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Service industries

About 4 out of 5 British workers work in the service industry. Here are some significant industries:

**Financial services**

This sector, which includes banking and insurance, is one of the biggest employers. London alone is one of world’s great financial capitals. It is also the center of world insurance and the London Stock Exchange is one of the main internationals financial markets. Other significant cities are Edinburgh and Leeds. Advertising, market research and computer systems have also expanded.

**Tourism**

Over the last years income from foreign tourists has increased by 30%. This industry employs 3.1 million people. Popular areas for tourism include the West County, The Lake District, North Wales and the Scottish Highlands. Historic cities also attract lots of attention.

**Retailing**

Large chain stores are dominant. Smaller shops experience difficulty in competing with the dominant big chains and are disappearing.

**Service sectors**

Healthcare, education, arts and government also employ large numbers of people.

OVERWORKED AND UNDERPAID

Britain’s national health service (NHS) is funded by the government and employs 1.2 million people. There are 690,000 registered nurses, most of which are women. Their hard work is highly underpaid. Research shows that

* they work day and night shifts
* most of them regularly do a lot of unpaid overtime
* 90% of them think they should be paid more
* a quarter of them have a second job to compensate money
* 1 in 8 nurses is under 30
* 31% would leave nursing if they could

For these reasons UK is the highest exporter of nurses.

A registered nurse talks about the situation. She describes how the nurses work on a rotational basis, so they work 5 weeks of day shifts and 1 week of night shifts. Her daily work involves talking to the staff and the patients, check the patients’ records, do paperwork and have meetings with nurses or doctors.