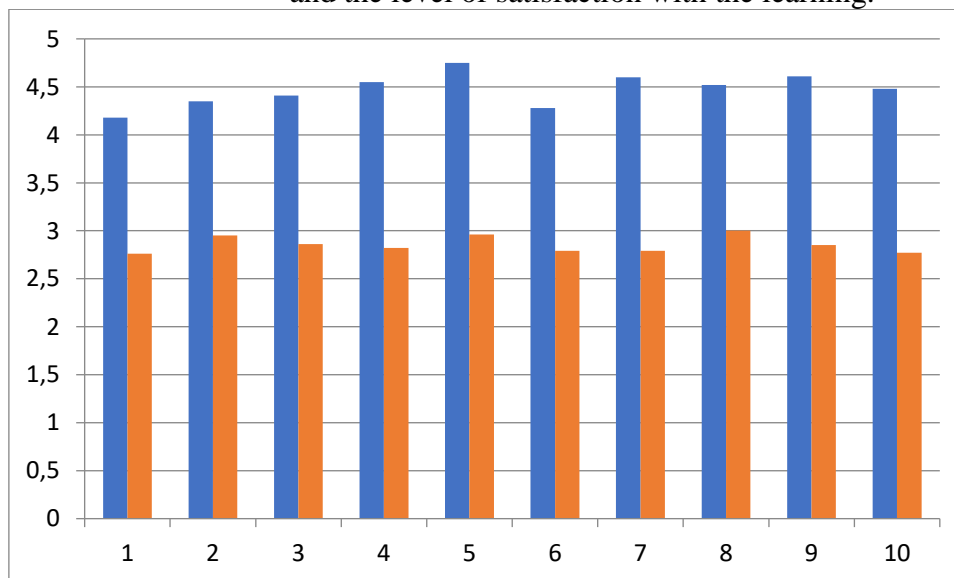
As follows the results for the study of the soft skills competence are presented. In this section results obtained from Q7 and Q8 are presented together in order to be able to compare them. In this sense, we present the results of asking “the importance each soft skill have related an entry level” and “the level of satisfaction obtained in acquiring this soft skill during their studies”.

Table 6. Comparing the importance of Conceptual / Creative Soft Skills at an entry level for a trainee and the level of satisfaction with the learning.

CONCEPTUAL / CREATIVE SOFT SKILLS	importance	Satisfaction
Maintain the "big picture" while working on a specific property-management, layout, and design component	4,18	2,76
Manifest critical thinking	4,35	2,95
Demonstrate an understanding of the organization's interaction with the larger external environment	4,41	2,86
Develop new ideas	4,55	2,82
Develop adaptation responses to unexpected changes	4,75	2,96
Exhibit knowledge of related job roles - peers, subordinates, others	4,28	2,79
Manifest development and adaptation of innovation or improvements	4,6	2,79
Understand the agendas and perspectives of owners, staff members, managers, and other parties	4,52	3
Consider customer needs when making decisions	4,61	2,85
Bring together different perspectives and approaches and combine them in creative ways	4,48	2,77

*5-point scale ranging from 1=*not very important* to 5=*critically important*

Graph 5. Comparing the importance of Conceptual / Creative Soft Skills at a trainee level and the level of satisfaction with the learning.



Related to Conceptual and Creative soft skills, we can observe that they are well valued, as they obtain a score over 4, and in some case more than 4,5. The soft skills considered the most important are:

- Develop adaptation responses to unexpected changes
- Consider customer needs when making decisions

We can observe that the answers for the graduates and the current students in the creative soft skills coincide in the two skills they consider the most important.

The two soft skills that are considered the less important are:

- Maintain the "big picture" while working on a specific property-management, layout, and design component
- Exhibit knowledge of related job roles - peers, subordinates, others

If we compare the level of importance with the level of satisfaction, we can say that there is a gap between what they consider they need and what they are learning during their HEI studies. If we compare data with former students, the gap is bigger in this case as the average score is less than 3, while for the former students was around 3,5. The cause of this should be deeper analyzed.

The two soft skills in which they obtained a major satisfaction are:

- Understand the agendas and perspectives of owners, staff members, managers, and other parties
- Manifest critical thinking

These two skills were, in fact, the two that were selected by the graduates as the less important ones in terms of using them at their current jobs. The two soft skills that are considered to have a lower level of satisfaction are:

- Maintain the "big picture" while working on a specific property-management, layout, and design component
- Bring together different perspectives and approaches and combine them in creative ways

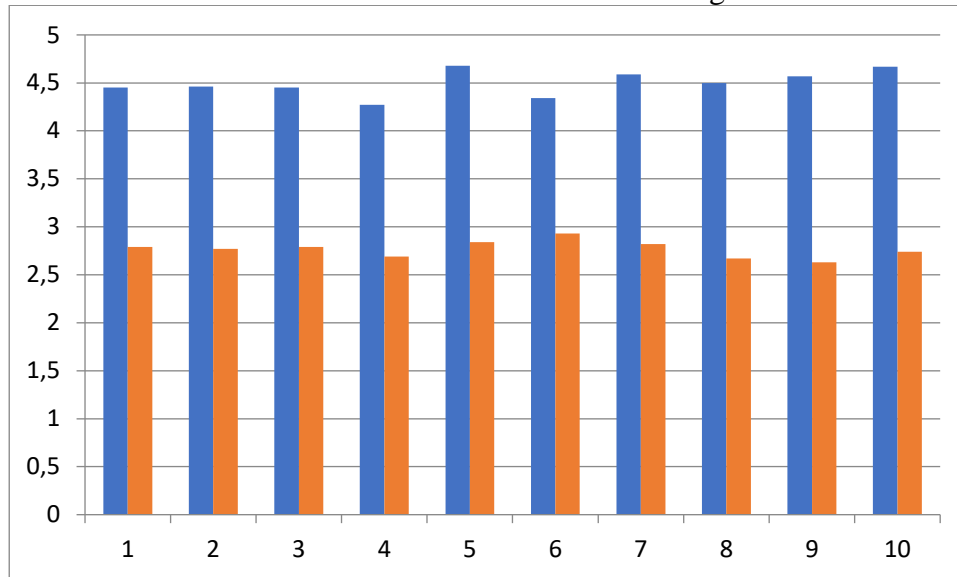
Table 6. Comparing the importance of Leadership Soft Skills at an entry level for a trainee and the level of satisfaction with the learning.

LEADERSHIP SOFT SKILLS	importance	Satisfaction
Steer conflicts away from personalities and toward issues	4,45	2,79
Present ideas in a convincing manner	4,46	2,77
Expresses disagreement in a tactful and sensitive manner	4,45	2,79
Works to understand why others resist change instead of forcing others to accept change	4,27	2,69
Operate effectively and calmly under pressure or in crisis situations	4,68	2,84
Build networks with people inside and outside the firm	4,34	2,93
Confront problems early before they become unmanageable	4,59	2,82
Employ a team approach to solve problems when appropriate	4,5	2,67
Listen carefully to input and concerns expressed by others	4,57	2,63

Promote respect and appreciation for diversity and individual differences	4,67	2,74
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*5-point scale ranging from 1=*not very important* to 5=*critically important*

Graph 6. Comparing the importance of Leadership Soft Skills at a trainee level and the level of satisfaction with the learning.



If we analyze the results obtained for the Leadership soft skills, in general terms, they are very similar to those obtained for the Conceptual Soft Skills. In general, the average score obtained when asking for the importance is between 4 and 4,5 and the score obtained for when asking the level of satisfaction is between 2,5 and 3; showing again a considerable gap between what they consider they need and what they consider they learn.

We can observe that this group of soft skills is slightly best valued than the previous one and that the level of satisfaction is a bit lower. The soft skills considered the most important in this section are, again, the same for current students and graduate:

- Operate effectively and calmly under pressure or in crisis situations
- Promote respect and appreciation for diversity and individual differences

And, the two soft skills that are considered the less important for applying for a trainee are:

- Works to understand why others resist change instead of forcing others to accept change
- Build networks with people inside and outside the firm

If we compare the level of importance with the level of satisfaction, data show exactly the same as in the previous group of soft skills. If we just look at the mean, we can see that is lower, none of the respondents valued in more than 3 their level of satisfaction.

In this case, the two soft skills were they have a highest level of satisfaction are:

- Operate effectively and calmly under pressure or in crisis situations
- Build networks with people inside and outside the firm

The first one, “operate effectively and calmly under pressure” is considered, as well, one of the most important ones; but the second one is considered one of the less important ones. The two soft skills that are less acquired during the studies are:

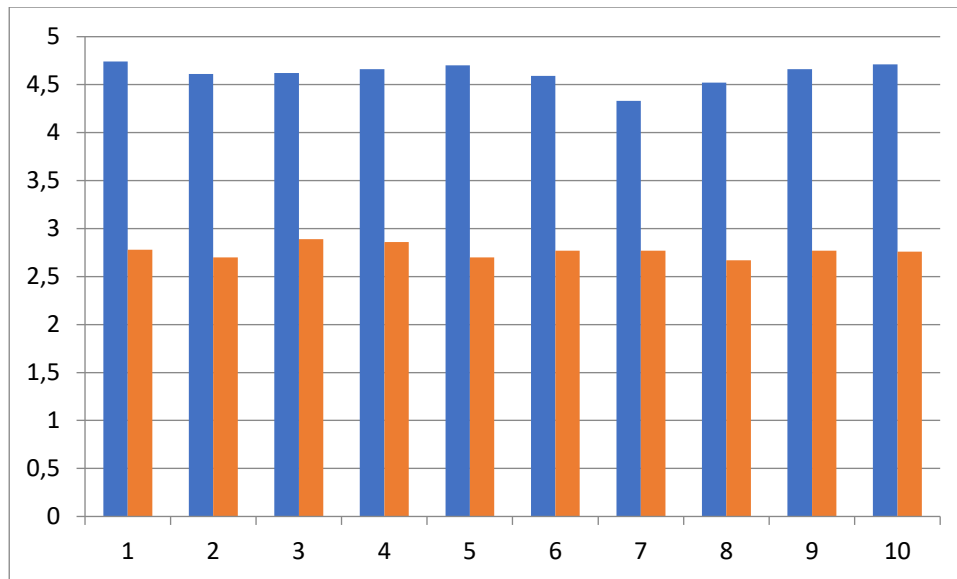
- Employ a team approach to solve problems when appropriate
- Listen carefully to input and concerns expressed by others

Table 7. Comparing the importance of Interpersonal Soft Skills at an entry level for a trainee and the level of satisfaction with the learning.

INTERPERSONAL SOFT SKILLS	importance	Satisfaction
Manage guest requests with understanding and sensitivity	4,74	2,78
Communicate efficiently (orally and in writing) with other employees, clients, and customers	4,61	2,7
Exhibit emotional intelligence, such as emotional control and passion	4,62	2,89
Effectively handle staff grievances and complaints	4,66	2,86
Act courteously and respectfully	4,7	2,7
Demonstrate awareness of others’ feelings	4,59	2,77
Exhibit negotiating skills	4,33	2,77
Provide effective feedback	4,52	2,67
Demonstrate empathy in dealing with customers and staff	4,66	2,77
Manifest intercultural sensitivity	4,71	2,76

*5-point scale ranging from 1=*not very important* to 5=*critically important*

Graph 7. Comparing the importance of Interpersonal Soft Skills at an entry level for a trainee and the level of satisfaction with the learning.



If we analyze the results obtained for the Leadership soft skills, in general terms, they are very similar to those obtained for the previous groups of soft skills. This group of soft skills obtains an average score a bit more high, as it moves around 4,5 when talking about the importance they consider it may have for their jobs. It's the same situation as the data collected among graduates.

There are three soft skills considered the most important in this section are (even average values are really close):

- Manage guest requests with understanding and sensitivity
- Act courteously and respectfully
- Manifest intercultural sensitivity

We can observe, again, that “act courteously and respectfully” and “manifest intercultural sensitivity” coincide as well as the two most important soft skills for this group in the graduates answers.

The two soft skills that are considered the less important are:

- Provide effective feedback
- Exhibit negotiating skills

If we compare the level of importance with the level of satisfaction, we can say that, again, there is a gap between what they need and what they learn, exactly the same as in the previous groups of soft skills. In this case, the two soft skills that are considered the ones where they obtained a major satisfaction or a higher level of knowledge are:

- Exhibit emotional intelligence, such as emotional control and passion
- Effectively handle staff grievances and complaints

In this case we find, according to the data, that there are three soft skills where the level of satisfaction is lower:

- Provide effective feedback
- Act courteously and respectfully
- Communicate efficiently (orally and in writing) with other employees, clients, and customers

Notice that the competence “act courteously and respectfully” is considered to be one of the most important and one with a lowest level of satisfaction; and that the competence “communicate efficiently” is one of the soft skills that according to graduates is most important in their current jobs.

In general terms, there are very few differences between the three groups of soft skill. Even this, we can see that the competences related to “interpersonal” skills are the ones considered the most important, with an average score of 4,61 and a deviation of 0.62. If we compare this data with the data obtained from the graduates, they also considered this group of soft skills as the most important group, but average score is a bit lower.

The next group, in terms of importance, are the “leadership” skills, with an average score of 4,50 and a deviation of 0,73; and the last group is the “creative” soft skills, with an average score of 4,47 and a deviation of 0.62.

In general terms, the results obtained from current students and graduates are very similar, but current students consider being soft skills a bit more important than graduates.

If we compare these ratios with the level of satisfaction obtained, data differ a little bit. The group that’s considered the best in terms of learning objectives acquired during the studies is the group related to “creative” skills, with an average score of 2,85 and a deviation of 1,33. The second group of soft skills is the one related to “interpersonal” skills, with a 2,76, and the one of “leadership” skills with an average score of 2,77 (there is almost no difference). The deviation, for those groups is 1,39 and 1,29 respectively. It means that there are important differences between the different respondents.

3.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

Spain has worked efficiently to achieve the objectives set by the new European Education framework. In the case of tourism, there are already many centers that, partially or totally, are already teaching the Degree of Tourism together with specialization masters. As mentioned in Spain, in the university area, there have only been general tourism degrees that included hotel management among their training. But there are several centers that work to obtain a degree directly related to hotel and restaurant management with professional and technical skills superior to the current higher education training cycles. This fact, contrasted with a significant number of universities that develop similar degrees in Europe, could close the map of university degrees related to tourism in Spain.

The Degree in Tourism offers a general overview of tourism in the first courses but, through the optional subjects in the last years there’s the possibility of specialization. But real specialization comes with the several masters’ degrees that focus on different areas such as planning and managing tourism destinations, cultural tourism, rural tourism, hotel management, and so on.

Regarding the structural change already made, it remains to be seen if there will be a real change in paradigm, as the Bologna process advocates, with a greater approach to student learning and the promotion of learning throughout life.

The mobility of students and professors is another of the objectives to be covered, but in which not only universities can participate by betting on structures of academic

flexibility. A decisive commitment is necessary to provide the necessary resources to carry it out with the highest guarantees of quality.

As mentioned, the competencies are focusing most of the efforts in the planning work of academic changes. It is competences that appear as training props in the reference documents that have been approved. Along the way, in many cases the concept of professional profile that only appears to frame a set of skills has been lost. We must not forget that is very important to connect the academic world with the working world and that, although the link can be developed through competencies, the detailed definition of professional profiles can provide us with clarifying elements.

After all the research is clear that there is a wide-spread consciousness of the importance of soft skills, but also exists a gap between the professional sector and their needs and the teaching and training model.

The challenge is to find innovative ways that allow introducing soft skills in the T&H curricula, focusing in new methods and fostering the cooperation among the different sectors.

Appendix 1: Face-to-face Interview Protocol and Supporting Documentation

Appendix 2: Focus Group Protocol and Supporting Documentation

Appendix 3: Survey Questionnaires and Supporting Documentation

Appendix 4: Results of the rank ordering task for face-to-face interviews

Appendix 4:

Results from the interviewee questionnaire completed in preparation for the face-to-face interview

Importance of leadership skills	Importance of interpersonal skills	Importance of communication skills	Importance of problem-solving skills	Importance of decision-making skills
8	9	7	2	
7	8	5	10	1
6	10	10	19	14
4	7	8	8	3
1	4	4	5	10
2	6	3	6	4
	7	8	3	9
	6	3	2	5
	1	5	9	7
	5	2	8	6
	3	7	6	2
	2	1	4	1
	8	6	1	8

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Confronts problems early before they become unmanageable	3	4	2	1
Employs a team approach to solve problems when appropriate	9	5	10	3
Results from the interview questionnaire completed in preparation for the face-to-face interview	4	4		
Listen carefully to input and concerns expressed by others	4	4		
Promotes respect and appreciation for diversity and individual differences	10	2	9	5
Same as in the previous task, now please rank each of the following 10 interpersonal skills in order of their importance in a new recruit.				
	<i>11</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>14</i>
<i>Soft skill</i>				
Manages guest requests with understanding and sensitivity	7	4	2	2
Communicates efficiently (orally and in writing) with other employees, clients, and customers	1	5	1	1
Exhibits emotional intelligence, such as emotional control and passion	2	1	3	5
Effectively handles staff grievances and complaints	6	7	6	8
Acts courteously and respectfully	3	8	4	6
Demonstrates awareness of others' feelings	9	2	5	7
Exhibits negotiating skills	8	10	10	3
Provides effective feedback	4	9	9	4
Demonstrates empathy in dealing with customers and staff	5	3	8	9
Manifests intercultural sensitivity	10	6	7	10