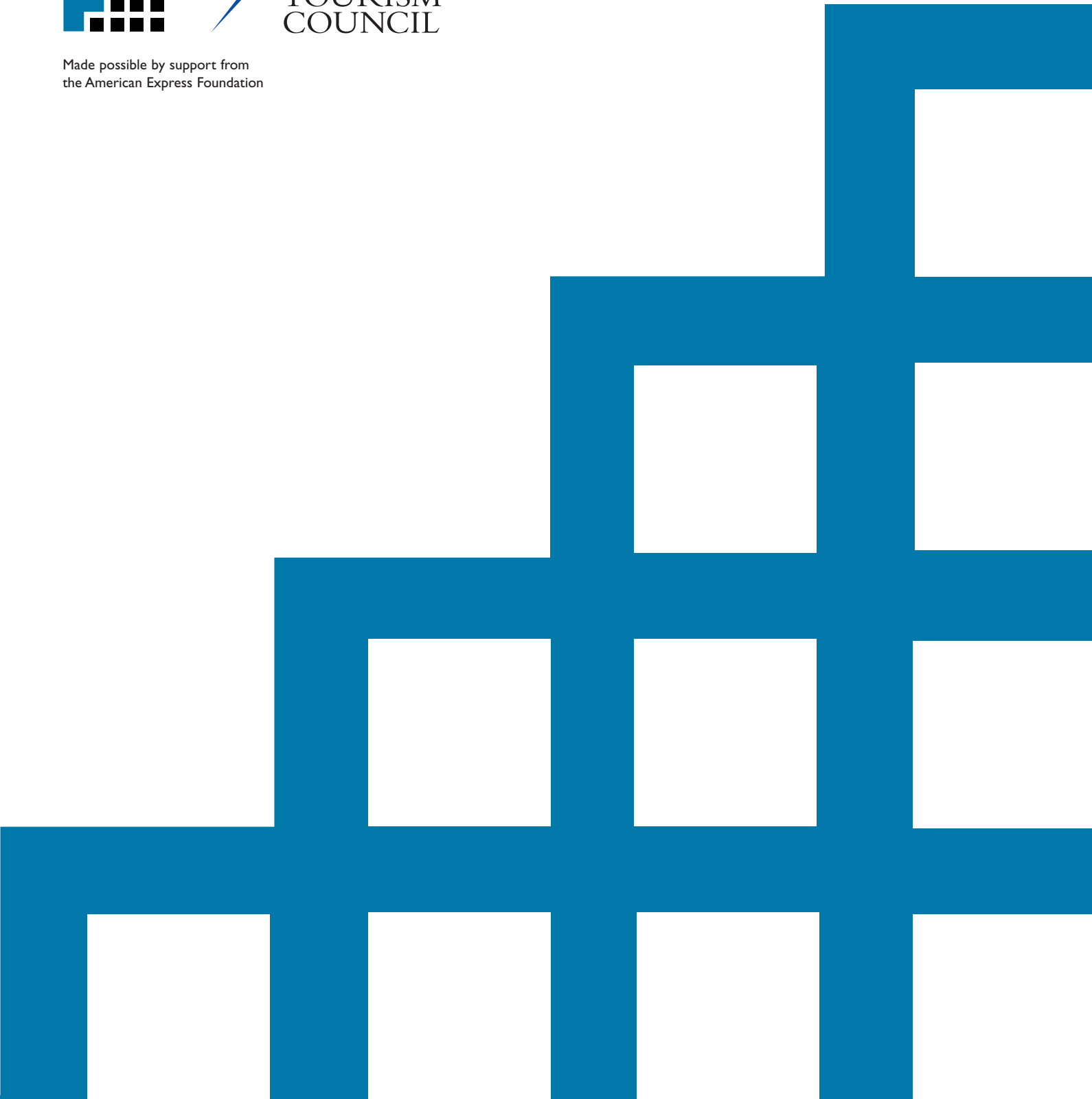


# MEXICO

## JOBS FOR THE MILLENNIUM



Made possible by support from  
the American Express Foundation





FUTUR, the Fundación Pro-Educación en Turismo, A.C., is a non-profit organisation whose mission is to promote the development and awareness of tourism in Mexico. FUTUR works for the overall development of tourism professionals by providing a vital link between schools and enterprises, is supported by members of the business community and collaborates closely with educational institutions throughout the country.



The World Travel & Tourism Council ('WTTC') is the Business Leaders' Forum for Travel & Tourism. WTTC's vision is a world where travel & tourism works for everyone, spreading peace and prosperity amongst travelers and host communities through development that is environmentally, socially, culturally and economically sustainable. One of WTTC's Seven Strategic Priorities is to promote the positive image of travel & tourism as a provider of jobs & career opportunities.



The New York City-based American Express Foundation has a long history of grant-making worldwide, including in Mexico. Grants fall into three program areas: community service, with funding to support disaster relief and American Express employee volunteers in their local communities; cultural heritage, with the twin themes of protecting the built and natural environment and supporting arts and culture unique to countries and regions; and economic independence, with an emphasis on supporting initiatives that encourage, support or develop economic self-reliance.

# INTRODUCTION



The Fundación Pro-Educación en Turismo, A.C. and the World Travel & Tourism Council are pleased to present *Mexico – Jobs for the Millennium*, a report on human resources and training in the travel and tourism industry in Mexico. This report was made possible by a grant from the American Express Foundation.

*Mexico - Jobs for the Millennium* presents significant new research into this vital subject. Human resources are at the core of travel and tourism, the world's largest services provider. The industry's reach into all aspects of the economy and society, and its anticipated rate of growth, offer tremendous opportunities for those countries that consider the requirements. To compete, every country, including Mexico, must ensure that its workforce will be capable of delivering quality products and services demanded

by increasingly discerning and well-informed consumers. This report presents a series of recommended actions for both the public and the private sector that could lead to better service quality, improved livelihoods and an even greater impact for Mexico's travel and tourism economy.

FUTUR and the World Travel & Tourism Council are delighted to be collaborating in public-private partnerships that are essential to the development of travel and tourism which is economically, socially and environmentally sustainable.

The support of the American Express Foundation is critical to the success of this co-operation. We are grateful to all those who have contributed to and supported this research and look forward to even greater success in Mexico's travel and tourism.

# OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this study was to collect information on current and future utilization of human resources in the travel and tourism industry in Mexico, with special emphasis on educational and training activities. The specific objectives of the study were to:

ASSESS THE STATUS OF THE TRAVEL AND TOURISM INDUSTRY  
AND TRAVEL-RELATED EDUCATION IN MEXICO;

IDENTIFY THE MAJOR HUMAN RESOURCES CONCERNS OF  
MEXICAN TRAVEL AND TOURISM EMPLOYERS;

IDENTIFY THE MAJOR HUMAN RESOURCES CONCERNS OF  
MEXICAN GOVERNMENTAL TOURISM ORGANIZATIONS;

FORMULATE RECOMMENDATIONS TO ASSIST  
THE WORLD TRAVEL & TOURISM COUNCIL AND THE  
FUNDACIÓN PRO-EDUCACIÓN EN TURISMO, A.C.  
IN DEVELOPING PLANS AND ACTIVITIES TO MEET THE HUMAN RESOURCES NEEDS  
OF THE MEXICAN TRAVEL AND TOURISM INDUSTRY.

Because published information on human resources issues in Mexico is not readily available, the research design necessitated a preliminary and exploratory phase, aimed at identifying the main questions related to the above theme. This was accomplished by conducting five focus groups in Acapulco, Puerto Vallarta, Los Cabos, Cancun, and Huatulco. The findings of the focus groups were used in the design of the questionnaires administered in Phase II.

Phase II of the Jobs for the Millennium Mexico study is based on a survey of two hundred and nine private companies and twenty five local, state and national tourism organizations throughout Mexico representing all major sectors.

This report highlights the main findings and recommendations of the study.

A copy of the full report is available from FUTUR or the World Travel & Tourism Council.

We thank the American Express Foundation for making this report possible.



# FINDINGS

## LABOR SHORTAGE

More than one-third of the employers surveyed experience difficulties in recruiting qualified managers, and more than 40 per cent have experienced difficulties in recruiting qualified skilled or semi-skilled employees.

## THE TRAINING FUNCTION

Because of the relatively small size of most firms in the Mexican travel and tourism industry, the presence of a full-time training function is rare.

More than three-fourths of the firms do not have a training department/unit. Of those that do, 50 per cent of the firms had one employee or less in their training department.

## SKILL DEFICIENCIES

Foreign languages, safety & security, and computers, are the skills that were found to be deficient across most job categories.

## EXPANSION OF TOURISM EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Employers strongly favor improving the quality of general education in elementary and high schools, and the expansion of public education and training programs that prepare executives, managers, and skilled, semi-skilled, and unskilled employees to work in the tourism industry.

Almost unanimously, they requested that their governments (federal and state) regulate and certify all educational and training institutions. The expansion of in-house training programs is favored by employers and, even more strongly, by government representatives.

Employee training is perceived to be so important that more than one-third of the respondents think that it would be appropriate for the federal government to mandate training activities throughout the industry. All employers in the survey thought that it would be appropriate for state governments to do the same.

An overwhelming majority of both employers and government representatives supported the establishment of service delivery standards. Employers in the survey requested government assistance in the design and implementation of in-house training programs.

## QUALITY OF EXTERNAL AND IN-HOUSE TRAINING PROGRAMS

A majority of survey respondents rate the effectiveness of the existing external tourism training and education programs in the medium range. The practical component in external tourism training and education programs is judged to be inadequate by both employers and government representatives, and the student-internship opportunities in the industry are rated as insufficient.

Both employers and government representatives agreed that one possible reason was the lack of communication between the educational sector and the tourism industry.

## THE STATUS OF THE TOURISM INDUSTRY IN MEXICAN SOCIETY

The tourism industry is perceived as having a modest status in Mexican society. A large proportion of the employers, as well as a smaller proportion of government representatives, thought that the industry was receiving little recognition and support from both the federal and state governments.

Both employers and government representatives judge that the Mexican tourist industry was "divided and did not speak with one voice".

According to the survey the industry is afflicted with high turnover rates. Employers and government respondents perceive the career opportunities in the industry to be modest.

Salaries in the Mexican tourism industry were evaluated as lower than in other industries by government representatives, and especially by employers. Both sets of respondents judge tourism employees to possess a medium level of customer service skills.

New employees' expectations about work in the industry were perceived by the employers and government representatives to be somewhat glamorous and unrealistic.

## DIFFERENCES BETWEEN EMPLOYERS AND GOVERNMENT

This survey did not show any significant differences between the opinions expressed by the employer respondents and the government representatives.

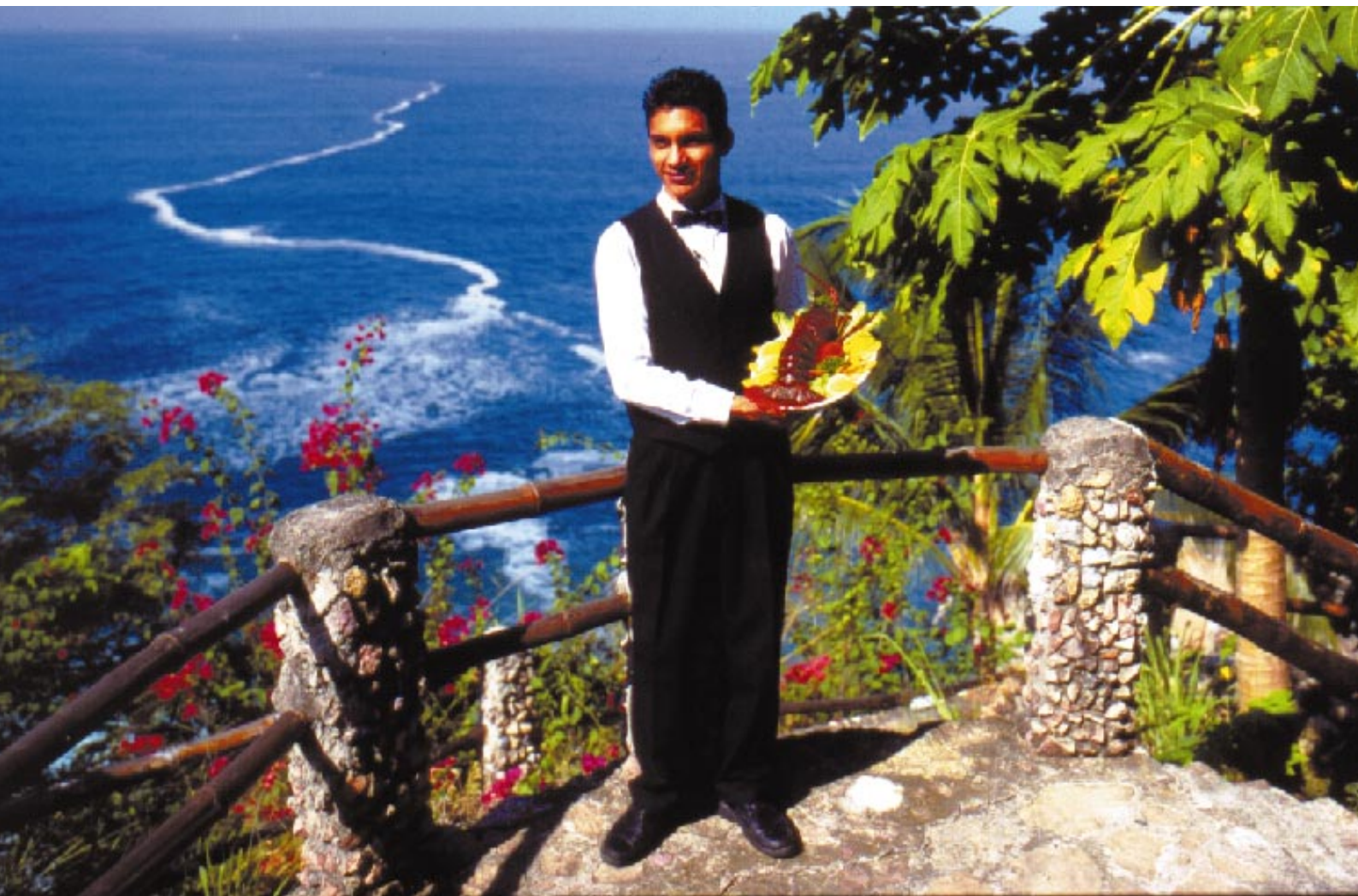
# RECOMMENDATIONS

## GOVERNMENT

1. Government tourism authorities (GTA's) should actively communicate the importance and contribution of the tourism industry.
2. GTA's should increase public awareness of career opportunities in the travel and tourism industry for properly educated and motivated individuals.
3. GTA's should increase the number of tourism training and educational institutions.
4. GTA's should establish joint private-public sector task forces where training is not required by law.
5. GTA's and educational institutions should establish a series of no/low cost teacher training courses.
6. GTA's should regulate and/or certify all external tourism training and educational institutions.
7. Mexico's Ministry of Tourism, national education authorities and tourism industry representatives should establish a tripartite council to set out standards for skills

## THE TRAVEL AND TOURISM INDUSTRY

1. Travel and tourism employers should increase the budgets assigned to human resources development.
2. The Mexican travel and tourism industry should create a national body to serve as a unified voice.
3. The Mexican travel and tourism industry must strive to restructure itself from an industry that employs people in jobs, to an industry that offers lifetime career opportunities.
4. The Mexican travel and tourism industry should create more realistic employment expectations.
5. The Mexican travel and tourism industry should provide more opportunities for internships and practical training.
6. The Mexican travel and tourism industry must improve the level of its employees' skills in the areas of foreign languages, computers and safety and security skills.





Dear Friends:

The Fundación Pro-Educación en Turismo, A.C. (FUTUR) is a non-profit association sponsored by the American Express Foundation, the Ministry of Tourism, the tourism industry and related businesses. Our mission is to foster and promote the development of a tourism-oriented culture in Mexico and to contribute to the training of excellent graduates in tourism. All of this is achieved through encouraging a close relationship between schools and businesses that share a sense of belonging and social responsibility.

In this context and with the purpose of assisting future generations, we became involved with research that examines the real needs of training and human resources in travel and tourism in Mexico. Our goal is to contribute to the development of the tourism industry.

We consider this research useful and important for businesses as they plan their employees' training. We also consider it important for schools as they plan their new curricula and Mexico's governmental institutions as they make policies that help people strengthen their preparedness for the world of work in one of Mexico's fastest growing industries. The development of talent and skills is the main ingredient of successful tourism.

I would like to thank all those who kindly helped us by responding to the questionnaires for this research. I am certain that your effort will benefit travel and tourism and especially the youth in Mexico.

Edmundo Pérez-de Cobos  
President, Fundación Pro-Educación en Turismo, A.C.  
President & General Manager, American Express Co. (México)

FUTUR Founding Partners:

Aerovías de México, American Express Company (México), Budget Rent a Car, Compañía Mexicana de Aviación, Dollar Rent a Car, Europcar, Fundación American Express, Hoteles Camino Real, Hotel Nikko, Hoteles Presidente Inter-Continental, Hyatt of México, IBM de México, KLM, Northwest.



Foundation



Paseo de la Reforma No. 350, Piso 20  
Col. Juárez  
06600 México, D.F.  
MÉXICO



1-2 QUEEN VICTORIA TERRACE  
SOVEREIGN COURT  
LONDON E1 W 3HA  
UNITED KINGDOM