



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 **United Nations Millennium Development**

Did you know?

- Tourism directly represents 5% of global GDP.
- Tourism is responsible for over 235 million jobs, or one in every twelve jobs worldwide.
- Tourism is the fourth largest export sector in the world, after fuels, chemicals and automotive products, generating over US\$ 1 trillion a year in exports.
- In some developing countries tourism can account for over 25% of GDP.
- In 2012, there will be one billion international tourists traveling the world.

Goals (MDGs), geared towards reducing poverty and fostering sustainable development.

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 and 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 MDGs 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 155 Member States, 7 Associate Members, 2 Permanent Observers and over 400 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, sustainable development, statistics and the Tourism Satellite Account (TSA), destination management, ethics 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 155 Member States. The Affiliate Members Programme represents UNWTO's 400 plus members from the private sector.

“When approached in a sustainable manner, tourism can help drive economic growth and alleviate poverty. In fact, tourism has proved to be one of the leading ways for least developed countries to increase their participation in the global economy.”

United Nations Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon

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.

1998

The WTO.Themis Foundation is created in Andorra to promote quality and efficiency in tourism education and training.

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.