

World Tourism Organization



UNWTO

ABOUT UNWTO

The **World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)** is the United Nations agency responsible for the promotion of responsible, sustainable and universally accessible tourism.

As the leading international organization in the field of tourism, UNWTO promotes tourism as a driver of **economic growth, inclusive development and environmental sustainability** and offers leadership and support to the sector in advancing knowledge and tourism policies worldwide.

UNWTO encourages the implementation of the **Global Code of Ethics for Tourism**, to maximize tourism's socio-economic contribution while minimizing its possible negative impacts, and is committed to promoting tourism as an instrument in achieving the **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**.

DID YOU KNOW?

- Tourism represents 10% of global GDP – direct, indirect and induced impact.
- Tourism is responsible for one in every ten jobs worldwide – direct, indirect and induced impacts.
- As a worldwide export category, tourism ranked third in 2015, after chemicals and fuels, and ahead of automotive products and food.
- For Least Developed Countries (LDCs), tourism accounts for 7% of exports of goods and services (10% for the non-fuel exporters)
- In 2016, over 1.2 billion international tourists travelled the globe, by 2030 the number of international tourists is expected to reach 1.8 billion.

OUR PRIORITIES

Mainstreaming tourism in the global agenda: Advocating the value of tourism as a driver of socio-economic growth and development, its inclusion as a priority in national and international policies and the need to create a level playing field for the sector to develop and prosper.

Improving tourism competitiveness: Improving UNWTO Members' competitiveness through knowledge creation and exchange, human resources development and the promotion of excellence in areas such as policy planning, statistics and market trends, sustainable tourism development, marketing and promotion, product development and risk and crisis management.

Promoting sustainable tourism development: Supporting sustainable tourism policies and practices which make optimal use of environmental resources, respect the socio-cultural authenticity of host communities and provide socio-economic benefits for all.

Advancing tourism's contribution to poverty reduction and development: Maximizing the contribution of tourism to poverty reduction and achieving the SDGs by making tourism work as a tool for development and promoting the inclusion of tourism in the development agenda.

Fostering knowledge, education and capacity building: Supporting countries to assess and address their needs in education and training, as well as providing networks for knowledge creation and exchange.

Building partnerships: Engaging with the private sector, regional and local tourism organizations, academia and research institutions, civil society and the UN system to build a more sustainable, responsible and competitive tourism sector.

OUR STRUCTURE

Members: An intergovernmental organization, UNWTO has 156 Member States, 6 Territories, 2 Permanent Observers and over 500 Affiliate Members.

Organs: The General Assembly is the supreme organ of the Organization. The Executive Council takes all measures, in consultation with the Secretary-General, for the implementation of the decisions and recommendations of the General Assembly and reports to the Assembly.

Secretariat: UNWTO headquarters are based in Madrid, Spain. The Secretariat is led by the Secretary-General and organized into programmes covering issues such as sustainability, education, tourism trends and marketing, statistics and the Tourism Satellite Account (TSA), destination management, ethics and social responsibility, and risk and crisis management. The Technical Cooperation and Services Programme carries out development projects in over 100 countries worldwide, while the Regional Programmes for Africa, the Americas, Asia and the Pacific, Europe and the Middle East serve as the link between UNWTO and its 156 Member States. The Affiliate Members Programme represents UNWTO's more than 500 plus Members from the private sector, academia and civil society.

“Tourism has become a pillar of economies, a passport to prosperity, and a transformative force for improving millions of lives.”

United Nations Secretary-General, **Antonio Guterres**

UNWTO: A SHORT HISTORY

- 1970:** The Statutes of the World Tourism Organization (WTO) are adopted on 27 September, known from 1979 onwards as World Tourism Day.
- 1975:** The first WTO Secretary-General is appointed and the General Assembly establishes WTO headquarters in Madrid, Spain.
- 2000:** The United Nations Statistics Commission approves the international standards included in the Tourism Satellite Account (TSA).
- 2001:** The UN General Assembly officially recognizes the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism.
- 2002:** 2002 is declared the International Year of Ecotourism.
- 2003:** WTO joins the UN system, becoming UNWTO, the UN specialized agency for tourism.
- 2007:** UNWTO presents the Davos Declaration, the tourism sector's response to the challenge of climate change.
- 2009:** The 18th UNWTO General Assembly approves the Roadmap for Recovery to see the tourism sector through the 2008-2009 global economic crisis.
- 2012:** For the first time in history over 1 billion international tourists travel around the globe in one single year. Tourism is included in the Outcome Document of RIO+20 the UN Decadal Conference on Sustainable Development, as well as in the Declaration of the G20 Leaders.
- 2013:** The 20th UNWTO General Assembly approves the Recommendations on Accessible Tourism.
- 2014:** In line with UNWTO recommendations, a resolution recognizing the contribution of sustainable tourism to poverty eradication, community development and the protection of biodiversity is adopted by consensus by the 69th Session of the UN General Assembly.
- 2015:** The UN General Assembly approves the adoption of 2017 as the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development, assigning UNWTO as the lead UN agency for the initiative.