



UNWTO Working Groups

Introduction

During the 38th Plenary Session of the Affiliate Members that took place in Yerevan, Armenia, on 3–4 October 2016, the Affiliate Members present agreed to create a series of working groups to enable greater support for the various initiatives included in the Action Plan and to provide members with new forms of collaboration and to be platforms for participation in the relevant working areas.

Suggested working groups

The working groups of the Affiliate Members Programme are defined as multidisciplinary teams in which various UNWTO members with common interests in specific fields collaborate. Thus far, the following working groups have been created:

- Working group on **accessible tourism** (At the request of Redestable)
- Working group on **destinations at stake** (At the request of BTW)
- Working group on the **meetings industry** (At the request of ICCA and IMEX)
- Working group on **quality in tourism** (At the request of Instituto de Calidad Turística – ICTE)
- Working group on **scientific tourism** (At the request of Fundación Starlight)
- Working group on **technology and tourism** (At the request of Google and Kyoto University)
- Working group on **youth tourism** (At the request of WYSE)

The main objectives are the following:

1. To serve as practical mechanisms to enrich the content of the Affiliate Members Programme's Action Plan;
2. To foster the knowledge exchange among the different actors involved;
3. To promote public-private collaboration in specific segments; and

4. To contribute to the visibility of UNWTO principles in the field of sustainability, accessibility and responsibility in tourism.

Participation in the working groups:

- The work of each working group will be supported mainly by one or more Affiliate Member who is an expert in the subject at hand, who will contribute their knowledge to the development of contents and activities. The coordination of the different activities will be carried out from the Affiliate Members Programme;
- To formalize the participation, members must send an email to the Affiliate Members Programme requesting to be part of the working group in which they are interested;
- Members may participate in all groups they deem appropriate, providing experience, suggestions and technical means to achieve their objectives;
- Working group meetings will take place every two months and will be carried out through videoconferencing systems. In addition, working group meetings will be held taking advantage of activities or events organized by UNWTO or its members to bring together a significant number of members who may be interested in this issue.

Action plan

1. Working Group Meetings

It is encouraged to hold of meetings in which current issues related to the topic of the working group will be addressed and presentations of the activities of the members will be made, providing an important meeting point for the exchange of opinions and experiences.

The meetings will take place every two months and will be carried out through video conference systems.

Meetings of the Working Group will also be held taking advantage of activities or events organized by UNWTO or its members to bring together a significant number of members who may be interested in this issue.

All Working groups will be officially presented in the framework of the 39th Plenary Session of Affiliate Members, held during the 22nd Session of the UNWTO General Assembly in Chengdu, China, on 11-16 September 2017.

2. Awareness-raising campaigns

Open sessions will be carried out, presenting the benefits of each working group and showing examples of companies in the sector that have improved their competitiveness and productivity through the topic at hand. These sessions will be carried out online or in person, taking advantage of fairs, congresses, etc.

3. Development of pilot projects

The main objective of these actions would be to demonstrate to the tourism sector, through the development of pilot projects, how to integrate solutions in a specific area. This will result in a significant increase in competitiveness, quality and profitability in the overall management of destinations, resources, facilities and services. The pilots are open to all members and the first pilot project is expected to develop in 2018.

4. Biannual event

An international event will be held every two years, with the format of a conference, congress, meeting, etc., in which one of the Member States will act as host and will serve to raise awareness about the current and future state of the specific topic at a global level, in which all the partners who are currently working and actively to promote the topic in tourism will be able to participate.

I. WORKING GROUP ON ACCESSIBLE TOURISM

1. Objectives

The working group on accessible tourism was suggested by Red Española de Turismo Accesible (Red Estable), a UNWTO Affiliate Member, with the following objectives:

- 1.1. To provide a complete analysis in the following areas:
 - Main reasons for creating accessible tourism strategies
 - Experiences and success stories provided by destinations
 - Global-standardized work system on accessibility
 - Measures to be implemented
- 1.2. To establish collaboration mechanisms on accessible tourism, universal accessibility and design for all among members of UNWTO, promoting the launch of research activities and pilot projects in this area
- 1.3. To disseminate activities developed by members, especially innovative experiences, studies and activities, as well as the benefits of their implementation in practice
- 1.4. To promote measures aimed at improving the promotion and commercialization of accessible tourist products
- 1.5. To promote the quality and competitiveness of tourist facilities, resources and services through the implementation of measures linked to the principles of universal accessibility and design for all
- 1.6. To foster the development of technical and technological solutions adapted to the real needs of tourists with disabilities, reduced mobility or special needs
- 1.7. To propose mechanisms to provide the appropriate knowledge to the professionals of the sector to integrate tourist accessibility within their strategic planning as an additional component in the value chain
- 1.8. To contribute to the debate to standardize the parameters and criteria that define the accessible tourist product, in accordance with the regulations on accessibility and international recommendations.

2. Action Plan

- 2.1. Meetings of the working group in 2017:
 - 22nd Session of the UNWTO General Assembly; Chengdu, China, 11–16 September 2017
 - 1st Ibero-American Accessible Tourism Summit; Mexico City, Mexico, October 2017

II. WORKING GROUP ON DESTINATIONS AT STAKE

1. Objectives

The working group on destinations at stake was suggested by FEDERAL ASSOCIATION OF THE GERMAN TOURISM INDUSTRY (BTW), a UNWTO Affiliate Member, with the following objectives:

- 1.1. To serve as a practical mechanism to promote and lead the discussion and action plan to aid those destinations going through various challenges.
- 1.2. To focus on enhancing methods to best stabilize destinations which are suffering sharp declines in bookings.
- 1.3. To positively advocate for tourism policies in line with UNWTO's principles, while assisting tourism stakeholders in supporting these initiatives and foster tangible outcomes
- 1.4. To deliver a comprehensive analysis of the following:
 - What are the main reasons behind the decline in bookings?
 - How have destinations handled similar situations in the past?
 - Can we develop a standardized benchmarking system?
 - Which measures should be implemented in the current situation?
- 1.5. To establish and consolidate a structure and methodology for collaboration in areas of work related to destinations at stake

2. Action Plan

2.1. Meetings of the working group in 2017:

- 22nd Session of the UNWTO General Assembly; Chengdu, China, 11–16 September 2017

2.2. Contributing to UNWTO meetings:

- UNWTO organizes approximately 100 meetings annually. The working group will be informed about which of these potentially could benefit from incorporating the theme of destinations at stake, or where this topic is already being covered. The working group will help to identify suitable speakers and/or experts on the specific themes covered.

III. WORKING GROUP ON THE MEETINGS INDUSTRY

1. Objectives

The working group on the meetings industry was suggested by ICCA and IMEX, two UNWTO Affiliate Members, with the following objectives:

- 1.1. To enable member countries to better understand how to develop effective strategies to become successful meetings destinations, with the Working Group's co-leaders, ICCA and IMEX, acting as global communication channels to the most appropriate experts in this field
- 1.2. To instigate seminars and training programmes, and assist in adding meetings content to appropriate UNWTO events.

2. Action Plan

2.1. Responding to meetings-related queries:

UNWTO to routinely pass on meetings-related queries from member countries and affiliate members to ICCA and IMEX, who will act to either respond to queries/provide advice, or pass them on to the most expert sources for their specific needs.

2.2. Annual Workshop/seminar:

ICCA to collaborate with IMEX to set up a workshop/seminar during IMEX Frankfurt in May 2018, aimed at countries which are interested in entering the meetings market, and require strategic guidance.

2.3. Other UNWO departments:

The Meetings Industry Working Group will examine the potential of working with other UNWTO departments, especially regarding statistics and trends to generate better analysis of existing data.

2.4. Meetings of the working group in 2017:

- 22nd Session of the UNWTO General Assembly; Chengdu, China, 11–16 September 2017

IV. WORKING GROUP ON QUALITY IN TOURISM

1. Objectives

The working group on quality in tourism was suggested by Instituto de Calidad Turística (ICTE), a UNWTO Affiliate Member, with the following objectives:

- 1.1. To define the general framework of tourism quality through the compiling information from countries involved in quality programmes, as well as share examples of good practices, quality standards and models of recognition granted in order to facilitate the decision-making of the actors and the development of policies fostering appropriate tourism quality
- 1.2. To establish a forum for the exchange of opinions and experiences with the objective of deepening the different aspects of tourism quality, and subsequently, promote the development of initiatives that will offer tangible results
- 1.3. To organize meetings with governments and institutions that recognize quality as a means to improve tourism competitiveness and the professionalization of the industry
- 1.4. To disseminate the various international experiences in the field of standardization and certification of quality stamps
- 1.5. To promote quality in tourism in both the public and private sector
- 1.6. To promote the development of specific actions aimed at the training of professionals and the improvement of tourism services in this field
- 1.7. To encourage the tourism sector to recognize the fundamental role of tourism quality as a motor for growth, generating employment, as well as its impact on improving the competitiveness of destinations
- 1.8. To encourage the development of public-private partnerships and the exchange of knowledge through the establishment of policies for action
- 1.9. To maximize the fundamental role of quality as an instrument for the development of sustainable tourism in destinations

2. Action Plan

- 2.1. The International Congress of Tourism Quality, a reference within the sector that has taken place every two years since 2009, will offer the ideal space to present the advances of the working group as well as contribute to the promotion of tourism quality in the world.

V. WORKING GROUP ON SCIENTIFIC TOURISM

1. Objectives

The working group on scientific tourism was suggested by Fundación Starlight, a UNWTO Affiliate Member, with the following objectives:

- 1.1. To establish and consolidate structures and mechanisms of liaising and working together in Scientific Tourism among UNWTO Members.
- 1.2. To disseminate to the tourism sector the activities carried out by the members, by sharing innovative experiences, studies and activities carried out by them, and the benefits of the application of such measures.
- 1.3. To encourage the generation of collaborative projects and activities in this area.
- 1.4. To promote measures to improve the promotion and marketing of technological and scientific tourism products.
- 1.5. To promote the quality and competitiveness of tourism facilities, resources and destinations by implementing scientific tourism and in accordance with the new improvements in tourism.
- 1.6. To encourage the development of scientific solutions and techniques developed to ensure global tourism activity, adapted to the connected experiences necessities of the tourists.
- 1.7. To propose mechanisms that help to provide adequate knowledge to destinations and companies so that they can integrate scientific tourism in their strategic planning as information from big data.
- 1.8. To contribute to consensus-building and the standardization of parameters and criteria that defines and characterizes the application of sciences in tourism, in accordance with regulations and international recommendation relative to science.
- 1.9. To facilitate relations between tour operators and tourism destinations that are UNWTO Members, to highlight and enhance existing scientific tourism tools and increase end-user demand for them.

2. Action Plan

2.1. Meetings of the working group in 2017:

- 22nd Session of the UNWTO General Assembly; Chengdu, China, 11–16 September 2017

VI. WORKING GROUP ON TECHNOLOGY AND TOURISM

1. Objectives

The working group on technology and tourism was suggested by Google and Kyoto University, two UNWTO Affiliate Members, with the following objectives:

- 1.1. To establish relations and collaboration mechanisms in the field of technology among UNWTO members.
- 1.2. To encourage the implementation of research activities and pilot studies in this area.
- 1.3. To disseminate activities advanced by the members, especially the technologically innovate experiences, studies and activities, as well as the benefits of applying it in their practice.
- 1.4. To promote the quality and competitiveness of tourist facilities, resources and services through access to technology.
- 1.5. To encourage the development of technological provisions in ensuring correct management of the destination, as well as accessibility to information on its tourism activity, aligned with the real needs of tourists.

2. Action Plan

2.1. Three areas of work have been identified within this group, two supported by Google and the other by Kyoto University as follows:

- Technological tools for crisis management in tourism (Google)
- Technological tools to redistribute tourist flows to less visited areas, regions and countries. (Google)
- Analysis of big data and its potential applications in tourism (Kyoto University) - the pilot study on capacity building on big data application platform for tourism.

2.2. Meetings of the working group in 2017:

- 22nd Session of the UNWTO General Assembly; Chengdu, China, 11–16 September 2017

VII. WORKING GROUP ON YOUTH TRAVEL

1. Objectives

The working group on youth travel was suggested by The World Youth Student and Educational (WYSE) Travel Confederation, a UNWTO Affiliate Member, with the following objectives:

- 1.1. To ensure youth travel is prominently positioned within the AM Programme Action Plan and the UNWTO's strategic framework going forward.
- 1.2. To provide a platform for Affiliate Members to exchange knowledge and insights regarding the youth travel sector and understand and identify future challenges and opportunities.
- 1.3. To increase collaboration amongst Affiliate Members with the aim to raise awareness of the value of youth travel within government, the mainstream tourism industry and public within destinations around the world.
- 1.4. To identify, develop and implement key tactical initiatives and synergies (that sit in line with the UN's Sustainable Tourism for Development goals) to help grow global youth travel.

2. Action Plan

- 2.1. Meetings of the working group in 2017:
 - 22nd Session of the UNWTO General Assembly; Chengdu, China, 11–16 September 2017
 - Monthly teleconferences – October, December 2017
 - Face-to-face meeting at the World Youth & Student Travel Conference, 26-29 September in Montreal, Canada
 - Face-to-face meeting at the UNWTO AM conference in Jamaica, November 2017