

Analytical Highlight

Prospects of Personal and protective service workers

Key facts

- Personal, care and protective service workers is the largest single occupational group in the EU-28.
- The group grew in size and as a proportion of total employment from 2003 to 2015.
- Growth from 2003 mostly occurred prior to 2008. Most growth occurred in jobs requiring medium- and higher level qualifications at the expense of those at the lower end.
- Overall employment levels for personal, care and protective service workers are forecast to fall over the coming decade, especially in the hotels and catering and the arts, recreation and other services sectors.

Who are they?

The group of personal and protective service workersⁱ covers a broad range of jobs, all of which are involved in the provision of services. Three out of four of these workers offer personal services covering a wide range of customers' needs. The type of service in question determines many of the skills required in these occupations, as well as the tasks undertaken in different jobs. For example:

- Jobs in the [personal services](#) sector include: the provision of services associated with travelling (e.g. flight attendants); preparing and serving food and beverages (e.g. waiters, bartenders and cooks); supervising or maintaining people's houses and buildings (e.g. housekeepers); providing driving lessons; caring for animals; providing hosting services for venues and events; providing hairdressing and beauty treatments; providing funeral services and so on.
- [Protective service workers](#) safeguard individuals and property against fire and other hazards, maintain law and order, and enforce laws and regulations. This subgroup includes a diverse range of occupations, such as police officers; fire fighters; prison officers; security guards; traffic wardens; and several warden-related jobs in leisure activities such as game hunting and swimming.

A Look into the Futureⁱⁱ

During 2005-2015, employment levels of personal and protective service workers grew by about 10%, while only a marginal increase is foreseen in the coming decade. Replacement demandⁱⁱⁱ creates jobs for both occupations; however, new job positions are expected only for personal service workers, while employment levels of protective service workers will actually shrink; and new comers in the occupation will only replace retirees. More information can be found [here](#).

In 2015, most employees in the personal and protective services held medium-level qualifications. This trend is projected to pertain until 2025, although the share of highly qualified workers is seen to grow. By 2025, one fifth of personal service workers and more than one third of protective services workers will be highly qualified (about 6% and 10% increase respectively compared with 2015 shares). At the same time, people with lower qualification levels will search for job opportunities within these occupations with rising difficulty. The largest employment sector of personal service

workers, accommodation and catering, offers a good example of the shift towards higher qualifications: in 2025, highly qualified employees are expected to increase by 50%.

Key trends in skills and drivers of change

A dramatic demographic change will affect the client group served by personal service workers. Over the next decade, Europe will face the effects of an ageing population. The 65+ age group will increase by 18.5% by 2025.^{iv} In comparison, the overall European population will increase by only 1.5% during the same period. New products, services and business models will emerge as a result of rising needs of an older society^v and this will be especially true for personal service workers. In addition, the nature of medical and psychological conditions of patients/clients will change as life expectancy increases.^{vi} Relevant services will need to adjust to accommodate: the workforce must meet the demand for certain skills (e.g. caretaking and cleaning) that will become increasingly important, and businesses may be able to tailor particular services to tap into new markets (e.g. senior tourism^{vii}).

Developments in **tourism** will affect the skills profile of respective personal services workers. Social trends and changing attitudes towards people with disabilities will boost *accessible tourism*^{viii}, where personal service workers can be widely employed. According to the European Commission, employees should be trained to have, among others knowledge of disabilities /types of disability and access requirements, principles of effective customer service, recognising and responding appropriately to people using personal supports and service animals and assistive technology^{ix}. *Stronger market segmentation* will continue affecting jobs and skills of relevant occupations. For example, the tourism industry includes elderly tourism, LGBT^x tourism, ecotourism, agritourism, culinary tourism etc. In turn, workers will need to diversify their skills accordingly.

NGO & travel agency “Premiki” has placed offering tourism products to “everyone” at the heart of its business. The concept encompasses that regardless of physical or mental limitation people shouldn’t be prevented from being able to travel to the place they desire. To accomplish its mission, Premiki offers accessible travel products, certifies touristic facilities which are “disability friendly”, and provide trainings to tourism professionals on accessible tourism. Through creating supply to meet the increasing demand, Premiki has successfully provided services in its native Slovenia and internationally.

Source: [Wei F. \(2012\) Compendium of Best Practices in Sustainable Tourism Prepared for United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs](#)

Protective service workers’ skills are being shaped by **the effects of greater tension in the political landscape**. Over the past fifteen years, a number of terrorist attacks have taken place in countries across Europe. According to some estimates, counter-terrorism spending in EU has increased by more than 160% between 2006 and 2011.^{xi} As a consequence, improving security and intelligence systems in patrolling and protecting public areas to prevent or tackle these threats have risen in the agenda. A higher demand for skills related to surveillance (e.g. CCTV^{xii}), policing, and other protective services is therefore likely.

Both personal and protective service workers include occupations with relatively high level of routine tasks – therefore, they are highly prone to partial replacement by **automation**. Overall, **technological developments** will significantly shape jobs and skills in both groups. Technological

developments in the security sector (e.g. more widespread use of CCTV, automated security systems in intelligent buildings and increase use of robots^{xiii} and drones)^{xiv} may decrease the demand for security guards and related jobs. For personal service workers, robots have been already developed with the foreseen capacity to support clients in museums, as tourist guides etc.^{xv}. But at the same time, as criminal actions increasingly spread into the digital world, rising demand can be expected for high-skilled professionals, who can handle security risks of physical damages, caused by remote interference (such as hijacking of driverless car or drone, hacking corporate ventilation systems or attempt to take over the control of a power plant.^{xvi}).

Response to Skill Challenges

Although no major changes are foreseen in employment levels of personal and protective service workers, their job content and thus skill needs can be expected to change. Skills development and upgrade will be important to find and sustain jobs in these occupations.

- Soft skills, such as communication skills, problem solving, teamwork skills, cultural awareness, courtesy and responsibility are all pivotal in making a difference for the customer, therefore providing a competitive edge for businesses. At the same time, these skills could prove particularly important for personal and protective services workers whose jobs are more prone to including automated technological applications.
- Special consideration for ICT literacy would be important, as technological advancements are expected in both occupations.
- Especially for personal service workers, and depending on the job role, skills need to be adjusted to the needs of specific user groups, such as the elderly and people with disabilities.

ⁱ Defined as ILO ISCO 08 groups 51 Personal service workers and 54 Protective services workers. ILO (2012) International Standard Classification of Occupations ISCO-08. Available at http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_172572.pdf. More information on the occupation can be found at: <https://ec.europa.eu/esco/portal/concept?lang=en&concept=http%3A%2F%2Fdata.europa.eu%2Fesco%2Foccupation%2F504&searchTerm=Personal%20service%20workers> and https://ec.europa.eu/esco/portal/concept?lang=en&concept=http%3A%2F%2Fdata.europa.eu%2Fesco%2Foccupation%2F480&conceptScheme=http%3A%2F%2Fdata.europa.eu%2Fesco%2FconceptScheme%2FESCO_Occupations

ⁱⁱ All figures from 2016 Cedefop forecast except where stated.

ⁱⁱⁱ The need to replace workers leaving a profession for various reasons, such as retirement. For more information on replacement demand and how it drives employment across sectors, can be found on the Skills Panorama:

http://skills Panorama.cedefop.europa.eu/en/analytical_highlights/focus-replacement-demand-driving-millions-job-openings-across-eu

^{iv} EUROPOP2013 – Projected population in the main scenario, own calculation.

^v World Economic Forum 2016, “The Future of Jobs”, http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_Future_of_Jobs.pdf.

^{vi} European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies 2012, *Home care across Europe: Current structure and future challenges*, viewed 1 June 2016, http://www.euro.who.int/_data/assets/pdf_file/0008/181799/e96757.pdf

^{vii} European Commission 2013, “*Europe, the best destination for seniors*”- “*Facilitating cooperation mechanisms to increase senior tourists’ travels, within Europe and from third countries, in the low and medium seasons*”, Expert draft report, Annex 1, demographic change and the rise of senior tourists.

^{viii} European Commission 2014, “*Economic Impact and travel patterns of Accessible Tourism in Europe – Final Report*”, viewed 1 June 2016, <http://www.accessibletourism.org/resources/toolip/doc/2014/07/06/study-a-economic-impact-and-travel-patterns-of-accessible-tourism-in-europe---fi.pdf>

^{ix} European Commission 2014, “*Mapping the skills and training need to improve accessibility in tourism services*”. For further information on Design for All see V. Egger, M.A. Klenovic “*Barrierefreies Bauen: Ausbildung und Beratung in Oesterreich – Analyse und Ausblick*”, 2010.

^x Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender.

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- ^{xi}European Parliament 2015, "Counter-terrorism funding in the EU budget", viewed 1 June 2016, [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2015/559490/EPRS_BRI\(2015\)559490_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2015/559490/EPRS_BRI(2015)559490_EN.pdf)
- ^{xii} Closed-circuit television, also referred to as video surveillance.
- ^{xiii} Muoio, D. 2015, "China's new security robot will shock you when it feels threatened", *Tech Insider*, 28 April 2016, viewed 1 June 2016, <http://www.techinsider.io/chinas-anbot-riot-robot-2016-4>
- ^{xiv} Metz, R. 2014, "Rise of the Robot Security Guards", *MIT Technology Review*, 13 November 2014, viewed 1 June 2016, <https://www.technologyreview.com/s/532431/rise-of-the-robot-security-guards/>
- ^{xv} Stuart, M. 2016, "Engineers in China have created robots that imitate humans with scary accuracy", *Tech Insider*, 27 April 2016, viewed 1 June 2016 <http://www.techinsider.io/china-robot-goddesses-speak-talk-human-humanoid-2016-4>
- ^{xvi} Glance, D. 2015, "How cybercrime has evolved over the past 5 years.", *World Economic Forum (WEF)*, 7 September 2015, viewed 1 June 2016, <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2015/09/how-cybercrime-has-evolved-over-the-past-5-years/> and Goodman, M. 2016, "The internet of things will turn our machines against us.", *Wired*, 16 January 2016, viewed 1 June 2016, <http://www.wired.co.uk/news/archive/2016-01/15/internet-of-hackable-things>