

What the government can do to help the hospitality industry before and after Brexit

About the author



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Dr. Maria Gebbels is a lecturer in hospitality management at the University of Greenwich. Her areas of expertise are career development in the hospitality industry and critical hospitality management research. Maria is currently working on advancing knowledge in the area of personology and professionalism in the hospitality industry, as well as the role of women in professional work settings.

Whilst the UK finalises its strategy for exiting the European Union, it is business as usual for the majority of hospitality businesses, but with the added disadvantage of having limited knowledge of what the present and future hold. The hospitality industry, which is the fourth largest industry in the UK and represents 10% of GDP, employs a much higher proportion of EU nationals compared to the UK workforce as a whole.

Not only that, according to UKHospitality, 4 in 5 hospitality businesses are classified as SMEs (small and medium-sized enterprises), and in comparison to larger companies, these are less likely to have sufficient resources available to prepare for Brexit and its aftermath.

So, what can the government or policy makers do to help the hospitality industry before and after Brexit?

BEFORE

- * Government and hospitality businesses should be working together in partnership to support small businesses by offering assistance with policy changes using a 24/7 hotline or a dedicated point of contact for each sub-sector of the industry.
- * Further collaborations between businesses should be encouraged in a form of regular meetings to discuss the changes and share best practices. These should also be by professional bodies and trade associations.
- * To retain existing staff and attract a new workforce, the government needs to help the industry in promoting employment in hospitality as a career of choice with flexible working practices.

AFTER

- * Hospitality businesses should be offered financial incentives to create partnerships with higher education institutions to develop hospitality leaders of tomorrow by offering placement opportunities with a fast track to permanent employment post-graduation for both UK and overseas students.
- * Provide priority funding for hospitality SMEs which includes career information, guidance and advice on available career opportunities.
- * To grow this vibrant industry and ensure that the UK remains a globally competitive player, the government needs to implement a plan for filling the staff shortages by clearly defining skills required by the industry and structuring recruitment accordingly, both within the UK and overseas.



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