Journal of Tourism and Services

11

2015

VSO

Journal of Tourism and Services

Volume VI

Journal of Tourism and Services is an international reviewed scientific research journal, published by the University College of Business in Prague since September 17, 2010 that publishes high quality, reviewed essays and analytical papers in English language with focus on tourism and service industry development. Together with scientific part and in order to promote the exchange of current and innovative ideas, the Journal also includes Reviews of Existing Work or Short Essays, Research Notes, and Research and Industry sections to address important topics and advance theoretical knowledge or thinking about key areas of tourism and services. The papers are approved by the Editorial Board and are blind peer reviewed by 2 independent reviewers. Each issue will also seek to include shorter non peer reviewed reviews of existing work or short essays aimed at stimulating debate, research notes to allow researchers to present initial findings and reflections or problems concerning fieldwork and research in general. The Journal is intended for international professionals, academics and students not only for reading but also as a space for publication and source of information for work. The Journal is published twice a year.

The Journal of Tourism & Services is included on EBSCO database called Hospitality & Tourism Complete.
The Journal of Tourism & Services is included to the database of the Research Development and Innovation Council, advisory body to the Government of the Czech Republic called "Seznam recenzovaných neimpaktovaných periodik vydávaných v České republice".

Table of Content

Editorial

The present issue of the Journal of Tourism and Services contains scientific papers, short essay, industry news and press releases.

The contributions to this issue are authored by researchers and scholars from Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Great Britain and Hungary.

Ákos Kátay´s paper aims to explore – using the SERVQUAL model – which characteristic of the services provided by hotels or which behavior of the service provider leads to a dissatisfied hotel guest.

Marie Štěpánková, Šárka Bendová and Metodi Koralov deals in their paper   with gender deviations between satisfaction and engagement of employees in the industrial corporation. Although this research results display practical implications especially in the industrial company and non-managerial job positions, the findings and conclusions can be applied in a generalized form to every field of business, including tourism industry and related service sectors, as well. Simultaneously, it can be explicitly rewarding at the human resource management – primarily, at the exploitation of the full employees potentials, and at the optimization of the correlations established among the corporate entity– management – employee.

The short essay of Nikola Naumov explores the changing theoretical conceptualizations of heritage and heritage tourism. The paper argues that heritage tourism has undergone an ontological expansion during the last few decades and now focuses more on the way we experience heritage sites rather than static consumption of heritage resources.

I would also like to welcome the new members of the Editorial Board and express the belief that our collaboration will be successful and will lead to further improvement of the Journal.

Last but not least I would like to wish to all members of the Editorial board, present and future authors, supporters, colleagues, and readers a Merry Christmas and a Successful New Year!

Alžbeta Kiráľová
Chair of the Editorial Board

Tourism in Jordan – Current Situation and Future Development

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Abstract

Paper focuses on Jordan as a tourism destination. Jordan would like to increase tourism development because tourism acts as an engine for development through foreign exchange earnings and the creation of direct and indirect employment. Tourism in Jordan employs 20,2 % of the population overall and brings in 23,3 % of GDP (total contribution). Jordan can be very successful destination thanks to its political stability, religious toleration, a higher quality of life, better healthcare and education compared with surrounding areas, exquisite cuisine, friendly and welcoming people.

Key words: Global Peace Index, Jordan, Tourism Development

JEL Classification: Z3

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Tourism is one of the strongest drivers of world trade and prosperity. In many countries, tourism acts as an engine for development through foreign exchange earnings and the creation of direct and indirect employment. Tourism contributes 5 % of the world´s GDP. It accounts for 6 % of the world´s exports in services being the fourth largest export sector after fuels, chemicals and automotive products. Tourism is responsible for 235 million jobs or one in every 12 jobs worldwide. International tourist arrivals increased by 4.3 % in 2014, reaching a total 1 133 million after topping the billion mark in 2012.

Tourist income is vital for many areas of the historic Middle East, with the advantages of a long background of early settlement and cultural development, a basis of European culture. Politically unstable Egypt and

the original "fertile crescent" countries of Syria, Iran, Iraq and Lebanon fall into this interesting developing world group.

Jordan has been occupied continuously through centuries of nomads, prophets, Silk Road merchants, Romans, their Byzantine successors, Arabs, Christian crusaders and Ottoman Turks. In the present 2015 political situation where this tourism market is threatened by today´s surrounding unrest, Jordan stands out strategically in the core of the region as a safe, secure destination with a stable, almost democratized Hashemite Kingdom ruled by King Abdallah II. since 1999.

Economically Jordan would like to increase tourism development, because of its political stability, religious toleration, a higher quality of life, better healthcare and education compared with surrounding areas, cosmopolitanism, exquisite cuisine, friendly and welcoming people, together with a reasonably liberal social and economic environment, it is called by the World Bank „an upper middle income country"[1]. [3] Jordan belongs to the small group of developing countries which enjoy both the continuous development commitment of their political leadership over many years, and considerable administrative stability. Tourism in many developing (and least developed) countries (also in Jordan) is the most viable and sustainable economic development option, and in some countries, the main source of foreign exchange earnings.

1.2 Paper Objectives and Hypotheses

The main focus of the paper is to evaluate current situation and outline the future development of tourism in Jordan. To have a proper idea about the issue the paper includes the following aspects as follows:
● to understand current situation in Jordanian tourism sector;
● to evaluate the importance of the tourism sector on the national economy;
● to focus on the future development of tourism sector in Jordan.
Hypotheses:
H1: Tourism is the most important sector in Jordanian economy.
H2: There is a negative impact of the Arab Spring on the number of tourist arrivals.
H3: Jordan is one of the safest destionation in the Middle East.
H4: There are very limited tourism resources in Jordan (thanks to the small area of the country).

1.3 Research Methods

For the present paper the data has been collected from both primary and secondary sources. The primary data has been collected from

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[1]Upper-middle-income economies (GNI between $4,126 to $ 12,735)

interviews with representatives of tourism sector in Jordan and from research which was carried out in January and February 2013 (299 respondents). Given the paper objectives listed above, following questions were asked in the interviews with the experts on tourism in Jordan:

1. Could you evaluate how the tourism in Jordan was influenced by the Arab Spring? (from December 2010 till now)
2. How can you assess the current safety situation in Jordan in relation to the foreign tourists?
3. Which destinations in Jordan are the most visited (are the most popular) by the foreign tourists / by the domestic tourists?
4. What do you think about the future development of tourism in Jordan? What form of tourism will Jordan focus on? On what segment of tourists?
5. What countries are the biggest Jordanian's competitors in the tourism industry?
6. In which area has got Jordan competitive advantage in tourism industry against the other countries in the region?
7. Do some projects for the future development of tourism in Jordan exists?

The required secondary data has been collected from various old research papers, from Jordan National Tourism Strategy (2011-2015, 2015-2017), from Yearbook and Compendium of UNWTO, from UNWTO Tourism Highlights, from Jordan Tourism Board (e. g. materials, maps, CD).

1.4 Literature review

The study of Valenina Croitor [4], titled "Arab Spring, Effects on Tourism (Can Tourism be Developed?)" shows that the countries that witnessed the Arab spring movement were affected negatively in 2010 and 2011, however countries with tourism attraction and resources got restored some of their competitive ability in 2012. The study "The Challenges of Tourism in The Countries of Arab Spring Revolution" provided by Ali et al [1] is related to situation in tourism in the Arab world before and after the Arab spring.

Mustafa [13] specifically discussed globalization and tourism in Jordan, in terms of unconstrained world distances or borders and their effects on the Middle East, stressing the value and use of increased communication and transportation in enabling more global interaction which erodes cultural differences. He concludes that Arab nations saw largely economic benefits from tourism, paying less attention to socio-cultural and environmental effects. He recommends more sustainable development and planning.

To increase the tourism contribution to national wealth and help to develop regions in order to bring in wealth and provide job opportunities, countries like Jordan with its extensive, varied cultural history, natural

and scenic resources are in a good position to seek foreign investment to exploit or better manage their assets [16].

The tourism sector is Jordan's second highest generator of foreign exchange and the second largest private-sector employer [14]. However, there are several major obstacles hindering tourism development in Jordan [5; 8].

World Travel & Tourism Council reports annually at a global summit and provides relative facts, figures and graphs annually on 184 countries, so this paper will look at some of this research to rank the Jordanian tourism industry [19].

2. Tourism in Jordan

Jordan, officially Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan is an Arab kingdom in the Middle East[2], on the East Bank of the River Jordan. Jordan is a small country (89 342 km^2, 112 place out of 252 countries) with few natural resources, but it has played a pivotal role in the struggle for power in the Middle East.

Jordan is a young country dense with history and nature, a well-travelled bridge between sea and desert, east and west. As a traditional crossroads of ancient trade routes, most of the great historical civilizations have left their marks, from Moabites to the Romans and Crusaders. Graph 1 shows tourist attractions and cities in Jordan.

According to the Jordan Tourism Board Jordan can be regarded as a typical Arab country. Its people are very warm, friendly and hospitable and are typically happy to forgive foreigners who innocently "break the rules" of etiquette. Foreign women in Jordan are often treated as honorary "men". Local women enjoy considerable freedom compared with many other countries in the region. Women are entitled to a full education, they can vote, drive cars, and often play significant roles in business and politics. Jordan is primarily a Muslim country, although the freedom of all religions is protected.

2.1 Development of tourism in Jordan

Table 1 shows the international tourist arrivals in the Middle East are estimated to have growth by 3 million in 2014, increasing the total to 51 million. The region is showing signs of recovery following three difficult years, with most destinations posting positive results. International

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[2]Middle East = Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Oman, Palestina, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, United Arab Emirates, Yemen (presented by UNWTO); Middle East and North Afrika = Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iran, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates (presented by World Economic Forum, The Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index).

Graph1

Tourist Attractions and Cities in Jordan

Source: Jordan Map & Sites: Interactive Map of Jordan. Available on: http://www.atlastours.net/jordan/sites.html

tourism receipts in Jordan increased by 6 % to reach US$ 49 billion. The region has a 5 % share in worldwide arrivals and a 4 % share in receipts. Growth was driven by the region´s top destination Saudi Arabia reporting a 13 % increase in the number of international arrivals. Qatar posted a solid 8 % increase in arrivals, with figures almost doubling over the past five years. Growth in Lebanon (+ 6 %) also picked up, while Palestine (+ 2 %) and Jordan (+ 1 %) recorded more moderate growth. Jordan´s share of tourist arrivals to the Middle East is around 8 %.

Mr. Charl Twal has said that, „Jordan has recorded sustainable growth from 2005 till 2010 due to general improvement in marketing and promotion effectiveness". As the travel market experienced some

Table 1

International Tourist Arrivals and International Tourism Receipts in the Middle East

| Destinations | Series[1] | International Tourist Arrivals | | | | | | | | International Tourism Receipts | | | | |
| | | (1000) | | | | Change (%) | | | Share (%) | (US$ million) | | | | Share (%) |
		2010	2012	2013	2014*	12/11	13/12	14*/13	2014*	2010	2012	2013	2014*	2014*
Middle East		54,700	49,991	48,442	51,041	-5.3	-3.1	5.4	100	52,150	47,752	45,238	49,303	100
Bahrain	THS	995	1,014	1,069	..	23.5	5.4	..	..	1,362	1,051	1,165	..	..
Egypt	TF	14,051	11,196	9,174	9,628	17.9	-18.1	5.0	18.9	12,528	9,940	6,047	7,208	14.6
Iraq	VF	1,518	1,111	892	..	-26.4	-19.7	..	..	1,660	1,634	..	..	..
Jordan	TF	4,207	4,162	3,945	3,990	5.1	-5.2	1.1	7.8	3,585	4,061	4,117	4,375	8.9
Kuwait	THS	207	300	307	..	11.7	2.0	..	..	290	425	298	369	0.7
Lebanon	TF	2,168	1,366	1,274	1,355	-17.6	-6.7	6.3	2.7	7,995	6,327	5,872	..	..
Libya	TF	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	60	..	..	..	..
Oman	TF	1,442	1,438	1,551	..	41.3	7.9	..	..	780	1,095	1,222	..	..
Palestine	THS	522	490	545	556	9.3	11.3	1.9	1.1	667	755	399	..	1.6
Qatar	TF	1,700	2,346	2,611	2,826	14.1	11.3	8.2	5.5	584	2,857	3,456	4,591	9.3
Saudi Arabia	TF	10,850	14,276	13,380	15,098	-18.4	-6.3	12.8	29.6	6,712	7,432	7,651	8,238	16.7
Syria	TF	8,546	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	6,190	..	..	..	..
Utd Arab Emirates[2]	THS	7,432	8,977	9,990	..	10.4	11.3	..	..	8,577	10,380	11,564	..	..
Yemen	TF	1,025	874	990	..	5.4	13.3	..	..	1,161	848	940	..	..

Source: UNWTO (2015). *UNWTO Tourism Highlights. 2015 Edition*, Madrid: UNWTO

Table 2

Arrivals of non-resident tourists at national border (mil.)

Country/ Year	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Jordan	3,73	3,79	4,21	3,96	4,16	3,9	4,0

Source: UNWTO (2014). *UNWTO Compendium of Tourism Statistics. 2014 Edition*. Madrid: UNWTO; UNWTO (2014). *UNWTO Yearbook of Tourism Statistics, 2014 Edition*. Madrid: UNWTO

significant changes in the Middle East region, resulting from the Arab Spring's impact on key tourism markets, Jordan has seen tourism flows, decline in 2011 and 2013 as the Table 2 shows. The major issue has been the war in neighboring Syria, which has been keeping tourists away from the Levant as a whole. That said, Jordan itself is a relatively safe destination, and although tourism from Europe continues to decline, travelers from Arab countries are on the rise, as they move away from troubled destinations like Syria, Egypt, Lebanon. Minister of Tourism and Antiquities Nayef Al Fayez has previously said that, „the Daesh terrorist group has affected tourism in the region more than the so-called Arab Spring uprisings". Also it is important to state that development of tourism in Jordan (not only) was influenced by the World economic crisis.

As the table 3 shows, Jordan´s largest source market is the Middle East, on the 2nd place is the Europe and the most dynamic region is the Asia and the Pacific (East Asia and the Pacific + South Asia).

The European market is a traditionally established market for Jordan. But unfortunately can be seen that the number of European tourists arriving in Jordan has decreased. This state may be due to the state of political instability in the region which has clearly influenced the flow of

Table 3

Arrivals of non-resident tourists at national borders

	2010	2011	2012	Market share 2012 (%)
Africa	49 762	49 947	55 002	1,32
Americas	215 121	189 283	198 631	4,77
East Asia and the Pacific	148 981	154 149	174 733	4,20
Europe	744 992	626 886	590 204	14,18
Middle East	2 054 551	1 892 950	2 007 452	48,23
South Asia	65 243	77 078	77 759	1,87
Not specified	928 758	969 361	1 058 586	25,43
Total	4 207 408	3 959 654	4 162 367	100,00

Source: UNWTO (2014). *UNWTO Yearbook of Tourism Statistics, 2014 Edition.* Madrid: UNWTO

tourists to Jordan. The main European nationalities visiting Jordan are Israel, United Kingdom and Italy. [20]

Jordan is regarded as a traditional market for USA international tourists. USA tourists come to Jordan for many purposes, such as visiting friends and relatives, holy sites, rest a recreation, adventures, business and others.

Jordan enjoys strong and warm relations with Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries. These countries, whose citizens, in general, have the highest per capita income in the region, contribute to giving Jordan a clear advantage over some other countries. The GCC market is the main regional market for the Jordanian tourism product. Jordan´s closeness to the gulf region, as well as its ideal climate and variety of its tourism product, are some of the factors that encourage tourists form the GCC countries to come to Jordan, especially in the summer season. In addition, common characteristics, such as language, culture and heritage, make Jordan a suitable destination for tourists from the GCC countries that come to Jordan with families and relatives using their transportation.

East Asia and the Pacific Rim is a clearly identified market, the number of tourist arrivals from that part of the world is still low compared to the number of tourists from other regions. But it can be stated that East Asia and Pacific is the most dynamic market source for Jordan.

This part reviews the main features of tourism in the chief competing markets for Jordan – Egypt, Israel and Turkey. It is important to note that, although Egypt, Israel and Turkey possess similar attractions to those characterizing Jordan (climate, beaches resorts etc.), Jordan has specific

attractions that are considered unique and can enable Jordan to differentiate itself from these three markets. Jordan is a country of great diversity, offering varied experiences to tourists: from the Dead to the Red Sea, the magic of Wadi Rum, the bewilderness of Petra, the history of Jerash, Ajloun Castle etc. Turkey competes esp. in the field of medical and adventure tourism, Egypt competes with the lower prices, says Mr. Samer Twal.

Table 4

Tourist arrivals to Jordan, Egypt, Israel and Turkey in 2014

Country	Number of tourists
Jordan	3 990 000
Egypt	9 628 000
Israel	2 927 000
Turkey	39 811 000

Source: UNWTO (2015). *UNWTO Tourism Highlights*. 2015 Edition, Madrid: UNWTO

Table 5

Country rankings (relative contribution to GDP and Employment, 2014)

Travel & Tourism's Direct Contribution to GDP	2014 % share
13 Malta	14.7
30 Lebanon	7.6
33 Tunisia	7.4
36 Greece	7.0
37 Cyprus	7.0
41 Jordan	6.2
47 Egypt	5.9
63 Turkey	4.7
65 Syria	4.6
World	3.1
Middle East	2.7
139 Israel	2.2

Travel & Tourism's Total Contribution to GDP	2014 % share
21 Malta	28.1
29 Jordan	23.0
31 Cyprus	21.3
32 Lebanon	21.1
41 Greece	17.3
48 Tunisia	15.2
61 Egypt	12.8
67 Turkey	12.0
72 Syria	10.6
World	9.8
Middle East	7.4
119 Israel	7.3

Travel & Tourism's Direct Contribution to Employment	2014 % share
10 Malta	16.0
24 Greece	9.4
30 Cyprus	7.7
32 Lebanon	7.4
36 Tunisia	6.8
54 Egypt	5.2
56 Jordan	5.1
World	3.6
Middle East	3.2
111 Syria	3.0
124 Israel	2.5
139 Turkey	2.2

Travel & Tourism's Total Contribution to Employment	2014 % share
19 Malta	29.1
27 Cyprus	22.6
31 Lebanon	20.3
32 Jordan	20.0
34 Greece	19.4
54 Tunisia	13.9
67 Egypt	11.6
World	9.4
107 Turkey	8.2
115 Israel	7.8
Middle East	7.6
118 Syria	7.6

Source: WTTC (2015). *Travel & Tourism Economic Impact 2015. Jordan. World Travel & Tourism Council,* London: WTTC

Table 4 shows the total number of tourists who actually visited Jordan, Egypt, Israel and Turkey in 2014. It is evident that Turkey has the lion´s share of tourists, followed by Egypt and then Jordan and Israel. Turkey is ranking as the 6th most popular tourist destination in the world [22].

Table 5 shows country rankings in connection to the relative contribution to GDP and Employment. Considering the small size and population of Jordan, its results are well into the top half of the 184 countries between 29th (Travel & Tourism´s Total Contribution to GDP) and 56th (Travel & Tourism´s Direct Contribution to Employment); so government policy is obviously exploiting its tourism resources well. Jordan has mostly better results than other competitive countries. For detailed information about the importance of tourism to the economy of Jordan see 2.3.

2.2 Safety situation in Jordan

Jordan is one of the safest countries in the Middle East. The security situation in the country can be evaluated using two basic indices: Global Peace Index (GPI) and Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Index (TTCI) – Indicator: Safety and Security.

GPI ranks the nations of the world according to their level of peacefulness. The index is composed of 23 qualitative and quantitative indicators from highly respected sources and ranks 162 independent states, covering 99,6 per cent of the world´s population. The index ganges global peace using three broad themes: the level of safety and security in society, the extent of domestic and international conflict and the degrees of militarization. Jordan was ranked among the top five peaceful countries in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) although its global ranking dropped, according to the GPI 2015. The index indicated that Jordan ranked fourth among the MENA countries and was preceded by Qatar, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates.

The TTCI measures the „set of factors and policies that enable the sustainable development of the Travel & Tourism sector, which in turn, contributes to the development and competitiveness of a country." [12] The TTCI benchmarks the Travel & Tourism competitiveness of 141 economies. It comprises four sub-indexes, 14 pillars, and 90 individual indicators, distributed among the different pillars:

Safety and security is a critical factor determining the competitiveness of a country's tourism industry. Tourists are likely to be deterred from traveling to dangerous countries or regions, making it less attractive to develop the tourism sector in those places. Here we take into account the costliness of common crime and violence as well as terrorism, and the extent to which police services can be relied upon to provide protection from crime.

As the table 8 shows, Jordan ranked 77th among world countries and 8th among countries of the region in the TTCI. In Safety and Security Index Jordan is ranked 6th in the region.

Table 7

Global Peace Index 2015

MIDDLE EAST & NORTH AFRICA	OVERALL RANK	OVERALL SCORE	CHANGE IN SCORE	REGIONAL RANK
Qatar	30	1.568	+0.080	1
Kuwait	33	1.626	-0.049	2
United Arab Emirates	49	1.805	+0.043	3
Jordan	71	1.944	+0.112	4
Oman	74	1.947	+0.075	5
Tunisia	76	1.952	-0.040	6
Morocco	86	2.002	+0.035	7
Saudi Arabia	95	2.042	+0.027	8
Algeria	104	2.131	-0.030	9
Bahrain	107	2.142	-0.019	10
Egypt	137	2.382	-0.191	11
Iran	138	2.409	-0.002	12
Lebanon	145	2.623	+0.005	13
Yemen	147	2.751	+0.165	14
Israel	148	2.781	+0.056	15
Libya	149	2.819	+0.419	16
Sudan	156	3.295	+0.059	17
Iraq	161	3.444	+0.122	18
Syria	162	3.645	+0.061	19
AVERAGE	**109**	**2.385**		

Source: IEP (2015). *Global Peace Index 2015. Measuring Peace, its Causes and its Economic Value*, Sydney: IEP

Jordan as a potential destination to the Czech Republic is the title of the research which was carried out in January and February 2013, and the purpose of it was to determine awareness of the Czech citizens about Jordan as a destination and if the Czech citizens are interested in traveling to Jordan. The part of the research was also the question concerning the safety situation in Jordan. Research was carried out on the website server vyplnto.cz between January and February, 2013. The entire survey was anonymous. Complete results of the research are publicly available at: http://jordansko-potencialni-destin.vyplnto.cz. The questionnaire was answered by 299 respondents.

The most of respondents perceives Jordan as a safe destination (42.47%), as a positive result we can take also 33.11% of respondents who don´t know.

Graph 2

The Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Index 2015 framework
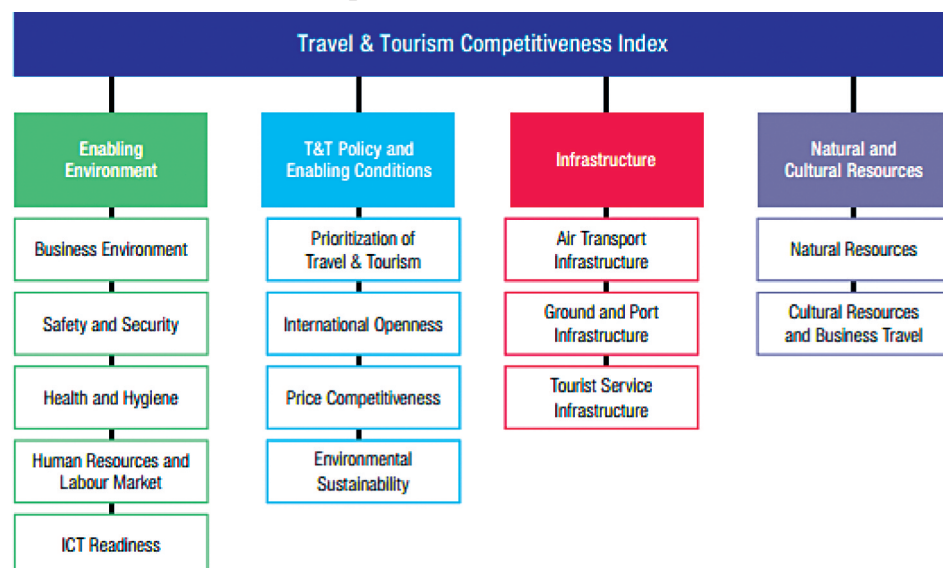
Table 8

The Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Index 2015 – Middle East and North Africa

Country/Economy	TTCI INDEX		Enabling Environment Pillars, values				
	Regional rank	Global rank	Business Environment	Safety and Security	Health and Hygiene	Human Resources and Labour Market	ICT Readiness
MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA							
United Arab Emirates	1	24	5.90	6.60	5.28	5.15	5.76
Qatar	2	43	6.05	6.61	5.97	5.23	5.44
Bahrain	3	60	5.53	5.33	5.17	4.71	5.76
Morocco	4	62	4.73	5.83	4.54	4.05	4.03
Saudi Arabia	5	64	5.21	5.99	5.10	4.46	5.29
Oman	6	65	5.29	6.38	5.37	4.27	4.83
Israel	7	72	4.61	4.85	6.06	4.81	5.25
Jordan	8	77	4.86	5.79	5.53	4.56	4.17
Tunisia	9	79	4.42	4.86	5.16	4.31	3.94
Egypt	10	83	4.11	3.40	5.40	4.12	3.80
Lebanon	11	94	3.76	3.81	6.04	3.99	3.62
Iran, Islamic Rep.	12	97	3.85	4.89	4.71	3.95	3.36
Kuwait	13	103	4.69	5.76	5.43	4.26	5.01
Algeria	14	123	3.78	4.90	4.97	4.04	3.09
Mauritania	15	137	3.46	5.06	3.03	2.30	2.18
Yemen	16	138	3.58	2.86	3.84	3.31	2.29
Middle East and North Africa average			4.69	5.19	5.24	4.35	4.38
Middle East and North Africa standard deviation			0.82	1.10	0.79	0.70	1.15
Best performer (global)			6.13	6.70	6.97	5.64	6.37

Table 9

Question – Do you see Jordan as a safe destination?

Q: Do you see Jordan as a safe destination?	%
rather YES	34,78
I don´t know	33,11
rather NO	23,08
definitely YES	7,69
definitely NO	1,34

Source: Own processing

2.3 The Importance of tourism to the economy of Jordan

Jordan is a small middle-income country with few natural resources and the economy depends largely on services (64.7 % of GDP) and foreign aid, of which the US is the main provider. Tourism has of vital importance to the national economy of Jordan. It is the Kingdom´s largest export sector, its second largest private sector employer, and it´s second highest producer of foreign exchange [2].

The World Travel and Tourism Council´s (WTTC) 2015 „Economic Impact Report" for Jordan is a largely enumerative study of the current and long-term contribution of tourism to Jordan´s economy and how it is performing in comparison both with other countries in the region and throughout the world.

The direct contribution of Travel & Tourism primarily reflects the economic activity generated by industries such as hotels, travel agents, airlines etc. But it also includes, for example, the activities of the restaurant and leisure industries directly supported.

The total contribution of Travel & Tourism includes its „wider impacts" (indirect and induced impacts) on the economy. The indirect contribution includes the GDP and jobs supported by:
● Travel & Tourism investment spending – an important aspect of both current and future activity that includes investment activity that includes investment activity such as the purchase of new aircraft and construction of new hotels;
● Government „collective spending, which helps Travel & Tourism activity in many different ways as it is made on behalf of the „community at large" – for example marketing and promotion, aviation, administration, security services;
● Domestic purchases of goods and services of the sectors dealing directly with tourists – including, for example, purchases of food and cleaning services by hotels, of fuel and catering services by airlines.

The induces contribution measures the GDP and jobs supported by the spending of those who are directly or indirectly employed by the Travel & Tourism sector.

According to the WTTC´s latest annual research (see table 10), the direct contribution of Travel & Tourism to GDP in 2014 was JOD 1,576.7mn (6.2 % of GDP). This is to forecast to rise by 4.7 % to JOD 1,650.7mn in 2015.

Table 10

The economic contribution of tourism sector in Jordan

Jordan	2014 US$mn[1]	2014 % of total	2015 Growth[2]	US$mn[1]	2025 % of total	Growth[3]
Direct contribution to GDP	2,220.5	6.2	4.7	3,967.3	6.9	5.5
Total contribution to GDP	8,183.9	23.0	4.7	14,830.3	25.7	5.6
Direct contribution to employment[4]	78.1	5.1	4.1	120.3	6.0	4.0
Total contribution to employment[4]	309.8	20.0	4.0	475.1	23.7	4.0
Visitor exports	5,462.3	34.4	4.9	9,873.2	38.3	5.6
Domestic spending	618.8	1.7	1.3	906.2	1.6	3.8
Leisure spending	5,309.9	5.4	4.9	9,571.9	6.0	5.6
Business spending	771.1	0.8	1.8	1,207.6	0.8	4.4
Capital investment	669.7	7.3	1.7	1,226.1	9.3	6.1

Source: WTTC (2015). *Travel & Tourism Economic Impact 2015. Jordan. World Travel & Tourism Council, London:* WTTC

The total contribution of Travel & Tourism to GDP was JOD 5,810.9mn in 2014 (23.0 % of GDP) and is expected to grow by 4,7 % to JOD 6,081.8 mln (23,2 % of GDP) in 2015.

Travel & Tourism generated 78 000 jobs directly in 2014 (5,1 % of total employment) and this is forecast to grow by 4,1 % in 2015 to 81 500 (5,1 % of total employment).

The total contribution of Travel & Tourism to employment was 310 000 jobs in 2014 (20,0 % of total employment). This is forecast to rise by 4.0 % in 2015 to 322 000 jobs (20,2 % of total employment).

Money spent by foreign visitors to a country (or visitor exports) is a key component of the direct contribution of Travel & Tourism. In 2014, Jordan generated JOD 3,878.4mn in visitor exports. In 2015, this is expected to grow by 4.9 % and the country is expected to attract 4 364 000 international tourist arrivals.

2.4 Main types of the Jordanian tourism products

The following paragraphs identify the main types of Jordanian tourism products. However, tourists may also find a combination of these types while visiting a single destination.

Cultural Tourism is a form of tourism motivated by interest in historical, artistic, scientific or heritage offering of a community, region,

group or institutions. Cultural Tourism is based on tourists visiting cultural sites:

● Archeological sites – Petra, Jerash, Karak, Shoubak, Madaba and Desert Castles,
● Religious sites – the River Jordan where Jesus Christ was baptised; the Jordan Valley with its village and highlands where Jesus and his disciples preached; Madaba´s chief attraction can be found in the contemporary Greek Orthodox Church of St. George – the mosaic map of the Holy Land is located; Jordan has more than fifty Islamic shrines etc.;
● Vernacular sites[3] - for example Taybet Zaman and Um-Qais;
● Archeological and historical museum – for example Amman Citadel Museum, Jordan Folklore Museum and Jordan Museum of Popular Tradition; La Storia Tourism Complex;
● Commemoration sites – there are sites that mark and honor the memory of a person, place or incident. In Jordan, commemoration sites are associated with battles such as Mo´ta Battle, Yarmouk Battle, Jerusalem Battle, Al-Smouh Battle and Al-Karama Battle.

Above are mentioned only few examples of very strong cultural heritage which Jordan can offer.

Eco-tourism is used to define forms of tourism which have the following characteristics: [11]

● all nature-based forms of tourism in which the main motivation of the tourists is the observation and appreciation of nature as well as the traditional cultures prevailing in natural areas;
● it contains educational and interpretation features;
● it minimizes negative impacts upon the natural and socio-cultural environment;
● is supports the maintenance of natural areas which are used as ecotourism attractions by providing alternative employment and income opportunities for local communities etc.

Jordan is a land of diversity, a land that encompasses all, sea and mountain, waterfall and desert, from the relaxing waters of the Dead Sea to the amazing mountains and desert of Wadi Rum and the flowing waterfalls of Mujib. There are at present seven nature reserves in Jordan organized and managed by The Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature, namely: [17]

● Dana Biosphere Reserve, often simply called Dana Nature Reserve, is Jordan's largest reserve, located in and around the town of Dana in the mountains east of Wadi Araba;
● Mujib Nature Reserve, commonly known as Wadi Mujib, is a long canyon feeding the Dead Sea running through the ancient region of Moab and the lowest nature reserve in the world;

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[3]A vernacular site is a local community that still protects and hangs on to its indigenous tangible and intangible features and traditions.

- Ajloun Forest Reserve is in north Jordan, near Jerash and Ajloun, and close to the Ajloun Castle. The reserve consists of rolling hills in a Mediterranean-like environment, covered in evergreen oaks, as well as strawberry and pistachio trees, among others;
- Dibeen Forest, close to the ancient Roman city of Jerash, is the newest reserve in Jordan, established in 2004. The forest is a pine-oak habitat, housing the Aleppo pine and marking the geographical limit of this type of forest;
- The Azraq Wetlands, located in Jordan's eastern desert near the town of Azraq, is RSCN's only wetlands reserve. The reserve, once a popular stopover for millions of migratory birds going from Africa to Eurasia, is now severely depleted due to over-pumping to support Jordan's growing population;
- Shaumari Wildlife Reserve is located in the eastern Jordanian desert, close to Azraq Wetland Reserve. The geology comprises desert wadis making up 65% of the area and Hammada areas covered in black flint forming 35% of the reserve;
- Fifa Nature Reserve is located in the south-western part of Jordan. The reserve has an area of 23.2 km^2. In part lying well below sea level, the reserve contains the salt plant pattern and the tropical plant pattern.

Adventure Tourism is based on visitors participating in adventurous activities such as climbing, trekking, all kinds of sport, camping, hand gliding, parachuting and bird watching (it can also be classified as eco-tourism). Some of the important sites that provide adventure tourism in Jordan are Aqaba and Wadi Rum. Also, the government supports some adventure tourism activities such as car racing; water skating, horse racing and diving.

Medical and Thermal Tourism

Jordan is renowned for its excellent medical services in the region as a whole. This is due to its highly qualified doctors, specialists and nursing staff as well as its well-equipped hospitals, medical centers and laboratories. In addition, Jordan has a number of natural springs and spas that attract visitors seeking thermal medication. The Dead Sea is the most visited destination for natural healing. Other hot springs include Ma´en, A´ffra and Himma.

Desert Tourism is based on visitors experiencing desert life as the Bedouins live. Some of these sites are Wadi Araba, Wadi Rum, Alktranh desert land and the Diseh area. These sites were the location of the Lawrence of Arabia legend.

Recreational Tourism is based on people visiting places with their families for the purpose of family outings, events, festival and other attractions. In Jordan the main market for this product is the Gulf

market where visitors and tourists arrive in Jordan to spend their holidays and to attend annual festivals such as Jerash Festival for Arts and Crafts, Shabeeb Palace Festival, Azraq Festival and Fuhais Art Festival.

Visiting friends and relatives (VFR) can be both domestic and international. Domestic VFR is either when locals working in cities go home for the weekend, or when locals decide to visit the countryside for the weekend. On the other hand, international VFR occurs when Jordanians working abroad (especially in the Gulf countries) decide to visit their families and friends on their holidays and vacations.

Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions (Events)
A perfect blend of ingredients that combine world-class facilities and breathtaking landscapes, Jordan is the ideal location for any event from meetings and incentives to conferences and exhibitions. For many corporations, MICE events are the cornerstone of the organization, resulting in highly motivated staff members and enhancing positive public awareness. Jordan´s possession of accommodation facilities and management capabilities makes it an ideal destination for MICE.

Education Tourism
With over 20 universities and over 35 institutes, both public and private, Jordan has become a destination of educational attraction. Universities in Jordan are currently well equipped and staffed to cope with the increasing number of students, from inside and outside of Jordan, who wish to start and / or continue their studies in Jordan. And in addition, students during their studies can explore the beauty of Jordan.

3. Future development of tourism in Jordan

Tourism in the Middle East is forecast to grow at 4.6 % per year up to 2030, compared to the world average of 3,3 %. According to the UNWTO Tourism Towards 2030, the number of international tourist arrivals to the Middle East is expected to achieve 149 million by the year 2030.

According to the WTTC´s latest annual research [19], the direct contribution of Travel & Tourism to GDP is expected to grow by 5,5 % pa to JOD 2,816.9mn (6,9 %) by 2025. As regards to the total contribution of Travel & Tourism to GDP there is forecast to rise by 5,6 % pa to JOD 10,530.0mn by 2025 (25,7 % of GDP).

By 2025, Travel & Tourism will account for 120 000 jobs directly, an increase of 4.0 % pa over the next ten years. By 2025, Travel & Tourism is forecast to support 475 000 jobs (23.7 % of total employment), an increase of 4,0 % pa over the period.

By 2025, international tourist arrivals are forecast to total 6 508 000, generating expenditure of JOD 7,010.3mn, an increase of 5.6 % pa.

Given the importance of the tourism sector to the economy, the Government of Jordan, through the Ministry of Tourism & Antiquities, has focused considerable attention in recent years on developing a coherent strategy.

The changed competitive environment in international tourism of recent years has indicated that Jordan's strategy for the coming years must place a stronger emphasis on raising the overall competitiveness of the industry by focusing on: [10]

- delivering planned improvements and enhancements in the enabling environment that will empower the industry, deepen stakeholder partnerships and provide for world class regulation;
- raising overall tourism revenue by increasing the average length of stay of international visitors (particularly higher spend tourists), increase arrivals in the off season, and stimulate the domestic tourism market;
- reducing the impact of seasonality further by increasing tourist volumes during the shoulder and off-peak months;
- better marketing and promotion of Jordan as a destination through further strengthening of the branding message and utilizing new distribution channels, with a priority on e-marketing, social networking and web-based platforms;
- specifically-targeted programs of work designed to build great visitor experiences there by creating a competitive advantage for Jordan;
- building on the excellent base already established to create and retain the best human resources in the region in order to drive industry success at every level.

At the end we can mention a few projects for the future support of tourism development in Jordan:

- Meanwhile, the government recently adopted several measures to promote tourism including waiving visa fees for tourists of all nationalities coming through Jordanian tour operators and are to stay for more than two nights.
- The government also decided to reduce electricity tariffs imposed on hotels to encourage competitive prices. A source at the Jordan Hotels Association said that the tariff has not been specified yet so that hoteliers cannot make any move before things are clear.
- It should be noted that the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities has recently announced a special tourism plan to promote Jordan as an attractive destination site for tourists from East Asia and the Pacific, especially Japanese tourists.
- Jordan has a strong and well-connected transport and infrastructure system, three commercial airports, a deep-water seaport, an extensive network of highways, and over 60 direct flights to major cities in the world through RJ Airlines and 700 other flights served by the One World

Alliance; in addition, the Government of Jordan has supported 20 major infrastructure projects related to the tourism sector: [12]

– Development and rehabilitation of Jerash Visitor Center
– Rehabilitation of Jerash Handicrafts Village
– Rehabilitation and maintenance of Madaba Visitor Center
– Rehabilitation of Al-Haranna Castle Visitor Center
– Rehabilitation of Quseir Amra Visitor Center
– Development of the Hosh Al-Moa'ahada Area in Um Qais – Irbid
– Improvement, maintenance and operational works including building capacity at A'fra in Tafila
– Developing the role of the tourist police to serve the tourism sector
– Rehabilitation of Sele'a heritage village in Tafila
– Developing Almatn site and the tourist trail in Tafila
– Developing the tourist street in the center of Al-Karak city
– Completion of the rehabilitation of the tourist trail of Al-Kader Street in Salt
– Rehabilitation and operation of the Aziz Jasir house in Salt (Pilot model)
– Acquisition and purchase of land
– Updating and repairs of different buildings
– Provision of facilities and services for the operation of the Royal Park in Jerash
– Implementation of Um Qais site management plan
– Support a number of associations to furnish and operate the ground floor of Saraya building in Madaba
– Development and rehabilitation of the King Abdullah Park facilities in Ma'an
– Operation of heritage buildings in the center of Irbid city

● According to NTS 2011 – 2015 [12], the 12 market segments that present significant opportunities for Jordan are:

– Cultural heritage (archeology) = cultural tourism
– Religious tourism
– Eco-tourism
– Health and wellness, medical tourism
– Cruises
– Meetings, incentives, conference and events (MICE)
– Adventure and activity tourism
– Scientific, academic, volunteer and educational (SAVE)
– Filming and photography, film tourism
– Festivals and cultural events
– Summer and family holidays
– Sports and recreation

and very important is to develop the tourism in Jordan by the responsible way (contacts with local people, cooking, sharing experience with all the others, story and sharing the story of the local people....) says Mr. Charl Twal.

- Madaba – new city for tourism = it is vision not only presented by Mr. Samer Twal:
  - Opportunities – proximity to Amman and international airport as well as other religious sites, unique historic and religious tourism offerings, development of old town as a tourist friendly destination;
  - Challenges – accessibility from Amman and surrounding sites, transportation and trip circuits need development, lack of evening entertainment, family activities.

4. Conclusion

The Jordanian tourism sector represents the biggest export sector of the Jordanian economy. It is also the second biggest private sector employer and second biggest source of inflows of the foreign exchange. It can be stated that tourism is one of the most important sectors of Jordan´s economy, having contributed 6,2 % to its GDP in 2014.

Without doubt Jordan will support tourism development. For the future development of tourism is important to underline rich natural, cultural and historical heritage in connection with the political stability, religious toleration, a higher quality of life, better healthcare and education compared with surrounding areas, cosmopolitanism, exquisite cuisine, friendly and welcoming people, together with a reasonably liberal social and economic environment.

As already indicated, tourism resources in Jordan are so diverse although of being located within a small area, these resources can be classified into three categories:

1. Natural resources: these include areas of significant land/sea-scapes, these include: Aqaba, Wadi Rum and natural reserves spreading in many regions.
2. Cultural resources: these include mainly archaeological/historical sites, shopping and galleries, events, and handcrafts.
3. Therapeutic resources: these are composed of the Dead Sea and some locations where waterfall and hot springs are found.

But unfortunately the development of tourism in last years is negatively influenced by the Arab Spring and by the World economic crisis. Jordan's tourism strategy for the coming years must place a stronger emphasis on raising the overall competitiveness of the industry by focusing especially on raising overall tourism revenue by increasing the average length of stay of international visitors, on increasing arrivals in the off season, and on stimulating the domestic tourism. Attention will be paid also to better marketing and promotion of Jordan as a destination and to building on the excellent base already established to create and retain the best human resources in the region in order to drive industry success at every level.

The three of four hypotheses (H1: Tourism is the most important sector in Jordanian economy, H2: There is a negative impact of the Arab Spring on

the number of tourist arrivals, H3: Jordan is one of the safest destinations in the Middle East) were confirmed on the basis of primary and secondary data. One hypothesis (H4: There are only limited tourism resources in Jordan (thanks to the small area of the country) was disproved.

„Stay as a guest, leave as a friend. "

Mr. Charl Twal - Owner, Mariam Hotel, Madaba, Jordan

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The Causes and Behavior-altering Effects of Hotel Guests' Dissatisfaction

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Abstract

The product hotels sell is pure service. Since this product can't be tried out in advance, its purchase depends largely on the guest's trust [47]. Guests evaluate the service based on the fulfillment of the complete experience. This means that they don't just rate the result but the process as well. They do this based on a subjective evaluation of the service they receive. [48]. The goal of this research is to explore – using the SERVQUAL model [28] – which characteristic of this service or which behavior of the service provider leads to a dissatisfied hotel guest either through being faulty or absent. The findings of the research reveal that the majority hotel guests who left negative feedback have done so because they were missing the manifestations of hospitality. The majority of these negative feedbacks were so severe that they resulted in actions by guests that were unfavorable for the hotel.

Key words: guest, hotel, service, dissatisfied

JEL Classification: L83, L86

1. Introduction

Tourism is – without a doubt – continuously evolving. The growth in the number of tourists at popular destinations can be seen even without participating in tourism. The World Tourism Organization's 2030 forecast predicts 1.4 billion visits for the not too distant future of 2020, more than 40% of which is expected to be directed to Europe. Europe's share from world tourism was 51.4% in 2014. This meant 581.8 million individual visits, 78.2% of which happened in the European Union [2]. Over 60% of nights spent in the European Union were realized in hotels and similar establishments[1] (Graph 1).

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[1]Hotels and similar establishments are typified as being arranged in rooms, in number exceeding a specified minimum; as coming under a common management; as providing certain services including room service, daily bed-making and cleaning of sanitary facilities; as grouped in classes and categories according to the facilities and services provided; and as not falling in the category of specialized establishments [3].

The high share of spent nights is realized in 13,5 million bed-places in the 6,5 million rooms of 200 000 hotels and similar establishments. These capacities are only partly utilized however. According to the data of Graph 2[2], the room capacity utilization of hotels and similar establishments

Nights spent in the European Union 2010-2013 (million)
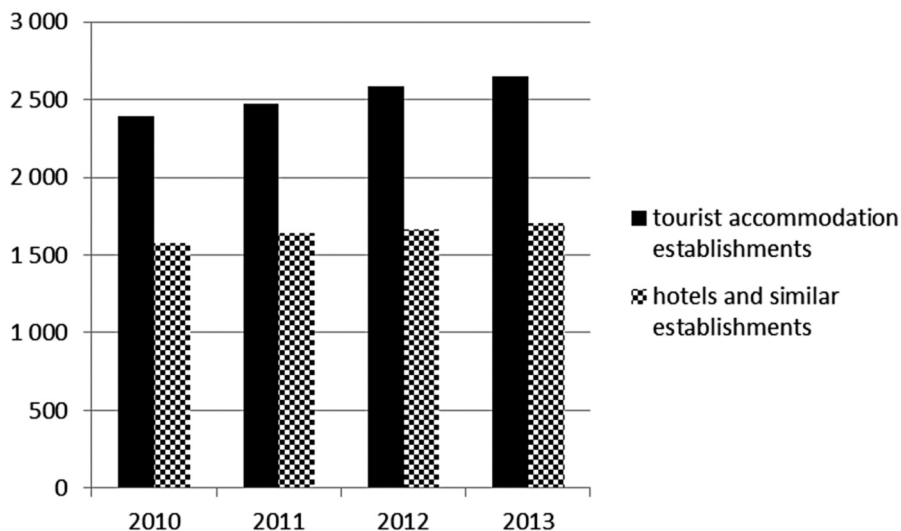
Source: Original, based on Eurostat [4] data

Net occupancy rate of bedrooms in hotels and similar accommodation in the European Union 2012-2013 (%)
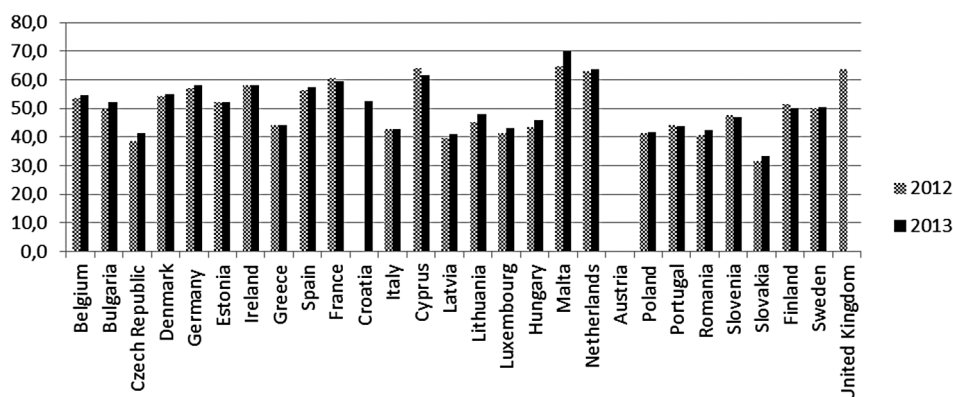
Source: Original, based on Eurostat [6] data

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[2] There's no data about Austria, while in the cases of Croatia and the United Kingdom there is data only for one year each.

stays below 60% on a yearly basis. In other words, the supply is higher than the demand.

Countries, lodging establishments within countries and hospitality providers within the same category – including hotels – have to compete for customers and the customers know this as well. Lam T., Zam H. [7] already saw at the end of the last century, that the greatest challenge for hotel industry management is to attain and maintain customer satisfaction. Milovic, B. [8] pointed out the benefits of customer relationship management (CRM): income rising along with increasing customer satisfaction, decreasing cost through simplifying procedures and the profitability improvement which is the combined result of the first two.

RateGain's income management guide [9] regards the spread of last minute bookings, the shortening of time between travel planning and actual travel as one of the current trends of tourism. Based on a 2014 research from PhoCusWright [10], 70% of bookings made through OTAs[3] took place no more than one day before arrival. Due to the spread of last minute bookings, promotional offers have to reach target groups in time as well. Social media is more suited for this than printed materials, not to mention the chance to save on printing and distribution costs [11]. According to Criteo Travel's Flash Report [12], in the first half of 2014 21% of hotel bookings were made using mobile devices (smartphones and tablets). Researching the reasons behind this is not part of the goals of this paper. What is important however is that last minute bookings are made possible by technology which is accessible to both supply and demand sides. The number of internet users have already exceeded 3 billion in 2014, which is more than 40% of the world's population. This ratio was only 1% in 1995 [13]. Table 1 shows representative data [14] on internet use within tourism and hotel industry.

Table 1

Internet use within tourism and hotel industry

Travel Booking Site Statistics	Data
Average number of reviews for a hotel	238
Percent of travelers who find user reviews important	81%
Percent of travelers who won't book a hotel without reviews	49%
Online Travel Booking Statistics	Data
Number of travel bookings made on the internet each year	148,3 million
Percent of all travel reservations made on the internet	57%
Percent of same day hotel reservations made from a smartphone	65%

Source: Original, based on data from Statistic Brain [14] March 3rd, 2015

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[3] Online Travel Agencies

Leaving the travel decision to the last moment is not the same as being irresponsible. It does mean however, that the guest has less time to personally and thoroughly inform herself of the expected variety of services, their quality and the cost-benefit ratio. This information is communicated by hotels through the number of stars to ease the customer's decision. As per UNWTO's researches on the subject [15] [16], the qualification is performed by the supply side or its representatives, mostly without independent quality control[4]. The above points explain the desire of guests to learn about the experiences and opinions of others about the hotel and its services.

Rosman, R. and Stuhura, K. [20] point out that it is both important and necessary for management to deal with e-WOM, since unanswered feedback – especially if negative – can scare off potential guests. Campos, D. F. – Marodin, T. G. [21] calls attention to the fact that a negative WOM in some cases can jeopardize the image of not only the hotel, but the brand and even the hotel company. According to the research of Crick, A. P. and Spencer, A. [22], guests not only relate to offered services in their own way, but also evaluate the same service issue differently as well. Every guest is an individual. Due to this, their dissatisfaction can only be effectively dealt with if the hotel handles the given problem as a unique case. O'Connor's paper [23] highlights that management has to take this opportunity for each guest comment. The comment of an unhappy guest is a feedback about the hotel's performance. Many studies have looked into the reasons of dissatisfaction before (Gundersen, M. G. et al. [24], McQitty, S. et al. [25], Spreng, A. R. and Mackoy, D. R. [26]), accepting and reinforcing the statement of Oliver, R. L. [27], according to which guest satisfaction is determined by the difference between the expected and the actually received service. Parasuraman et al. [28] have organized these gaps into a system and developed [29] the SERVQUAL model, which also fits the hotel industry very well. The original model of Parasuraman et al. described five gaps between expectations and received service.

GAP 1. The exact expectation of the guest is unknown. The gap is the difference between the expected service and management perceptions of customer expectations.

GAP 2. Inadequate quality standards. The gap is the difference between service quality specifications and management perceptions of customer expectations.

GAP 3. Service quality not meeting specified levels. The gap is the difference between service delivery and service quality specifications.

GAP 4. Broken promise. The gap is the difference between service delivery and external communications.

GAP 5. Service is not what was expected. The gap is the difference between perceived service and expected service.

Luk, Sh. T. K. and Layton, R. [30] have created an extended version of

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[4] exceptions include Hotelstars Union

the model, which now includes two more gaps in the context of consumer (guest) – colleague – management.

GAP 6. Baseless assumption. The gap is the difference between expected service and employee perceptions of customer expectations.

GAP 7. Lack of harmony within service provider organization. The gap is the difference between employee perceptions of customer expectations and management perceptions of customer expectations.

Services are heterogeneous in nature. This is because they are provided by people. One characteristic of human resources is that it can regulate its performance. The majority of hotel services are pure services without a material element. Therefore the quality of the service depends on the person providing it. Service is intangible. Due to this hotels attempt to make the service awaiting the guest perceptible through other means (e.g. photo gallery, virtual tour). Service is perishable and can't be stored. The lost income from a room left empty on a given day can't be recovered. Availability comes with a cost, however. Service is inseparable from market participants as the presence of the guest is essential for booking and using a room. The emphasis is therefore on people in the case of services. The difference between expected and perceived service can be traced back to two basic reasons:

● hotel staff have not done something they should have,
● or they did something the guest thought they shouldn't have [48]; [37].

2. Problem formulation

The main question of the study is how the guest – leaving home in hopes of positive experiences – uses the available digital review opportunities to react to negative experiences suffered. A further research goal is to discover if real or perceived slights make a guest more critical. Will she look for further issues to reinforce her opinion? Will she recall earlier bad experiences to prove her point? The result of the research is expected to decide whether comments about negative experiences are driven more by a will to inform or by the desire for revenge.

H1: the guest becomes more critical after being offended and thus discovers and reports further shortcomings.

H2: the goal of a guest sharing her dissatisfaction with others on the internet is to diminish the revenue of the hotel.

H3: the level of dissatisfaction resulting in retaliations is lower in member hotels of chains/brands belonging to international hotel corporations, than in independent hotels.

3. Problem Solution

3.1 Methods

The secondary research used is the study of related literature and the utilization of relevant findings.

The main research used to learn about the opinions of dissatisfied guests is a content analysis of guest reviews posted on hotel websites using a cluster sample. The first 3 of the 10 most popular cities in Europe are – in order – Florence, Budapest and Prague according to the Condé Nast Traveler Readers' Choice Awards 2014[5] These 3 cities were taken as the sample for the main research. Due to the high number of hotels in the sample, the number of hotels had to be narrowed down. This was facilitated by TripAdvisor's hotel-suggestion link, which offers a filtering of all possible hits in capitals and touristically important towns with its 30 Best <town name> Hotels on TripAdvisor „Just for You" option. Aligned with the goals of the research, reviews of „poor" and „terrible" ratings were examined of the 30 hotels in each city. The sample was taken between 2015-02-25 and 2015-05-15. n=1382.

The main title was taken as the main reason for the complaint. In case there was no main title, the first complaint was taken as the main reason. The first version [28] of the SERVQUAL model was used to organize the resulting data. According to this model, the combined effects of ten variables define the quality of service (table 2).

Table 2

The variables defining service quality in the hotel industry

RELIABILITY. Keeping promises
Ability to provide an accurate and trustworthy service
Price value ratio. Correct billing.
Fulfilling the service at the agreed and confirmed time (e.g. check-in, check-out, breakfast, wake up call, open hours of F&B retail locations and service areas).
RESPONSIVENESS. Positive attitude.
Willingness to provide service for guests in the right time and way (e.g. quick feedback, offering alternative solutions and options especially in case of over-booking or room move, commission procedures[6])
COMPETENCE. Understanding of tasks, being personally invested in them and having the knowledge, ability and skill to fulfill them perfectly.

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[5] http://www.cntraveler.com/galleries/2014-11-04/top-10-cities-in-europe-readers-choice-awards-2014

[6] Fulfilling guest requests

ACCESS. Traffic access to the hotel is obvious.
No or minimal wait times (e.g. Check-in, check-out, restaurant).
Access to service areas is simple and obvious.
Open hours are tailored to guest needs.
Internet access, WiFi.

COURTESY.

Friendliness, politeness, attentiveness, tact.

COMMUNICATION. Informing guests in a language they speak on at least the following topics:

explaining the core of the service,

the price of the service, compromises in the matter of the service requested by the guest and its expected price,

assuring the guests that their problem is being handled.

CREDIBILITY. Empathetic attitude. Honesty, honor, truthfulness, fairness.

Compliance with the image of the hotel company or chain/brand.

The reasoning used during a sales pitch.

The personal characteristics of the employee representing the hotel.

SECURITY. Personal, medical, asset and monetary security.

Guests don't have to worry about harassment from either the hotel or other guests.

Hygiene standards are good, including food safety.

The valuables and personal effects of the guests are safe in the hotel and in safekeeping areas.

The handling of items left in the hotel.

The relationship between guest and hotel is characterized by discretion.

UNDERSTANDING. Learning the needs of customers and guests beforehand and recognizing them in the present.

Analyzing the spoken, special and latent expectations of the guests.

Personalized attention.

Recognizing return guests and knowing their habits.

TANGIBLES. Availability and functionality of equipment and appliances.

Appropriate amount of materials and tools, as well as the appropriate frequency of their refill and replacement.

Other guests in the hotel and other service areas.

Source: original based on Parasuraman et al. [28]

Variables were categorized based on the characteristics (table 2) discovered during the analysis of complaints. The application IBM SPSS Statistics 21 was used to process the data.

3.2 Sample composition

Of the ninety hotels representing the offering palette, 20 (Florence:5, Budapest:12, Prague:3) belong to international chains while 70 are independent.

Their average quality expressed by the number of stars is 4.2 (Florence:3,8; Budapest:4,4; Prague:4,3). Hotels belonging to international chains have five stars with one exception. The average quality of independent hotels is 4.0 stars. Determining the number of stars was done primarily based on data presented on their own websites. When this was not available, Booking.com category was used.

On the demand side, of the 1382 guests who posted negative comments, 55% were traveling with their partner, 13% with their acquaintances, 21% with their family, while 11% traveled alone.

From the 1382 negative comments, 888 were marked „Poor" and 494 „Terrible" on Tripadvisor's five rank scale.

3.3 Causes of dissatisfaction

There is at least one real or imagined cause for every case of guest dissatisfaction. This main offense is joined by other inconveniences which were encountered during the events started by the main offense. For example upon arrival to the hotel the guest learns that they need to move on to another hotel in the city (overbooking is the most often cited reason by the hotel). In this case the main cause of dissatisfaction is the hotel's lack of reliability. While the guest is waiting for an explanation, they see that other guests are being given rooms. Due to this, the hotel's credibility will also be called to question along with the main cause. To make matters worse, the hotel does nothing more than provide the address of the other hotel where the replacement room was reserved. As a result, the expectation for responsiveness is also unmet. Since these events are the „products" of the main offense, they would not have taken place without it. Graph 3 shows the distribution of main offenses. The number of main reasons is equal to the number of entries.

A third of the main causes leading to a complaint are the result of false promises made by the hotel. One characteristic form of unreliability is the missing confirmed service. Hotels often sell more rooms than they have available. The reason for overbooking is that a portion of bookings are canceled by guests. The product (room) is purely service however and therefore cannot be stored. It is perishable. In case a service can't be fulfilled due to overbooking, the guest must be informed in advance and a replacement room has to be organized in a hotel of the same or similar

Graph 3

Main causes of guest dissatisfaction (n=1.382)
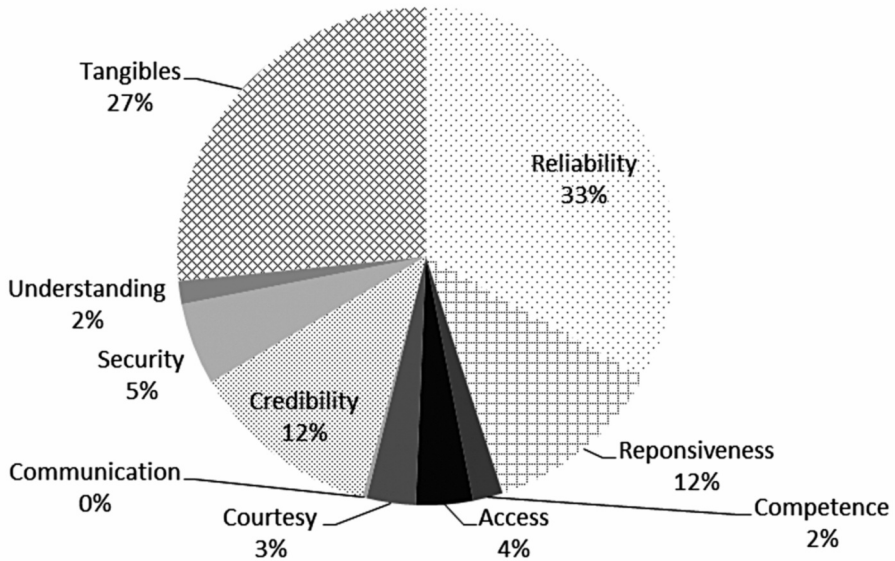
Source: original research

quality according to points b) 1. and 2. of article 25 of IH&RA[7]-UFTAA[8] Code of Practice [32]. From the comments it was clear that guests were only informed about the alternate arrangement upon arrival.

The other typical unfulfilled promise is the room's type and/or location within the hotel. In these cases guest dissatisfaction can be traced back to the hotel's marketing communication. The leading service of the hotel are the rooms. Due to this floor plans are designed with an eye for efficiency instead of ensuring that all rooms provide the same favorable view [33]. On the other hand, the complexity of the hotel's target group demands a variety of room types and the establishment of related price categories. The combined effect of the variety of room types and the facing of the building means that often the same type of rooms is located in different wings of the hotel. Hotels however only provide a visual presentation of the most attractive rooms in the form of virtual tours and photo galleries instead of every room. This can generate high expectation and can lead to disappointment.

The third classic cause of unreliability is unsatisfactory price value ratio compared to expectations. This was the most characteristic (59%) main cause for complaint in the hotels of Florence. Budapest and Prague appear on both the 2015 [34] and 2014 [35] lists of 10 cheapest European

[7] International Hotel & Restaurant Association
[8] Universal Federation of Travel Agent's Associations

cities according to TripAdvisor's research. Table 3 shows the price ranges of hotels in the research sample at the time of this paper's submission.

<div align="right">Table 3</div>

4 and 5 star Hotel prices 2015 (Euro)

Hotel Rating (stars)	Florence	Budapest	Prague
****	47,00 – 474,00	35,00 – 167,00	29,99 – 386,69
*****	225,00 – 692,00	79,00 – 234,00	109,94 – 336,99

Source: original based on PriceofTravel [36] data

Material assets that can fulfill basic and motivational needs and desires on a memorable level – tangibles – play a lead role in the process of making a hotel booking decision. The presence of material assets and their good condition is important in keeping guests satisfied due to the inseparable nature of the service.

Since the European Union's growth in 2004 the European Commission is continually encourages initiatives aiming for the standardization of services. This goal was realized in Hotelstars Union's uniform criteria system, established in 2009. The AHRCR[9] and the HHRA[10] were among its founders. Italy is not yet part of the alliance. Hotel qualification is performed using different guidelines in each region of Italy.

Guests found the most issues with the room and the bathroom. The distribution of guest nationality was not possible due to lack of data, except in cases where the guest made a note of this in the comment and where it was obvious from other details (e.g. home address). Based on what data was available, it could be determined that 78% of guests identified as U.S. Citizens (number of complaints: 463) were unhappy with the size of the room.

Room size is a determining factor for the feeling of comfort. A basic expectation of guests is that the hotel room should have its own bathroom/toilet. This is a minimal requirement even for the three star category in every member of the European Union [37]. The minimum size of rooms that include a bathroom is not defined by the Hotelstars Union, but bonus qualification points are only rewarded for a size of at least 14 m². The most (25) points can be attained only if at least 85% of the rooms are at or above 30 m² [38].

U.S. Room sizing practice is markedly different.

The 2014 Hotel Cost Estimating Guide [39] of the JN+A and the HVS Global Hospitality Services list that a North American UPSCALE[11] rated hotel's rooms have on average 389 square feet which is 36,14 m². Even the rooms in ECONOMY hotels, which represent the lowest quality have

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[9] Czech Association of Hotels and Restaurants
[10] Hungarian Hotel & Restaurant Association
[11] four star equivalent

303 square feet, or 27,27 m² which is almost the double of the 14 m² for which Hotelstars Unions awards the baseline (10) points.

Both cited complaint causes are characteristic for independent hotels to a larger extent than chain hotels (Graph 4).

The ration of main complaint causes in chain (n=590) and independent (n=792) hotels separately (%)
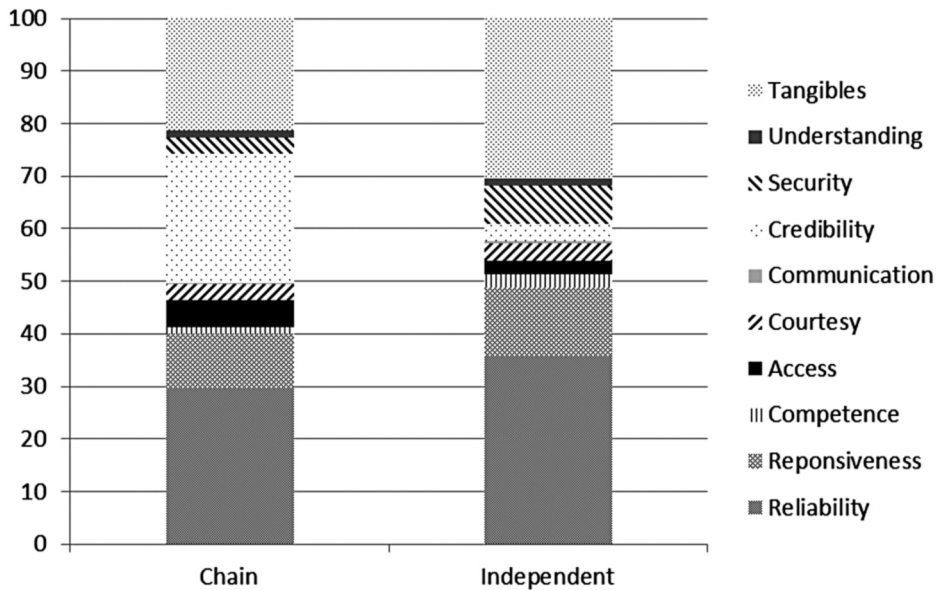
Source: original research

The standards used by chains make the ambiance the guest arrives in more predictable. Standardization however also comes with the possibility that the guest will find the high quality known from the chain's communication and experienced during travels to be natural and will expect it. This can become dangerous when the material assets (see tangibles) of the ambiance in the chain's member hotel are worn out, not working, and/or the personnel are not assisting the guest with the familiar and expected attitude and responsiveness. If this is accompanied with the breaking of a concrete promise made to the guest (see reliability), the hotel is not only damaging its own credibility, but that of its parent chain as well. Credibility made up 12% of main guest complaint reasons (Graph 3), and appeared seven times as often in case of hotels belonging to chains (Graph 4) than independent hotels. A contributing factor could be that chains use standardized room selections and connected price categories. They also like to use a sales technique called upselling. The essence of upselling is trying to convince the freshly arrived guest to take a room in a higher price range [40]. Independent hotels also use this method as their options allow.

Comprising 5% of main complaint reasons is security, which led to dissatisfaction twice as often in independent hotels than in chain hotels. The most typical (46 cases in all) concrete issue that resulted in a grievance arose from a lack of monetary security (unwarranted credit card charge). In other cases guests cited room theft (14 cases), disappearance of items left in the hotel (6 cases) and food safety (8 cases) as the cause of safety incidents.

Access related deficiencies were only 4% of main complaint reasons. These clustered around two primary problems. One of these was the lack of internet access and Wi-Fi or their limited availability end appeared in chain and independent hotels equally. It is noteworthy that according to PhoCusWright's 2013 Traveler Technology Survey [41] guests prevalently use mobile devices all throughout the life cycle of their travels (Table 4).

Table 4

Mobil Devices Used During the Travel Life cycle (%)

	Destination Selection	Shopping	Booking	Sharing
Tablet	22	21	12	15
Smartphone	35	34	19	14

Source: original based on PhoCusWright [41] data (n=1658)

Hotels generate income and profit from this both directly (booking) and indirectly (sharing). For this reason guests expect to be able to use their devices in the hotel as well and to do so without limitations and extra cost.

The 2013 research of Hotels.com [42] found that internet access and Wi-Fi is the 3rd most important expectation of guests in case of hotels while being the 1st in case of hotel rooms. The next research by Hotels.com in 2015 confirmed the leading position of Wi-Fi [43]. The survey (n=4700) determined that 25% of leisure tourists and 49% of occupational tourists think that Wi-Fi should be a standard service in hotels.

The other common manifestation of lack of access is opening hours, which represent the eagerness to provide service. In this regard chain hotels produced the majority of complaints, roughly twice that of individual hotels (Graph 4). The suspected rationale for this is the greater operating flexibility of independent hotels. This is explained by the fact that the general managers of independent hotels have more decision making autonomy than their corporate (e.g. chain or hotel management company maintained) counterparts [44]. In smaller independent hotels the owner also often participates in running the hotel.

Courtesy (3%) and understanding (2%) are overall seldom the main causes of guest dissatisfaction and appear in the same ratio at chain and independent hotels.

Similarly rare (2%) is competence among the main cause among complaints. Here however there is a significant, two and a half times difference in the frequency of emergence (Graph 4). The likely reason for

this is that in the case of chain hotels both the organizational structure and work distribution are standardized, which translates to standardized job descriptions as well.

3.4 The consequences of dissatisfaction

4. 4. 1. Growing dissatisfaction

The main cause of complaint was the single cause of guest dissatisfaction in only 184 cases. This is 13.3% of all complaints. In addition to the main cause, guests listed one additional cause of their dissatisfaction in 36% of the cases, two in 21.8%, three in 17.7% and four in 7.4% of the cases. 41 guests listed 6 or more additional causes, which 3.8% of all cases. That is 3897 causes in total, which lead to 1382 complaints. The number of supplementary inconveniences in a cause and effect relationship with the main cause was 1231. Based on their distribution, the defining sources of dissatisfaction in connection to the main cause of complaint are as follows:
– a lack of quick and eager help (responsiveness 29%);
– missing or partially fulfilled promised compensation (reliability 17%);
– shortcomings in substitute service – usually another room (tangibles 15%);
– the behavior of employee(s) dealing with the complaint (courtesy 14%);
– the professionalism of the transaction (competence 9%);
–other (access, communication, credibility, security, understanding: 16%).

Dissatisfied guests become more critical. From the text of the complaints in 1284 cases it was obvious that the new cause of dissatisfaction was distinct in time from the main and supplementary causes of complaint. Events prior to the main cause were recalled by only 21 guests. Of this, 14 were in connection to the approachability of the hotel (access). Parking space (tangibles) and rooming needs based on actual health status (understanding) were recalled in 2 cases each, while lack of responsiveness was remembered in 3 cases. In the other 1263 cases additional inconveniences and/or further shortcomings – separate from the main slight – discovered and cited by the guests came later.

Later discovered shortcomings in tangibles cover all areas of main hotel activities. Of the 421 cases in total, 49% were in connection to the accommodation function, primarily the room itself. 18% were in the area of Food&Beverage – primarily the food – and 33% were deficiencies and faults of material assets discovered in the other service areas. The composition is exceptionally varied from air conditioning through torn shower curtain to broken jacuzzi.

All 269 cases of access were without exception complaints about the poor quality of internet access and/or lack of Wi-Fi and/or the fact that it has to be paid for.

Guests relate more critically to hotel personnel as well after a suffered slight. They are less likely to tolerate the lack of competence (81 cases), responsiveness (69 cases), reliability (54 cases) and understanding (24 cases), insufficient verbal and non-verbal communication (44 cases) and are especially sensitive to shortcoming in courtesy (139 cases). For guests who received poor quality in the personal components of service as well, the whole hotel can become untrustworthy [45], which is confirmed by the loss of credibility in 117 cases.

Close to half (31 cases) of the total 66 cases of security were complaints about the child safety of hotel swimming pools and complementary wellness units. Further 27 cases were about food safety while 8 other cases were in connection with property security (damage to personal effects, theft).

The number of inconveniences were almost the same – chain (618), independent (645) –, while the ratio of causes had only a 2% deviation in chain and independent hotels. In relation to measured ratios within the same sample where the deviation was higher than 2%, three components – competence +5%, security +4%, tangibles +3% – were higher in independent hotels compared to chain hotels. A greater deviation was encountered in two cases – access +7% and credibility +15% –, but here chain hotels performed worse than independents. The causes of the deviations are the same as those discussed before in the description of main causes.

4. 4. 2 Guest reaction

59% of the comments and the related 2211 complaint causes – 56.7% of the total – were serious enough that the guest left the hotel or threatened with negative consequences. The distribution of results of dissatisfaction[12] are shown on Table 5.

59% (815) of the comments contained one or more offenses (2211) which compelled the guest to retaliate. On average guests had to suffer close to three (2.7) slights before they acted in a way that was detrimental

Table 5

Distribution of retaliation methods based on the number of causes (n=2.211) (%)

do not come back	dissuade others form the hotel	recommend another hotel	move into another hotel
49,4	29,9	13,9	6,8

Source: original research

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[12] Individual consequences were taken into account in connection to the causes of dissatisfaction

to the hotel. The guests clearly indicated in their comments what they will do to get back at the hotel. Based on the feedback four kinds of retaliation method could be identified. The distribution of these methods can be seen in table 5.

Dissatisfied guests are understandably uneager to return to the place where they received a slight instead of the expected experience (Graph 5). Therefore if the hotel is unable to restore the guest's satisfaction on site, it loses a potential return customer. On the long run this is a loss in the case of leisure tourists as well, since a hotel is an investment made with an estimated operating time measured in decades. Occupational tourists however book several nights in the same hotel on company level and in the same time period. Guests in a decision making role at their company can cause a loss of many nights to the hotel, as one specific complaint promises: „… I suggested to my company to cancel the corporate agreement with you, …".

Leisure and occupational tourists can both cause losses to the hotel by dissuading others from staying there. The intention to cause a loss is clear and heightened if the name of the alternative hotel is specifically stated.

Graph 5

Number of negative results of each complaint cause (No.)
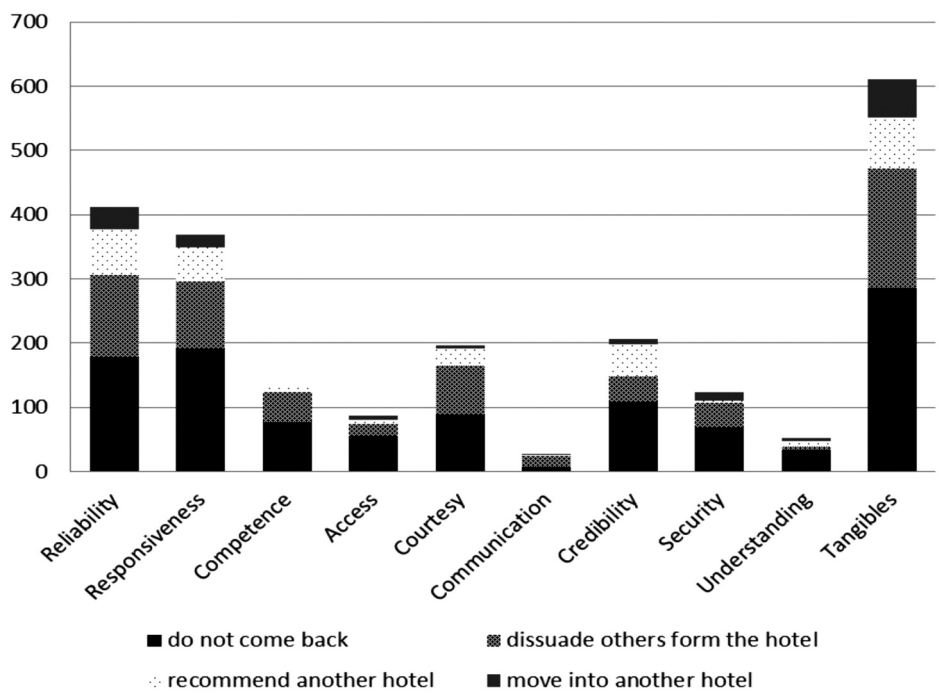
Source: original research

Immediate loss is only caused however if the guest moves to another hotel. Among the 6 complaints about monetary security there were 6 cases where the hotel – in spite of acknowledging the complaint as justified – did not refund the room price for the nights not spent there due to relocation.

It should be noted that there is a significant number of comments (their ratio is 41%) which include the guest's dissatisfaction, but the guest did not think it necessary to threaten with negative consequences despite setting the rating to „poor" or „terrible". The distribution of comments based on the included consequence is shown in table 6.

Table 6

The composition of comments by the presence of mentioned consequence and the hotel's operational type. (No.)

	negative consequence in Chain Hotels		Negative consequence in Independent Hotels		sum
	present	absent	present	absent	
Florance	57	22	269	129	477
Budapest	247	236	134	108	725
Prague	19	9	92	60	180
sum	323	267	495	297	1382

Source: original research

5. Conclusion

H1 The leading offense which made up 35.5% (1382 cases) of complaints was accompanied by 1231 additional inconveniences (31.6%). Separately from these, guests received inadequate service afterwards in 1263 (32.4%) cases. The ratio of main reasons resulting in a comment is almost the same as the ratio of mostly later suffered or detected slights which were distinct from them in time. The first hypothesis of the research which predicted that guests become more critical after being offended is partially fulfilled.

H2 According to the majority of the comments (59%), guests cancel or avoid the repetition of their hotel visit and urge others to do the same. When guests stop using the hotel's services, the hotel's revenue is directly diminished. Dissuading others from booking at the hotel can lead to a drop in the number of guests. The communication of dissatisfied guests therefore indirectly lead to decreased business. Results prove that the majority of dissatisfied guests attempt to avenge their slight by causing a loss of revenue to the hotel. Therefore the second hypothesis of the research is fulfilled.

H3 For chain hotels, the ratio of guest complaints that threaten with negative consequences was 54.7% within their own sample. This same value for independent hotels was higher at 62.5%. Based on this, the third hypothesis of the research was fulfilled.

Negative guest reactions were caused by slights suffered in the context of courtesy, credibility, reliability, responsiveness and understanding. These categories – holding an emotional content – are the components defining service quality that comprised 56% of causes for complaints. They can all be grouped into the idea of hospitality and carry Conrad Hilton's philosophy: „It has been and continues to be our responsibility to fill the earth with the light and warmth of hospitality" [46, p.13].

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The Case of Research Aspects Arising from Employee Satisfaction and Engagement for the Benefit of the Employer

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Abstract

We have targeted this article in order to reveal a correlation among resulting 14 research aspects (scales), which describe particular factors of employee satisfaction and employee engagement. The outcome acknowledges an old good truth that good conduct, human respect and mutual esteem support good performance results and employee satisfaction in the workplace, as well. Our current research deals with gender deviations between satisfaction and engagement of employees in the industrial corporation. The research was executed in Bulgaria with the total of 2,140 participants, out of which 1,550 employees delivered questionnaires filled in correctly. This confirms the return rate of 72.4 %. We used a questionnaire based on the Focal EE as the Engagement Questionnaire (see the web page on http://www.custominsight.com/employee-engagement-survey/sample-survey-items.asp).
It was translated into Bulgarian, modified for both male and female employees, and standardized for the use in the conditions of the industrial corporation.

1. Introduction

1.1 Theoretical Framework of Satisfaction as a Construct and as a Research Object in Industrial and Organizational Psychology

Employee satisfaction research has been considered a relevant task at research surveys in organizations for years. The reason for such a contention is neither academic nor purely practical. Both these aspects have been present having a variety of significance. From the academic point of view employee satisfaction is a phenomenon related to a man psyche up to his relationship with various aspects of work, living over his personal happiness, or misery, it is actually a degree of his motivation to be able to implement his overall potential. A high ratio of satisfaction is a guarantee of the sound mental health of an individual in terms of psychology. From the practical point of view the situation does not appear less important.   Well, employee satisfaction collocates with effectiveness of different corporate departments, effectiveness of the whole company, its financial prosperity, competitive advantage, personnel turnover, recruitment of new employees, etc.

Job satisfaction shall not be considered a one-dimensional construct. An individual employee of the firm can become deeply satisfied with a single aspect of the job, on the other hand, and very dissatisfied with another. For instance, the man can enjoy a party of his colleagues very much, feels closely connected to them, wishes to be in touch with them also at times outside working hours, and simultaneously can be strongly dissatisfied with his pay and working conditions.

1.2 Definitions of Employee Engagement and Employee Satisfaction

Our research target is not to provide an exhaustive compendium of definitions related to the given subject. Therefore, we have selected a certain number of definitions dealing with the employee engagement and employee satisfaction after our literature search. William Kahn provided the first formal definition of employee engagement as "the harnessing of organisation members' selves to their work roles; in engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during role performances" [6].

The CustomInsight.com where we used the free questionnaire from defines employee satisfaction and engagement as "The extent to which employees feel passionate about their jobs, are committed to the organization, and put discretionary effort in to their work". In contrast to the engagement definition, the employee satisfaction has been cited as „The extent to which employees are happy or content with their jobs, and work environment" [3]. We have drawn from the experience of the

exclusive research study processed by ourselves on basis of the themed gender diversity and performance in the industrial corporation. Thus, we characterized conclusions of our research study in the following manner: The results of this research support the contention that gender diversity at the business unit level positively affects financial performance, which appears to have substantial practical implications. This financial utility suggests that making diversity an organizational priority may result in financial benefits [1]

1.3 Managerial View on Employee Engagement

The latest trends within the HR Management field solve the need of a qualified labour force and performance management. As Legnerova & Fucikova say, this is the necessity to be managed including the employee diversity:

Employee diversity is necessary for better company results. This was mentioned by Legnerová, as well: "In a team of different types of people and personalities, employers then need to learn to work with such diversity – and thus, master diversity management. Managers meet diversity quite often, although they may not always be explicitly aware of it. International or multicultural teams or interdisciplinary teams noticeably exemplify diversity in the workforce" [7]. In view of the potential company needs' servicing, Stritesky submits the following in terms of the HR field thereto:

Then we structure the HR department in both organizations into the front office and back office. Back office is represented by expert teams or administrative departments. Expert teams are mostly focused on the development, knowledge management and training, compensation and benefits, or recruitment. Furthermore, there are departments dealing with HR Controlling, HR projects and information management. Front office is represented by a newly created function of the HR Business Partner. His daily workload is characterized by little differences in each organization [8]. It is apparent that companies endeavour for a close approach to real needs of their internal clients as well as employees. Subsequently, inherent employee diversity and engagement help increase the company productivity together with the particular tools used.

2. Target of the Research

Our research is targeted to clarify relations and engagement established among miscellaneous aspects of the employee satisfaction with the job. We are going to accentuate the functions a posterior the strongest dependencies.

3. Hypothesis

The hypothesis of our research reflects our claim that overall aspects of employee satisfaction and engagement have developed correlations among each other, and some of these correlations will play a high account role. We are expecting that communication represents a factor that will have more significant or extensive amount of significant correlations.

4. Methods

This research study was executed based on the customized order organized by the industrial corporation, i.e. a power company in Bulgaria. The number of questionnaires comprised in the study amounts to 1,550 respondents in total, of whom 76 % (1,153) were males, and 13 % (202) were females out of the total number of participants. The number of 10 % (154) out of the questioned personnel did not indicate their gender at all. The return rate of the questionnaires accounted to 72.4 %. All of the respondents occupy the non-managerial job positions in the power company. Majority of the respondents occupy the operational work positions such as electricians, fitters, and meter readers. The questionnaire consists of 79 questions arranged in fourteen independent categories. The questionnaire was translated from English into Bulgarian, tested in the Focus Group, and modified to conform to the power company working conditions. We assume that it fully confirmed its efficiency via results we achieved in the research study. The scales indicated the statistical significance in the form of existing deviations between male and female groups of employees being employed by the Bulgarian power company.

5. Data Collection and the Questionnaire

The questionnaire was used based on the sample questions of the example of the company Custom Insight [3] for the purpose of examination of the employee job satisfaction and gender differences between male and female employees. We selected this type of the questionnaire because of its qualities fully covering overall categories of employee satisfaction and engagement used for the power company examination. It was actually built up on basis of the well-known questionnaire of the Focal Employee Engagement, which has been in operation more than twenty years. Questions were extracted from the web page known as Custom Insight [3]. The range of the evaluation scale identifies the limits from 0 to 10, where 0 stands for I fully disagree with the statement, 10 stands for I fully agree with the statement. The questionnaire uses a standard form of the numerical scale ranging from

1 – 5. For the reason of the research, participants being technically educated employees, we selected the scale ranging from 0 – 10, which simulates the analogy with percentages in a more compact manner, thus it better corresponds to their mentality.

The questionnaire was structured into 14 specific categories. Each category consists of numbers of questions. The Sample Group consisted of male and female employees of the power company in Bulgaria. All sample group members work in non-managerial positions, mostly in the positions such as technicians, fitters, and meter readers, which form at least 85 % of all staff in the power distribution company. In terms of our time schedule, we carried out the research procedure from October to December 2014 by approximately 20 members of the staff. Power company employees were obliged to attend a regular training on each recipient's workplace organized twice a year. Each of the trainings took a half of the workday, and the staff had to reply to questions asked previously six months ago. The questionnaire was structured into 14 specific categories. The scope of the categories enumerates them in the following Table 1 below.

<div align="right">Table 1</div>

Specific Questionnaire Categories

#	Category	No. of Items
1	Feedback	7
2	Teamwork	2
3	Opportunities for Growth	6
4	Work/Life Balance; Stress and Work Pace	6
5	Quality and Customer Focus	7
6	Fairness	6
7	Mission and Purpose	6
8	Respect for Management	6
9	Compensation	5
10	Respect for Employees	7
11	Workplace and Resources	6
12	Performance and Accountability	5
13	Communication	4
14	Personal Expression/Diversity	6

Source: Authors' processing

The paper questionnaires were collected and delivered to our colleague to the headquarters of the power company in Sofia, Bulgaria, for their further processing and computerization. The output results were depicted

by Microsoft Excel Processor. The further data processing and maintenance was executed in the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Testing the scales (criteria) was elaborated in SPSS Cronbach's alpha in order to find out the scales' consistency. Means and standard deviation were used to rank satisfaction categories as well to define norms. T-tests were performed to explore the possible differences between male and female employees in order to scrutinize norm boundaries. The relative aspect means the division of every scale to the number of items. So, we managed to accomplish two goals such as:

1. Instead of working with raw means and standard deviation, we converted them into the original scale of supplying answers. Hence, the results rank between 0 and 10 for every scale.
2. This simple transformation enabled us to carry out the direct comparison between scale (categories) results.

Each category can indicate the category itself. Herein, the category manifests its relevancy as there is a variety of categories equipped with an alternative quantity of questions. In order to achieve the Mean per each of the categories, it was necessary to average replies to questions by a diverse quantity of items. Thereinafter, it was possible for us to compare the scales among each other.

6. Empirical Part of Analysis, Results and Discussion

We have used the questionnaire in our research, which results can be summarized in fourteen different scales, i.e. aspects of satisfaction, in other words. Hence, it is logical that questions are arising, whether there do exist correlations among those 14 aspects. From one point of view, we can expect that a majority of them will correlate among each other with the statistical significance. On the other hand, it is not less probable that correlations among them will not be equally strong. Thus, there are questions to be concerned: "What aspects should the relations beexpressed in the strongest way, and which aspects should they be expressed among the least strongly? Do the correlations correspond with reality? "See the actual matrix in Table 2.

Correlations among all aspects are expressed in 91 correlations in total, which implies us to a necessity to organize them in a certain configuration. Therefore, we are proposing the following configuration see the Table 3 below:

Correlations

Table 2

		Feedback	Teamwork	Growth	WorkFamilyStress	Quality andCustomerFocus	Fairness	MissionPurpose	Respect forManagement	Compensation	Respect forEmployees	Workplace andResources	Performance andAccountability	Communication	PersonalExpression andDiversity
Feedback	r	1	.713**	.794**	.650**	.495**	.805**	.540**	.631**	.532**	.725**	.571**	.510**	.660**	.692**
	p		.000	0.000	.000	.000	0.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
Teamwork	r	.713**	1	.734**	.601**	.536**	.687**	.514**	.571**	.466**	.633**	.489**	.491**	.611**	.621**
	p	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
Growth	r	.794**	.734**	1	.731**	.616**	.789**	.608**	.700**	.609**	.754**	.612**	.604**	.709**	.729**
	p	0.000	.000		.000	.000	0.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
WorkFamilyStress	r	.650**	.601**	.731**	1	.655**	.715**	.626**	.655**	.648**	.701**	.631**	.589**	.628**	.663**
	p	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
Quality andCustomerFocus	r	.495**	.536**	.616**	.655**	1	.610**	.721**	.667**	.576**	.643**	.566**	.676**	.623**	.601**
	p	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
Fairness	r	.805**	.687**	.789**	.715**	.610**	1	.616**	.734**	.640**	.813**	.619**	.598**	.732**	.748**
	p	0.000	.000	0.000	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000	0.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
MissionPurpose	r	.540**	.514**	.608**	.626**	.721**	.616**	1	.739**	.626**	.731**	.677**	.738**	.701**	.666**
	p	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
Respect forManagement	r	.631**	.571**	.700**	.655**	.667**	.734**	.739**	1	.681**	.841**	.676**	.727**	.778**	.766**
	p	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000	0.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
Compensation	r	.532**	.466**	.609**	.648**	.576**	.640**	.626**	.681**	1	.760**	.670**	.652**	.686**	.704**
	p	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
Respect forEmployees	r	.725**	.633**	.754**	.701**	.643**	.813**	.731**	.841**	.760**	1	.734**	.741**	.830**	.854**
	p	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	0.000	.000	0.000	.000		.000	.000	0.000	0.000
Workplace andResources	r	.571**	.489**	.612**	.631**	.566**	.619**	.677**	.676**	.670**	.734**	1	.695**	.725**	.710**
	p	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000
Performance andAccountability	r	.510**	.491**	.604**	.589**	.676**	.598**	.738**	.727**	.652**	.741**	.695**	1	.772**	.721**
	p	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000
Communication	r	.660**	.611**	.709**	.628**	.623**	.732**	.701**	.778**	.686**	.830**	.725**	.772**	1	.840**
	p	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	0.000	.000	.000		0.000
PersonalExpression andDiversity	r	.692**	.621**	.729**	.663**	.601**	.748**	.666**	.766**	.704**	.854**	.710**	.721**	.840**	1
	p	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	0.000	.000	.000	0.000	

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Authors' processing

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Table3

Configuration of Gathered Correlation Coefficients

Value	Significance	Number of Relations
r < 0,50	Relatively weak correlation	4
0.50 < r< 0.65	Medium correlation	33
0.65< r< 0.80	Strong correlation	48
r > 0.80	Very strong correlation	6

Source: Authors' processing

As we can see from the result generalization above, there is the least number of relatively weak correlations, and those with very strong correlations besides. Medium or strong correlations do entirely predominate there. Very strong correlations are the most appealing for us. Thereby, we are proposing their detailed description bellow:

The strongest correlations expressed can be found between the following categories:

● Feedback and Fairness (r = 0.81)

> It is obvious that people who receive a clear good-quality and early feedback have also a feeling that they are treated honestly and correctly. This contention is rather logical especially if we take account of the fact that a good-quality feedback conceals in it a fair attitude and communication of the things as they are void of any attempts to hide, or manipulate the reality.

● Fairness and Respect for Employees (r = 0.81)

> Fairness is strongly connected to the feeling that employees are treated with respect. This result is rather logical especially if we take account of the fact that fairness is based on the previous definition an integral part of the demonstration of the respect.

● Respect for Management and Respect for Employees (r = 0.84)

> We consider it very intriguing that respect for management and respect for employees are very strongly connected, i.e. the more the employee feels he/she is respected, the more he/she appreciates his, or her managers and vice versa.

● Respect for Employees and Communication (r = 0.83)

> Respect the employee feels from others surrounding him, or her, is strongly connected to the quality communication, as well. The more quality, the communication is, the better are employee relationships in the workplace together with the mutual respect.

● Respect for Employees and Personal Expression and Diversity (r = 0.85)

> Personal expression and diversity of ideas cannot simply exist without any effort and special attention paid from the

management side. The support of a personal opinion expressed, respect for others' opinion even though it is not consistent with the manager's opinion require a targeted corporate policy and corporate culture. Therefore, it is not unexpected that personal expression and diversity of ideas have a strong correlation with respect for employees.

● Communication and Personal Expression and Diversity (r = 0.84)

This is a phenomenon, which we consider a very intriguing. It illustrates that communication and respect for employees as well as personal expression and diversity is for employees of the organization mutually very significant. For plenty of people these are very presumably synonyms meaning that we are able to express ourselves and our critical ideas, and be respected for that in case that the communication proceeds on a high level. Though, it has not always been the true in reality.

7. Practical Consequences and Recommendations

It is of a great concern for employees to feel respect for them. If the manager is not certain of what and how to take necessary steps in order to make his/her employee feel respected, and the manager is uncertain how to actually do it to make the employee appreciate him/her for such decisions, then results of our research can become a very beneficial point of initiation. It is a matter of how we have to be fair to others, disclose all necessary information to everyone who is in need of it, pays respect to opinions of others even though they may differ from ours. We are not going to provide a 100% cooking recipe for respect, but we are concerned that it is a method which with the certainty enhances the possibility to make employees feel both as important as to feel respect for their management. On the other hand if we wish to be held by our employees high, the quickest is to respect and accept them, and to communicate all the necessary with them.

8. Conclusion

Research surveys on employee satisfaction and employee engagement have become one of the current emphasized and highly prioritized trends in surveys held within the field of industrial and organizational psychology at present, whereas their content is focused both on theoretical as well as practical values. Thus, we take the view that what we hypothesized as overall aspects of employee satisfaction have developed correlations among each other was proved. In particular, the second part of our hypothesis focuses on this fact in a more relevant way. Above all, we found out that some of these correlations play a crucially high account role for

managers and leaders in a general company doing business regardless the fact that the company is either in the industrial or in the service sector. Discovering the correlations among miscellaneous kinds of employee satisfaction enabled us theoretical insights into various components of human psyche. However, our article displayed practical implications especially in the industrial company and non-managerial job positions above all; we assume that our findings and conclusions can be applied in a generalized form to every field of business, i. e. both to travel industry and related service sectors, as well.Simultaneously, it can be explicitly rewarding at the human resource management – primarily, at the exploitation of the full employees potentials, and at the optimization of the correlations established among the corporate entity– management – employee.

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Heritage and Tourism: Reconceptualisation of the Past as an Experience

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Abstract

This short essay explores the changing theoretical conceptualisations of heritage and heritage tourism. The paper argues that heritage tourism has undergone an ontological expansion during the last few decades and now focuses more on the way we experience heritage sites rather than static consumption of heritage resources. Therefore, as the paper concludes, a new framework is needed, which to better reflect the realities of modern tourism industry and to incorporate the growing awareness of the value of intangible experiences, memories and emotions as tourism products.

Key words: heritage, tourism, interpretation, intangibility, experience

JEL Classification: Z320

1. Introduction

While the theoretical and conceptual interrelationships between heritage and tourism have been debated at enormous length during the past few decades (e.g. [3], [18], [27], [28]), the critical formulation of heritage tourism has remained fragmented across a broad number of academic disciplines. Various approaches to heritage rooted in anthropology, cultural studies, history, archaeology, architecture, and museum studies have contextualised the way we understand and define heritage tourism. Moreover, these disciplines have also shaped the values we attach on both tangible and intangible resources of the past [1], [11], [16], [25], [30]. Recognising the interdisciplinary nature of heritage and the spectacular growth of tourism at a global scale, it is at least arguable that the theoretical conceptualisation of heritage tourism has been constantly reformulated. The growing interest for 'heritageisation' [17] as a resource for urban development and economic revitalization involves the emergence and development of new products. What we have witnessed during the

past decade, particularly since the increased popularity of intangible heritage products (see [31], [34]), reveals how heritage tourism has changed from simple visits to heritage sites to heritage experiences, which put an emphasis on the process of engagement between, the involvement of senses and emotions as integral parts of the tourism product. In this short critical discussion, I argue that the debates around the conceptual notions of cultural heritage and heritage tourism need to evolve and to incorporate new approaches to heritage development, management and interpretation. Following Smith [30], I argue that heritage should be understood as an experience rather than a static physical asset. Recognizing the importance of values we attach to heritage sites, I conceptualize heritage as:

.. a group of resources inherited from the past, which people identify, independently of ownership, as a reflection and expression of their constantly evolving values, beliefs, knowledge and traditions[1].

1.1 Heritage, tourism and the 'Authorised Heritage Discourse'

Since ancient times people have travelled to heritage places for cultural, spiritual or religious purposes [18], [32]. Visits to to ancient temples, sanctuaries and shrines are largely considered as the earliest forms of heritage tourism and largely considered as the very first heritage experiences [9]. The rise of the contemporary experience economy and the changing patterns in international travel and tourism since the post-war period stimulated the formation of the 'heritage industry' and the development of objects, sites and practices solely for tourist consumption [20]. As noted by Barbara Kirshenblatt – Gimblett [22, p.151], "heritage and tourism are collaborative industries, heritage converting locations into destinations and tourism making them economically viable as exhibits of themselves. Many 'tourist-historic cities' have emerged which further reveals the importance of heritage tourism for urban development and economic prosperity [3]. Within the contexts of urban revitalization and economic diversification, heritage has been defined as a "historic-cultural capital" [12] which has to be preserved for its aesthetic and economic values (see also [26]). Hence, heritage tourism is simply conceptualised as a form of tourism that involves "people visiting heritage places or viewing historical resources" [32,p.4]). Both definitions put an emphasis on the tangible dimensions of heritage as a static and immutable legacy of the past, which is to be preserved, conserved and developed as a tourism product. Such understanding of heritage largely echoes the classic archaeological definitions of the past that tend to privilege tangible over intangible, emphasize monumentality and focus on

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[1]This definition of heritage is given by the Council of Europe's Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society. See more at: http://conventions.coe.int/ Treaty/Commun/QueVoulezVous.asp?CL=ENG&CM=8&NT=199

old and aesthetically pleasing [6], [27]. Moreover, such approach to heritage advocates 'conserve as found' policy [35] and refers to the concept of 'Authorised Heritage Discourse' (AHD). As introduced by Laurajane Smith [30], the AHD defines heritage as material artifacts, places, sites and landscapes from our past, resources that we have inherited and have to preserve for future generations. The discourse is centred upon monumentality and argues that heritage is fragile and non-renewable and therefore has to be conserved because its 'innate value'. It is 'authorised' by the body of experts who have the duty to legitimise and sanction the official narrative of how heritage should be managed and developed. At national level, this is exemplified with national policies and legislations which provides the development and management frameworks for cultural heritage preservation. At global level, the AHD can also be found at UNESCO World Heritage Convention [33]. The Convention, widely regarded as the prime normative instrument for cultural heritage preservation, has been criticised for being 'eurocentric', 'restrictive' and 'exclusive' [24,p.9], [8], [23] because it primarily concerns the physical protection of build monuments and sites rather than any expressions of living culture, values and meanings attached to them.

The concept of AHD, as argued by Smith [30], tends to privilege conservation, materiality and archaeology thus excluding the socio-cultural and political characteristics of heritage resources. As noted by Howard [21,p.6] heritage is not only a set of architectural monuments but "anything that someone wishes to conserve or collect, and to pass on to future generations". There are various ways in which we might attemp to interpret this definition but perhaps the key point to note is that heritage is a subject of various interpretations and multiple processes of meaning making. This in turn means that heritage is not 'done' and produced only in the past; rather, it is a subjective continuosly developed notion which is exhibited, managed and manifested in the present (see for example, [7], [14],[15]). Following Edensor [10] and Kirshenblatt – Gimblett [22], heritage exemplifies the representation and manifestation of our culture and largely constructs national identities, social cohesion and cultural legitimacy. In the words of Smith [30,p.26], heritage is 'not so much a thing as a set of values and meanings'. In her view, heritage is a symbolic, emotional embodiment of our past comprised of activities that involve remembering, commemoration and communication of memories, traditions and social values. In this paper, I argue that these intangible aspects of heritage shape the way we understand, exhibit and manifest our culture and history and they also reformulate how we assemble various moments of our past as tourism products. Socio-cultural, political and ideological influences brings the needs of a more holistic understanding of what is embraced, presented and consumed as heritage. Moreover, they further reveal the ongoing transformation of heritage tourism from visits to cultural sites and monuments to heritage 'experiences' focused on intangible cultural practices, rituals and performances.

1.2 Heritage as an experience: (re)conceptualising heritage tourism?

As illustrated in the above section, heritage is a subject of various definitions and interpretations, largely based on the way we construct, negotiate and exhibit our cultural values and meanings. The continuous development of heritage tourism has facilitated the 'tourismification' of heritage resources and, most importantly, the development of 'heritage experiences' – products that combine certain elements of learning and entertainment into one product suitable for a wide range of audiences. In that respect, heritage resources are largely commodified and staged experiences emerge in order to satisfy the demand for 'visitable experiences' [5]. These experiences involve the active participation of people and stimulate the creation of more intangible memories and emotions. More conceptually defined, heritage experiences tend to be inherently focused on social and cultural values as a performance in which certain representations of the past are continually (re)created and negotiated by different actors [36].

Having emphasised the shift from material culture to heritage experiences, I argue that heritage has undergone an ontological expansion to incorporate new approaches to conservation, interpretation and development. Hence, heritage tourism has also been influenced by these changing dimensions. As the definition of heritage has evolved over time, the theorisation of heritage tourism also needs to shift directions. Too often heritage tourism has been framed as an activity that brings commodification, destruction and loss of authenticity (e.g. [2], [20], [25]) but it should also be read in less pejorative terms and regarded as a resource for revitalization, empowerment and community development. Nothing can detract from the central fact that heritage tourism is now more about experiencing heritage than consuming heritage and intangibility is equally important as monumentality. Therefore, it is difficult to escape the conclusion that heritage tourism needs a new framework which to better reflect the realities of modern tourism industry and to incorporate the growing awareness of the value of intangible experiences, memories and emotions as tourism products.

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Industry News

The University College of Business in Prague Became Part of a New Educational Holding

The new Educational Holding Academic Alliance, Inc., in whose portfolio belong the College of Business and Law (Originally College of Business in Ostrava and the College of Information Management, Economics and Law from Prague), the Pan-European University in Bratislava and other educational institutions at all levels of education mainly in the Moravian-Silesian region, completed another acquisition process. University College of Business in Prague became part of the Holding at the beginning of September 2015.

The strategy of the Academic Alliance together with partners PROSPERITY Holding, Inc. and the original shareholders of VŠMIEP Inc. confirms the current trend of efficiency in the organization of higher educational institutions for one purpose: to prepare a strong economic background of educational entities that will prepare students optimally than ever for their future professional career. Linking several higher educational institutions in the Academic Alliance aims to create a dominant educational institution of Central European character built among others on joint educational programs, scientific research projects and publications, and strong personal background. The significant social demand on interconnection study and practice particularly linked to the company's with diverse manufacturing and technical focus and service orientation contribute to this strategy.

The study programs of the University College of Business in Prague focusing on tourism and air transport services; with nearly 3,000 students they complete a range of the strong programs in the Holding with high added value and quick return of tuition fees in the form of high-quality employment in the labor market.

The new owner and founder and the new Board of Directors of the University College of Business in Prague guarantee students a creation of an even stronger foundation for quality education and career growth; Academicals a confident further development of the University College. 'Our intention is to achieve through linking of educational institutions synergy and other innovative and competitive effects to enhance and increase the added value for our customers - our students. We would like to achieve this goal, among other things, by a development of the right products. Thus, study fields, tailored to the needs of the labor market and skill-oriented education with practical features without memorizing and congestion by redundant information. On several occasions, our team of experts also confirmed that one of the primary objectives of the Holding is guiding students to entrepreneurship, inspiring thinking with ideas that

will have a chance at life; here we see the prospect and potential of the acquired knowledge through higher education. Higher education has long been not about education for education, but to ensure that our graduates can push through and will become a useful and respected manager or even set up his/her own business, "says Ing. Radan Jünger, Chairman of the Board of the Academic Alliance, Inc.

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Erasmus Week in October 2015 at the University College of Business in Prague, Czech Republic

Between October 12th and 16th, 2015, University college of Business in Prague hosted colleagues from partners´ universities in frame of Erasmus Week. Professors from Latvia, Hungary and Poland held interesting and informative lectures for our students. The lecture of Agita Livina from Latvia was focused on Management Approaches for Tourism Development in National Parks. The lecture of Attila Kurucz from Hungary dealt with Strategic Management (Creative a Vision) and Performance Management (Effective Small Business Management). Katarzyna Czaińska from Poland was talking about Ratio of Interculturalism of Organization – Advantages and Disadvantages of Implementation. All lecturers were kindly welcomed by both, students and staff.

(pj)

International Workshop Tourism in Global World, October 14, 2015 at the University College of Business in Prague, Czech Republic

The international workshop "Tourism and Business in Global World" was held on 14th October 2015 at the University college of Business. The session was opened by the Vice-Rector for International Collaboration and External Affairs doc. Alžbeta Kiráľová, PhD., who welcomed all participants, introduced the University College of Business and was the master of ceremony. In the first part of the workshop Attila Kurucz from Kodolányi Janos University, Hungary presented a paper Some new Aspects of the Change Management at the SMEs; Šárka Bendová from the University College of Business in Prague discussed Research Aspects Arising from Employee Satisfaction and Employee Engagement for the Benefit of the Employe; Iveta Hamarneh from the University College of Busi-

ness in Prague gave a paper under the title Tourism and Jordan – Current Situation and Future Development; Petr Houška from the University College of Business in Prague presented a paper New International Standards and ISO 18065:2015 Tourism and related Services – Tourist Services for Public Use provided by Natural Protected Areas Authorities – Requirements; Katarzyna Czaińska from the European University College of Business in Poznań focused on Ratio of Interculturalism of Organization – Advantages and Disadvantages of Implementation; Agita Livina from the Vidzeme University of Applied Sciences in Latvia focused on Impacts of Summer Schools on Region´s Economic and Social Development; Viktor Šafařík from the University College of Business in Prague discussed Prague, Vienna and their Surroundings: Comparison of the Tourism Development Trends; Andrej Malachovský from Matej Bel University, Banská Bystrica, Slovakia focused on The Czech and Slovak Tourism in Systemic and Structural Crisis. Selected presentations will be published in one of the next issues of the Journal of Tourism and Services.

(pj)

Tourism in Africa: A Tool for Development

The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and Casa África have jointly released a new regional report to assess the current situation of Africa's Tourism Product Development. Presented at 21st Session of the General Assembly of UNWTO in Medellín (Colombia), this report proposes a UNWTO methodology for Tourism Product Development that can be applied to African destinations.

Recent tourism performance across Africa is analyzed and future prospects are identified, thus demonstrating the importance of a well-defined strategy for tourism product development, so as to explore and leverage the array of opportunities that the international tourism sector offers to African destinations. It further discusses the prospects and challenges of tourism development for African nations, describes a specific approach for developing unique tourism products and presents case studies of specific projects that are helping shape Africa's tourism context.

It's available for free download from the following links: http://affiliatemembers.unwto.org/ publication/am-regional-report-volume-four-tourism-africa-tool-development

(unwto)

WYSE Travel Confederation Millennial Traveller Report Series

The Millennial Traveller report series is based on the Millennial Traveller survey, which was conducted in mid-2014 in order to capture

a snapshot of the behaviours, experiences and attitudes of the millennial traveller, a young, yet influential demographic group of travellers born between the early 1980s and the early 2000s.

The series presents an analysis of responses regarding destinations, travel services, travel motivations, trip characteristics, use of the internet and mobile technology, plus attitudes towards current political and socioeconomic issues through a number of short reports.

Each report is focused on a specific topic or sector of the youth travel industry and highlights issues of importance for the millennial traveller, as well as opportunities for interacting with and serving millennials.

The Millennial Traveller II report, the second in WYSE Travel Confederation's Millennial Traveller series, focuses on four types of services utilised by millennial travellers: travel agents, airlines, tour operators and hostels. The report discusses:
● Planning and booking preferences of millennials
● Factors that influence millennials' travel purchases and decisions
● Millennials' opinions on products and services

Free executive summaries of the Millennial Traveller reports are available at www.wysetc.org/research. The full reports are available free of charge to members of WYSE Travel Confederation. Non-members may purchase the full reports at the WYSE website.

(wm)

New Project Approved for Financial Support by Fund for Development of Science of the University College of Business in Prague

University College of Business in Prague supports since 2012 research, development and other creative activities of academic staff and students from the Fund for Development of Science. The main objective of the Fund is to support development of scientific research activities of the academic staff and students. For the period of 2015 - 2016 the projects Food Tourism Influence on SMEs Development in the Czech Republic was selected for financial support. To the researchers' team belongs Ing. Iveta Hamarneh, PhD., Head of Department of Tourism Economy, doc. Ing. Alžbeta Kiráľová, PhD., Vice Rector for International Affairs & External Relations, Ing. Eva El Bourkhissi, Department of Tourism Economy, Ing. Lukáš Malec, PhD., Deputy Head of the Department of Information Technologies and Analytical Methods, and 2 students of the master´s degree program.

(ih, ak)

Emerging Innovative Marketing Strategies in the Tourism Industry, Hershey: IGI Global, 2015

The continuous growth and expansion of the travel sector has brought about a greater need to understand and improve its various promotional tactics. Effectively employing these methods will benefit all manner of travel destinations and attract a larger number of tourists to these locations.

Emerging Innovative Marketing Strategies in the Tourism Industry is an authoritative title comprised of the latest scholarly research on effective promotional tools and practices within the tourism sector. Featuring expansive coverage on a variety of topics from the use of information technology and digital tools to tourist motivation and economic considerations, this publication is an essential reference source for students, researchers, and practitioners seeking research on the latest applications, models, and approaches for promotion in the travel industry.

This publication features valuable, research-based chapters across a broad range of relevant topics including, but not limited to, consumer search behavior, customer relationship management, smart technologies, experiential tourist products, leisure services, national brand images, and employment generation.

(IGI Global)

The EU's Tourism Education & Training Offer – a Mapping Exercise and Performance Check – Conference in Brussels, October 21st, 2015

On 21st October in Brussels, the European Commission, CSES and NECSTouR organized the final conference presenting the results, highlighting good practice and providing recommendations from the study undertaken in all 28 EU Member States on the training and education systems for tourism and their performance against industry needs.

The European Commission - DG Growth - Tourism Unit has selected the consortium composed of CSES, NECSTouR and Fondazione Campus to study the education and training offer for the tourism sector and assess its performance in delivering the qualitative skills needed on the labor market.

28 national experts are undertaking research in each country, highlighting good practice and identifying gaps in order to prepare a European report with recommendations and an action plan to further transfer and deploy best practice. The report is expected to provide an up-to-date assessment of the adequacy of current training provision, especially in the light of the emerging requirements of the industry.

During the conference best practices were presented in panel discussion. Doc. Ing. Alžbeta Kiráľová, PhD., Vice Rector for International Af-

fairs & External Relations and PhDr. Stanislav Voleman, President of the Czech Guides Association and Area Representative to Eastern Europe & Caucasus of the World Federation of Tourist Guide Associations presented the Tourist Guide study program provided by the University College of Business in Prague as a best practice. This program was developed in a close collaboration of the University College of Business in Prague and the Czech Guides Association.

<div align="right">(NECSTouR, ak)</div>

3rd International Conference on Business & Management in Connected Era: New Horizons and Challenges (ICBM@2015), Sharjah, United Arab Emirates

The 3rd International Conference on Business & Management in Connected Era: New Horizons and Challenges was held from 17th to 19th November 2015 at the Skyline University College, Sharjah, United Arab Emirates.

This conference provided an opportunity for the meeting of great minds and acted as platform for generation, evolution, screening and adoption of ideas in the field of business, management, and technology.

The conference attempted to create a forum for academicians, researchers and practitioners from all over the world to meet, exchange ideas and network in order to deliberate on the challenges and opportunities for businesses in the contemporary world.

Doc. Ing. Jindřich Ploch, PhD., Rector of the University College of Business in Prague presented a research paper under the title Modernization of Air Transport Services in the Tourism Sector. Co-author of this paper is prof. Ing. Zdeněk Žihla, CSc. Doc. Ing. Alžbeta Kiráľová, PhD., Vice Rector for International Affairs & External Relations of the University College of Business in Prague presented the research paper Innovating the Czech and Slovak Tourism through Creative Tourism. Co-author of this paper is doc. Ing. Andrej Malachovský, PhD.

<div align="right">(ak)</div>

New Member of the Editorial Board

Newly distinguish colleague Dr Edith M Szivas joined the Editorial Board of Journal of Tourism and Services from November 2015.

Dr. Edith M Szivas is a Visiting Professor at the International Centre for Hotel and Resort Management, University of West London, UK and Director of UAE based SeaStar Consultancy. She is a tourism development specialist with 25 years of international experience. Her expertise bridges industry and academia. Prior to moving into full-time consultancy she was a senior tourism academic at University of Surrey

UK where she was Director of Business School PhD Program and Director of Tourism MSc Programs (Tourism Planning and Development, Tourism Management and Tourism Marketing). Her consultancy work started with a tourism development and marketing strategy project of a spa town which led to projects in tourism policy, planning and strategy, national level tourism education and human resources development and luxury hotel management and branding.

Dr. Szivas has worked on tourism development and tourism human capital development related projects in the GCC and Middle East, North Africa, Europe, Asia and Africa with international organizations and for public and private sector clients. Her work with UNWTO spans two decades and she is a UNWTO.TedQual Auditor.

Dr. Szivas holds a Bachelor Degree in International Trade - Import/Export, an MSc in Tourism Planning and Development from the University of Surrey, United Kingdom and a PhD in Tourism also from the University of Surrey United Kingdom.

Press Releases

Tunisia to host the 4th UNWTO International Conference on Tourism and the Media

Building stronger partnerships between tourism destinations and the media will be the topic of the 4th UNWTO International Conference on Tourism and the Media, to be hosted in Tunisia on 12-13 November 2015.

The conference is organized with the support of CNN International and counts on the participation of key media and tourism sector representatives. The initiative aims to bridge the gap between tourism authorities and the media community and to reflect on how to better communicate in critical circumstances. The key note speech will be delivered by Jim Bittermann, CNN Senior European Correspondent.

"Working alongside the media and facilitating their access to information is highly important for destinations worldwide", said Mr. Rifai. "Together with the Tunisian Government, I trust that this event will help us advance stronger media partnerships in tourism", he added.

"The objectives of the Tunisian government are clear; we want to make of our country a leading destination in the international scene. The image of Tunisia is that of a country with 3.000 years of history; a country which has been at the crossroads of many civilizations and which have shaped our people; a people known for its openness, tolerance, warmth and hospitality" said Minister Elloumi Rekik.

The 'Tourism and the Media' Conference series constitute a major initiative and reflect the commitment of UNWTO to engage with the media community worldwide. Previous conferences were held in Croatia, Egypt and Portugal and addressed topics such as 'Tourism in the Headlines', 'Partnering with the Media in challenging times' and 'How the media is shaping the news'.

Madrid, Spain, 4 November 2015
PR No. 15082

UNWTO to hold the 1st Global Conference on Wine Tourism in Georgia in 2016

The 1st UNWTO Global Conference on Wine Tourism, to be held in the Kakheti wine region from 7-9 September 2016, was officially launched by UNWTO and the Georgia National Tourism Administration on the occasion of the World Travel Market in London.

As explained by UNWTO Secretary-General, Taleb Rifai, who led the presentation with the Head of Georgian National Tourism Administration, George Chogovadze and the Georgian Ambassador to Spain, Zurab Pololikashvili, "Wine tourism represents a growing segment with immense opportunities to diversify demand. In the case of Georgia, this potential is well-known and we are very pleased to be holding the first UNWTO Global Conference on Wine Tourism in the country".

"Georgia's unique wine-making traditions date back 8,000 years and are part of UNESCO's intangible heritage, creating the ideal base to host the Wine Tourism Conference. Herewith, the country's recent success in attracting a growing number of tourists, its development in terms of tourism products, branding and marketing present an excellent platform to share best practices, experience and knowledge¨ said Dimitry Kumsishvili, Minister of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia.

Gastronomy and wine have become key components for experiencing the culture and lifestyle of any destination and a growing travel motivation. To foster the development of this segment UNWTO has launched in September 2015, the UNWTO Gastronomy Network.

Additional info:
UNWTO AM Report Vol. 4 'Global Report on Food Tourism'

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Madrid, Spain, 2 November 2015
PR No. 15081

The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and the European Bank of Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) partner to foster inclusive and sustainable tourism

UNWTO and the EBRD have signed an agreement to work jointly in promoting inclusive and sustainable tourism as a driver of socio-economic growth. Advancing resource efficiency and promoting youth inclusion are two of the major priorities of the agreement.

The inclusion of youth in the tourism sector through training and employment opportunities, resource and energy efficiency, and capacity building for SMEs are among the key areas covered by the agreement. UNWTO and the EBRD will also cooperate in identifying best practices and in knowledge sharing.

The EBRD President, Sir Suma Chakrabarti, said "Tourism is a major contributor to the economies of many EBRD countries of operations. This partnership will enable both organisations to work together, with both the public and private sector, to promote sustainable and inclusive practices in the tourism industry. The EBRD aims in particular to promote youth inclusion in the industry in regions where young people are facing substantial challenges in participating in the economy due to skills mismatches and limited access to training opportunities."

"The tourism sector is making a fundamental contribution to the current economic recovery and can play a leading role in advancing inclusive development, namely in terms of job creation. By partnering with the European Bank for Development and Reconstruction we will be able to create opportunities to generate more and better employment opportunities while supporting the transition of the sector to a more sustainable path" said UNWTO Secretary-General, Taleb Rifai.

The agreement was signed in the framework of the EBRD's commitment for supporting inclusive and sustainable tourism in the countries of operation of the Bank, particularly in the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean region and the Western Balkans. The cooperation will benefit from UNWTO's experience and expertise in the areas of education and training through the UNWTO.Themis Foundation and of sustainability through initiatives such as the Hotel Energy Solutions (HES) and the Collaborative Actions for Sustainable Tourism (COAST) project.

The EBRD, owned by 64 countries and two intergovernmental institutions, is supporting the development of market economies and democracies. Follow them on the web, Facebook and Twitter.

Useful links:
European Bank of Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)
Tourism Driving Trade, Fostering Development and Connecting People

UNWTO / European Commission Directorate-General Development and Cooperation Guidebook "Sustainable Tourism for Development"

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International tourist arrivals up 4% driven by strong results in Europe

International tourist arrivals grew by 4.3% in the first eight months of 2015 according to the latest UNWTO World Tourism Barometer, fuelled by strong results in Europe and consolidating the trend of recent years. International tourists (overnight visitors) travelling the world between January and August 2015 reached 810 million, 33 million more than in the same period of 2014.

Europe, the world's most visited regional destination, recorded a robust 5% increase in international tourist arrivals, the highest across all regions and a notable result for a rather mature region. Asia and the Pacific, the Americas and the Middle East all enjoyed 4% growth, while limited data available for Africa points to an estimated 5% decrease in the number of international tourists.

"Sustained growth in international tourism is very positive news for all as the sector increasingly contributes to creating jobs, promoting trade and investment, developing infrastructure and fostering inclusive economic growth. This is particularly true in recent years, when tourism has been instrumental in supporting the economic recovery of many countries and in generating new jobs" said UNWTO Secretary-General, Taleb Rifai.

"Yet, we should not be complacent. We need to continue advancing fundamental issues such as travel facilitation and connectivity while placing sustainability at the core of our action. As world leaders prepare to meet in Paris next December for the 21st Session of the Conference of Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP21/CMP11) and following the approval of the 2030 Agenda for

Sustainable Development by the UN General Assembly in September 2015, sustainability must be at the forefront of the tourism agenda", he added.

Regional Results

A very busy summer season contributed to the remarkable results of Europe where international arrivals increased by 5% between January and August 2015. The euro area continues to benefit from a weaker currency and a sustained economic recovery. Central and Eastern Europe (+7%) rebounded from last year's decline. Northern Europe (+6%), Southern Mediterranean Europe (+5%) and Western Europe (+4%) all recorded sound results for subregions with many mature destinations. The 28 countries of the European Union (EU-28) boasted 6% more arrivals this period, exceeding the regional average.

Asia and the Pacific recorded a 4% increase in international arrivals through August. Oceania (+7%) led growth, followed by South-East Asia (+6%), with Thailand showing a strong rebound after weaker results last year. Arrivals grew by 4% in South Asia and by 3% in North-East Asia, where Japan continues to show extraordinary growth.

International arrivals in the Americas grew by 4% between January and August 2015, consolidating last year's strong results. The appreciation of the US dollar has stimulated outbound travel from the United States. The Caribbean and Central America (both +7%) saw the highest growth in the region fuelled largely by the US and European markets. Results in South America (+4%) were in line with the regional average, while in North America (+3%) growth was weighed down by weaker arrivals in the United States.

Limited available data for Africa points to a 5% decline in arrivals, with North Africa decreasing by 10% and Sub-Saharan Africa by 3%. International tourist arrivals in the Middle East grew by an estimated 4%, consolidating the recovery that started in 2014. (Data for both Africa and Middle East should be read with caution as it is based on limited available data.)

Currency fluctuations impact tourism demand

Although demand has been positive overall, tourism flows have been determined to some extent by the comparatively strong currency fluctuations. Many destinations are benefitting from more favourable exchange rates, while others have become more expensive, but seen their purchasing power abroad increase.

Among the world's top source markets, China continues to report double-digit growth in outbound travel, benefiting Japan, Thailand, the United States and various European destinations. Among the other emerging markets, India, South Africa and Egypt reported double-digit growth in tourism expenditure. Meanwhile expenditure from the Russian Federation and Brazil was significantly down, reflecting the economic constrains in both markets and the depreciation of the Ruble and the Real against virtually all other currencies.

As for the traditional advanced economy outbound markets, data on

international tourism expenditure reveal robust demand from the United States (+9%) and the United Kingdom (+5%), reflecting the strength of their economies and their currencies. Expenditure from both Germany and Italy grew by 3%, while demand from France, Canada and Australia was rather weak, partly as a result of the depreciation of their currencies against the US dollar.

Useful links:
UNWTO World Tourism Barometer
UNWTO Tourism Highlights, 2015 Edition

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Madrid, Spain, 29 October 2015
PR No. 15078

Destination branding, the Silk Road and young Asian tourism, addressed at the UNWTO activities in the World Travel Market

The first activity of UNWTO at this year World Travel Market is the 9th UNWTO/WTM Minister's Summit to be held on 3rd November. Under the title 'Destination branding: new challenges in a changing market', the Summit will focus on the impact of social media and new business models in destination branding.

During the same day, UNWTO will present the first Global Conference on Wine Tourism, in cooperation with the Georgian National Tourism Administration to be held in Georgia in 2016. The activity is part of the UNWTO Gastronomy Network plan of action. The platform was officially presented in September 2015 during the UNWTO General Assembly in Medellin, Colombia and aims to promote information and knowledge to further develop Gastronomic Tourism.

Experiential travel and the booking revolution will also be tackled during the Social Silk Road seminar that will take place on the 4th of November, an activity which will be conducted in partnership with Travel Perspective. The seminar, under the title 'Is the guidebook dead?' aims at analyzing how new trends are shaping the booking process and how emerging destinations are transitioning into a digital context.

Finally, UNWTO will join PATA at a side event to discuss 'How do young Asian travelers step out of the crowd'. As the rise in global tourism will be driven by young travelers, particularly from the Asian continent, the session will try to provide strategies to destinations in order to cope with this phenomenon.

Useful links:

UNWTO Programme of Activities at WTM

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Madrid, Spain, 23 October 2015

PR No. 15065

UNWTO kicks off the official celebrations in Spain of the 70th Anniversary of the United Nations

Ahead of UN Day on 24 October, the World Tourism Organization, the only UN Specialized Agency with Headquarters in Spain, welcomed all UN agencies, funds and programmes based in the country to mark the occasion as the first activity of the official Spanish celebrations of the United Nations' 70th Anniversary (Madrid, Spain, 23 October 2015).

"Today we think as one, we act as one, we feel as one and we reflect on the achievements and future challenges as one family. I strongly believe that the UN is one of the most significant achievements of mankind; a system which may not be perfect, but embodies the highest values of human ideals and strives to achieve them. On UN Day we celebrate the UN and its core objectives – peace, social progress and respect for human rights", said UNWTO Secretary-General, Taleb Rifai, welcoming the UN colleagues working in Spain.

The celebration will continue on 24 October, UN Day, with an event geared to the public, set to take place in Madrid's Conde Duque cultural centre, and the official visit of UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon to Spain between 28 and 29 October.

2015 equally marks Spain's 60th year of membership in the UN. A total of 14 UN agencies, funds and programmes have representation in Spain:

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR); United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), United Nations Support Base in Valencia (UNSB-V); United Nations Millennium Campaign in Spain; United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF); United Nations University Institute; United Nations Support Office for the International Decade for Action "Water for Life" 2005-2015; United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA); United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO); International Labour Organization (ILO); World Health Organization (WHO) - WHO Office for Health Systems Strengthening; World Tourism Organization (UNWTO);

The United Nations Global Compact (UNGC, LN Spain), United Nations World Food Programme (WFP).

Useful links:
Tourism and the Sustainable Development Goals
United Nations Seventieth Anniversary
Official celebration of UN Day in Spain (available in Spanish only)

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Madrid, Spain, 20 October 2015
PR No. 15073

On World Statistics Day, UNWTO calls for more and better tourism data

UNWTO called today on the occasion of World Statistics Day for improved investment and coordination in data collection in the tourism sector (Madrid, 20 October, 2015).

Under the theme "Better Data. Better Lives," the UN World Statistics Day is celebrated to raise awareness of how official statistics help decision makers develop informed policies that impact millions of people. Improved data sources, sound statistical methods, new technologies and strengthened statistical systems enable better decisions and better lives for all.

"Robust tourism statistics are vital to guide sustainable development, monitor progress, evaluate impact, promote results-focused management, and highlight strategic issues for policy objectives. UNWTO calls upon national governments to work towards building internationally comparable and reliable tourism statistics, including Tourism Satellite Accounts (TSA), in line with the UN approved guiding namely the International Recommendations, the International Recommendations for Tourism Statistics 2008 and the Tourism Satellite Account: Recommended Methodological Framework 2008" said UNWTO Secretary-General, Taleb Rifai

In a constant endeavor to provide guidance on the development of tourism statistics, UNWTO recently launched the following tools:
● International Recommendations for Tourism Statistics 2008 Compilation Guide, in cooperation with United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD)
● Measuring Employment in the Tourism Industries - Guide with Best

Practices, in cooperation with the International Labour Organization (ILO)
● The Use of Statistics to Evaluate Tourism Policy
World Statistics Day is celebrated every five years in the United Nations calendar to mark the many achievements of official statistics.

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Madrid, Spain, 13 October 2015
PR No. 15071

The 2015 UNWTO/WTM Ministers' Summit at World Travel Market London will put a spotlight on destination branding and how it has become an increasingly complex challenge (WTM London, Tuesday, November 3, 2015).

Destination management organisations are re-evaluating their structures and strategies to adapt to new market trends created by social media and new business models, such as the so called "sharing economy" and the growing empowering of consumers.

Moderated by CNN journalist Richard Quest, Tourism Ministers and private sector leaders from around the world will discuss Destination Branding: new challenges in a changing market.

The 2015 edition of the UNWTO/WTM Ministers' Summit will focus on:
● What makes a successful destination brand in today's globalised media landscape?
● The links between nation branding and destination branding
● The role of social media and consumers' engagement in destination branding
● Reputation management and crisis communication
● The changing role of destination marketing organisations; and
● The contribution of the creative economy to destination branding

Confirmed speakers include;
● Nikolina Angelkova, Minister of Tourism, Bulgaria
● Mauricio Ventura Aragón, Minister of Tourism, Costa Rica
● Darko Lorencin, Minister of Tourism, Croatia
● Nicolas Petrovic, Chief Executive Officer, Eurostar International
● Noah Tratt, Global Senior Vice President, Expedia, Inc.

- Lee McCabe, Global Head of Travel, Facebook
- Nayef H. Al-Fayez, Minister of Tourism and Antiquities, Jordan
- Edward Zammit Lewis, Minister of Tourism, Malta
- Magali Silva, Minister of Foreign Trade and Tourism, Peru
- Issa Mohammed Al Mohannadi, Chairman, Qatar Tourism Authority, Qatar
- Frantisek Palko, State Secretary, Ministry of Transport, Construction and Regional Development, Slovakia
- Derek Hanekon, Minister of Tourism, South Africa
- Walter Mzembi, Minister of Tourism and Hospitality Industry, Zimbabwe

The discussion will be further enriched by the participation of more than 150 Ministers and aides poised to attend the event.

"The rise of the new technologies, coupled with the global economic downturn, has brought a paradigm shift as power moves from governments to citizens and from companies to consumers. This change is having a huge impact in the tourism sector and both destinations and companies need to adjust to new challenges", said UNWTO Secretary-General, Taleb Rifai.

World Travel Market London, Senior Director, Simon Press, said: "The UNWTO and WTM Ministers' Summit is a fixture in the calendar for ministers and private sector to debate the key issues facing the industry. Destination branding is becoming even more complex challenge as consumers empowered by new business models such as the sharing economy and social media have an impact on a destination's brand and reputation. I am delighted WTM is again able to facilitate such an important conversation."

Now in its ninth year, the UNWTO/WTM Ministers' Summit is part of the World Travel Market London Ministerial Programme, bringing together Tourism Ministers and leading tourism experts to debate each year key issues affecting the sector.

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Madrid, Spain, 1 October 2015
PR No. 15070

UNWTO welcomes the G20 Tourism Ministers' commitment to promote more and better jobs

Recalling that tourism is one of the most dynamic and resilient economic sectors, Ministers of Tourism committed to maximize the potential the sector has to generate jobs, particularly for women and youth.

In line with the overall priorities of Turkish G20 Presidency – Inclusiveness, Investment for growth and Implementation – the meeting focused on how tourism can create more and better jobs as a means to reduce inequalities at national and international level.

"Tourism has a major role to play in economic growth and cultural understanding" said the Turkish Minister of Culture and Tourism, Yalçın Topçu, recalling the objectives of the Turkish Presidency of the G20 and the important role that tourism plays in the socio-economic development of Turkey.

"Today, though our economies have improved considerably, growth is still subdued and unemployment remains one of our most pressing challenges, particularly when it comes to the youth. Tourism can promote more and better jobs, create opportunities for women and youth, stimulate entrepreneurship and the inclusion of SMEs into the tourism value chains" said UNWTO Secretary-General, Taleb Rifai in his opening remarks to the Meeting.

The Deputy Director General of the International Labour Organization (ILO), Greg Vines, stressed that tourism "has the potential to further contribute to economic growth and job creation especially in less advanced regions" a factor that "gives tourism a key role in meeting the global challenges set by the 2030 agenda for sustainable development".

G20 Tourism Ministers recalled that tourism accounts for almost 10% of the world's GDP, 6% of global trade, one in eleven jobs in the world. Data from ILO shows that 'accommodation and restaurants', together with other 'private sector services' are expected to create jobs at the fastest rate of any sector in the economy for the next five years.

In view of the above, Ministers recalled that tourism creates jobs at all skills levels, not only directly in the sector, but through its value chain in many other sectors and that it has a higher share of women and youth employment and entrepreneurship as compared to the whole economy.

Ministers agreed on several actions, including:
– To promote jobs for women and youth, stressing policies that address women's empowerment;
– To advance the decent work agenda including the issues of wage setting, social dialogue and social protection;
– To create stronger links between the private sector, the public sector

and education and training institutions to close the gap between the needs of the market and education programmes;

– To enable cooperation between developing countries and G20 countries to promote inclusive economic opportunities and job creation, with a particular focus on women's education;
– To promote the integration of SMEs into the global economy;
– To promote the value of employment in tourism to reflect more accurately the opportunities and benefits of tourism jobs and to attract and retain talent in the sector; and
– To accelerate their efforts in the measurement of tourism employment in the framework of the UN adopted Tourism Satellite Accounts and the International Recommendations on Tourism Statistics;

Useful links:
G20 Tourism Ministers Declaration
The T20 Initiative

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Madrid, Spain, 28 September 2015
PR No. 15067

UNWTO welcomes the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals

UNWTO welcomes the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and reiterates its commitment to work towards the implementation of the Goals.

Tourism is one of the most dynamic economic sectors, with significant global reach, and can make an important contribution to the achievement of the SDGs, particularly in the areas of job creation, sustainable consumption and production and the preservation of natural resources.

"Issues such as climate change, effective resource management, poverty reduction and inclusive growth need to be at the center of tourism development. Now that the Goals have been approved, it is time to step up our action, time to advance policies and business strategies that monitor and minimize the negative effects of tourism development and maximize its positive impacts, namely through the distribution of its benefits among host communities" said UNWTO Secretary-General, Taleb Rifai.

The SDGs are a universal 17-goal plan of action for people, the planet and prosperity for all countries and require all stakeholders to act in collaborative partnerships. The SDGs were approved by the 70th Session of the United Nations General Assembly on 25 September 2015.

Tourism is included in the SDGs as a target in Goal 8, Goal 12 and Goal 14:

– Goal 8, on the promotion of "sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all includes as Target 8.9 "By 2030, devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products".
– Goal 12 aimed to "ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns" includes as Target 12.b to "Develop and implement tools to monitor sustainable development impacts for sustainable tourism which creates jobs, promotes local culture and products".
– Goal 14 set to "Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development" includes as target 14.7 "by 2030 increase the economic benefits of SIDS and LCDs from the sustainable use of marine resources, including through sustainable management of fisheries, aquaculture and tourism".

Useful Information
Brochure: Tourism and the Sustainable Development Goals (available in English)
Tourism and the SDGs at unwto.org

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Medellín, Colombia, 14 September 2015
PR No. 15061

UNWTO and ICAO enhance cooperation in support of the UN Sustainable Development Goals

UNWTO and the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) have announced a new joint strategic statement on Tourism and Air Transport for Development (Medellín, Colombia, 14 September 2015).

The Medellín Statement was agreed today at the first joint UNWTO/ICAO High-Level Forum on Tourism and Air Transport for Development, held on the sidelines of the 21st UNWTO General Assembly in Medellin, Colombia. It highlights the potential of air transport and tourism to improving socio-

economic prosperity and promote sustainable development in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) expected to be agreed at the United Nations SDG Summit next week in New York.

"With increased connectivity warranting long-term growth for aviation and tourism, our interlinked sectors represent lasting opportunities for socio-economic development. Yet if we are to harness these benefits, tourism and air transport must address persisting divergent policies and work towards a stronger, integrated position on inter-sectorial issues such as travel facilitation, market access, taxation or infrastructure development. As the global inter-governmental bodies responsible for tourism and aviation, UNWTO and ICAO are obliged to lead by example and pave the way for closer and more effective cooperation at all levels" said UNWTO Secretary-General, Taleb Rifai, opening the Forum.

"There are tremendous benefits for States which can be derived from optimized air transport connectivity and local and regional tourism development," commented ICAO Secretary General Dr. Fang Liu during her opening Forum remarks. "This is true not only in terms of increased business activity and economic growth, but also improved general prosperity and social welfare. With aviation set to double in flight and passenger volumes in just the next 15 years, it is essential that States prepare today to reap the full benefits of this growth in the years ahead."

The high-level policy-makers and regulators at the Joint Forum discussed challenges relating to policy convergence, the need for enhanced connectivity, market access, air transport competitiveness, and travel facilitation.

"ICAO and the UNWTO have been actively engaged for some time in maximizing the cooperative opportunities for aviation and tourism," stressed ICAO Council President Dr. Olumuyiwa Benard Aliu when opening the UNWTO General Assembly. "These efforts have been aided by our private sector engagement through the Global Travel Association Coalition (GTAC), and they are critical to realizing both the long-term economic growth and prosperity benefits for States and the related targets in the UN SDGs."

Useful links:
Medellín Statement
Welcoming Remarks by Taleb Rifai
Welcoming Remarks by Fang Liu
21st UNWTO General Assembly
International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)

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Medellín, Colombia, 14 September 2015
PR No. 15060

President of Colombia opens the 21st UNWTO General Assembly

Gathering more than 900 delegates from 120 countries, including over 70 Ministers and Secretaries of State for Tourism, the 21st Session of the UNWTO General Assembly opened in Medellín, Colombia, in the presence of President Juan Manuel Santos (14 September 2015).

In his opening speech, President Santos emphasized Colombia's vast tourism offer and the country's commitment to share it with the world in a sustainable manner: "We give tremendous importance to tourism in our development plans and in our economy. The participants gathered here today know more than anyone how tourism can boost countries and be an agent of social transformation. In Colombia, so much so, that tourism now is our second largest source of foreign exchange, surpassed only by oil. Indeed, with falling prices on oil and coal, we are looking to replace the income from these smokestack industries with more environmentally friendly ones, such as tourism".

United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, who greeted the participants in a video message, welcomed the Assembly theme – 'fostering inclusive development and social transformation' – and stressed that "As one of the largest and fastest growing sectors of the world economy, tourism makes vital contributions to employment generation, poverty reduction, women´s empowerment, environmental preservation and peace building " and said that looking ahead he will count on the sector's full involvement "in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals which include, for the first time ever, targets related to sustainable tourism".

UNWTO Secretary-General, Taleb Rifai, praised Colombia's commitment to tourism as well as the country's remarkable transformation into one of the America´s fastest growing tourism destinations, Mr. Rifai underscored how tourism, alongside it's economic weight, also has the power to generate significant social benefits: "Only those that understand the connection between tourism and peace can appreciate the real value of travel and tourism", said Mr. Rifai.

Olumuyiwa Benard Aliu, President of the Council of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) highlighted the close relationship between tourism and air transport: "In 2014, some 53% of tourists travel by air to reach their international destinations. We must recognize the important fact that divergent policies for air transport and tourism ultimately hinder economic development".

Walter Mzembi, Minister of Tourism and Hospitality of Zimbabwe and co-chair of the 20th UNWTO General Assembly, called upon the Assembly to "emerge from Medellín with a greater resolve on how to protect our

sector from all forms of threats and confirm it as a diplomatic bridge that connects people to people".

Useful Links:
Official Speeches (videos)
Juan Manuel Santos (in Spanish)
Taleb Rifai
Olumuyiwa Benard Aliu
Walter Mzembi
Full video message of UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon
21st UNWTO General Assembly

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Medellín,Colombia, 12 September 2015
PR No. 15058

Education in focus ahead of the UNWTO General Assembly

Improving the tourism sector's ability to nurture young talent was in focus at the UNWTO Forum on Talent Development in Tourism: Investing in Youth, which gathered in Medellín, Colombia, ahead of the 21st UNWTO General Assembly (11 September 2015).

As a labour intensive sector, tourism's capacity to attract, retain and develop human capital is essential to its competitiveness. The first UNWTO Forum on Talent Development in Tourism, organized by the UNWTO Knowledge Network jointly with UNWTO Affiliate Member University of Medellín, brought together Colombian tourism students with representatives from the private and the public sector from around the world to explore how to better match supply and demand of skilled labour in tourism.

"Tourism and hospitality students, such as the young people gathered here today, are the future of the tourism sector. Today, our sector offers excellent entry points into the job market, but we need to improve its capacity to provide opportunities for long-term careers in order to help maximize tourism´s contribution to inclusive development", said UNWTO Secretary-General, Taleb Rifai, opening the forum.

The same challenges were highlighted by Sandra Howard, Vice Minister of Commerce, Industry and Tourism, Colombia, who emphasized the essential role of young tourism students in shaping and upholding the Colombian tourism sector´s success.

As part of the forum, students from different Colombian institutions had the opportunity to exchange views with the UNWTO Secretary-General on issues such as the inclusion of tourism ethics and

sustainability in academic curricula, the role of innovation in tourism, and the sector's ability to foster community development and peace.

During the panel discussions, participants emphasized that talent development in tourism depends on the joint efforts of tourism educators and institutions; the private sector; and public bodies. They further pointed out the important role that international organizations can play in this regard. Above all, participants stressed the need to provide opportunities for the development, implementation and reward of creativity and innovation by the workforce and prospect recruits.

At a subsequent meeting, the UNWTO Knowledge Network agreed to an action plan to advance the issues identified during the presentations and discussion at the Forum.

Useful links:
UNWTO Forum on Talent Development in Tourism: Investing in Youth
Photos from the Forum on Flickr
University of Medellín
21st UNWTO General Assembly

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Madrid, Spain, 10 September 2015
PR No. 15057

21 million more international tourists in the first half of 2015

The number of international tourist arrivals grew by 4% in the first half of 2015 according to the latest UNWTO World Tourism Barometer. Destinations worldwide received some 538 million international tourists between January and June 2015, an increase of 21 million compared to the same period of 2014.

Europe, Asia and the Pacific and the Middle East all recorded 5% growth in international arrivals and the Americas 4%. Limited data available for Africa points to an estimated 6% decrease in the number of international tourists in the region. At the subregional level, the Caribbean and Oceania (both +7%) were the best performers, together with Central and Eastern Europe and Central America (both +6%).

In spite of this overall growth, results by destination are rather mixed. Safety and security remain a global concern while the economic scenario is comparatively more volatile with the recovery of advanced economies contrasting with the slowdown of emerging economies. Tourism demand has also been impacted by lower oil prices and currency fluctuations.

"These results show that, despite increased volatility, tourism continues to consolidate the positive performance it has had over the last five years and to provide development and economic opportunities worldwide", said UNWTO Secretary-General, Taleb Rifai. "As UNWTO prepares to meet in Medellin, Colombia, for its 21st General Assembly, this is the appropriate moment to call for a stronger support to tourism as the sector has the potential to deliver on some of the most pressing challenges of our time, namely job creation, economic growth and social inclusion", he added.

According to the UNWTO forecast issued at the beginning of 2015, international tourist arrivals are expected to increase by 3% to 4% worldwide for the whole year, in line with the long-term forecast of an average growth of 3.8% a year set for the period 2010 to 2020.

Regional Results

Europe, the most visited region in the world, led growth and increased international arrivals by 5%, benefiting from a weaker currency in the euro area. Growth was driven by the recovery in Central and Eastern Europe (+6%), while Western Europe, Northern Europe and Southern Mediterranean Europe (each +5%) all outgrew the worldwide average.

Asia and the Pacific recorded a 5% increase in international arrivals in the first half of 2015, with Oceania (+7%) in the lead. Destinations in North-East Asia and South-East Asia (both +5%) reported rather mixed results, led by Japan (+47% through July) and Thailand (+30% through July). South Asia recorded a comparatively modest 4% increase in arrivals after two years of double-digit growth.

International arrivals in the Americas grew by 4% in the first half of 2015, consolidating last year's strong results. All four subregions recorded positive growth, although with variations across destinations. The strong US dollar fuelled robust outbound demand from the United States. The Caribbean (+7%) and Central America (+6%) led growth. In North America (+3%), arrival numbers were strong in Canada and Mexico (both +8%), while for the United States indications point to more modest growth. Most destinations in South America (+4%) reported sound results, in spite of Brazil's outbound travel stalling.

The limited data available for Africa indicates that international tourist numbers were down by 6% with a decline of 10% in arrivals to North Africa and 4% in Sub-Saharan Africa. Alongside the impacts of the terrorist attacks, African destinations have been impacted by the aftermath of the Ebola outbreak in a few West African countries and the slower growth of regional economies depending on the export of oil and other commodities.

International tourist arrivals in the Middle East grew by 5% consolidating the recovery initiated in 2014.

(Data for Africa and Middle East should be taken with caution as it is based on limited available data.)

Source markets show mixed results

In terms of outbound tourism, data for the first quarters of 2015 shows a diverse picture in spending abroad.

Among the emerging markets, China and India both started the year with double-digit growth in the first quarter, while expenditure from the Russian Federation and Brazil reflected the slower economic growth in both markets and the depreciation of the rouble and the real against the US dollar and the euro.

As for the traditional advanced economy source markets, demand from the United States, France, Sweden and Spain remains strong, while it is weaker in Germany, the United Kingdom, Italy and Canada.

Useful links:
UNWTO World Tourism Barometer
UNWTO Tourism Highlights, 2015 Edition

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Madrid, Spain, 31 August 2015
PR No. 15056

UNWTO General Assembly to meet in Medellín, Colombia

Tourism's ability to foster inclusive development and social transformation will be the focus of the upcoming 21st Session of the UNWTO General Assembly meeting in Medellín, Colombia (12-17 September 2015).

The Assembly takes places at a most dynamic time for the tourism sector. With five consecutive years of robust growth, tourism has been a major contributor to the economic recovery in many parts of the world, generating foreign earnings, employment and investment. In 2014, despite several challenges, international tourism reached new records with 1,133 million tourists travelling the world and contributing US$ 1.5 trillion in exports.

Colombia is hosting the UNWTO General Assembly for the second time, following the 2007 UNWTO General Assembly in Cartagena de Indias. The event is expected to gather over 800 delegates from UNWTO Member States, the private sector and academia.

"I trust that Colombia and Medellín will provide us a unique platform to share our insights on the important transformations shaping the tourism sector, step up response to our most pressing challenges and leverage the immense potential of tourism to be a true instrument for positive change in the world", said UNWTO Secretary-General Taleb Rifai.

"Hosting the UNWTO General Assembly for the second time is a unique

opportunity for Colombia to share with the world its achievement in terms of tourism development and competitiveness: 161 ongoing infrastructure projects, over 18 thousand entrepreneurs entering the formal economy, 413 service providers with quality certification and 1.8 million direct jobs among others", said Cecilia Álvarez-Correa, Minister of Commerce, Industry and Tourism of Colombia.

This year´s Assembly also coincides with a defining moment for the international community as it prepares to embrace the universal Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the post-2015 blueprint for sustainable development.

Among the highlights of the Assembly is the joint UNWTO/ICAO High-level Forum on Tourism and Air Transport for Development. The Forum will focus on how closer cooperation between aviation and tourism can maximize the impact of both sectors on employment, inclusive growth and sustainable development, in the context of the post-2105 development agenda and the coming Climate Summit next December. The Forum with the participation of all delegates attending will be moderated by the Secretary-General of UNWTO, Taleb Rifai, and the Secretary-General of the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO), Dr. Fang Liu and count on the participation of Richard Quest, Anchor of CNN's Quest Means Business.

Other special events during the General Assembly include topics such as tourism as a tool for peace and social inclusion, financing for development, talent management, gastronomic tourism and shopping tourism.

Held every two years, the General Assembly is UNWTO's main statutory meeting and the most important international gathering of senior tourism officials and high-level representatives of the private sector.

For more information, please visit the official websites
http://www.unwtoga2015.org (available in English and Spanish)
http://lmd.unwto.org/event/general-assembly-twenty-first-session

Useful links:
UNWTO General Assembly: Side Events (available in English)

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Madrid, Spain, 26 August 2015
PR No. 15055

East African countries commit to advance regional tourism cooperation

The first UNWTO East Africa Tourism Development Forum brought together Tourism Ministers and representatives from East Africa and the Vanilla Islands to explore areas of further regional cooperation (Mombasa, Kenya, 20-22 August 2015).

In an effort to unlock the tourism potential of East Africa, the first UNWTO East Africa Tourism Development Forum gathered regional tourism leaders and stakeholders to identify opportunities to maximize sustainable tourism development through regional collaboration.

Opening the Forum, the Deputy President of the Republic of Kenya, William Samoei Ruto, said "Tourism is a critical component of the East African economy and an important part of our common destiny. Our biggest challenge is to work together to improve every aspect of the experience we offer to our visitors, from their arrival at the airport, their movement within and across our countries, the accommodation and facilities that we offer, and the affordability across all income brackets. We are better, stronger and more attractive together than individually. This Forum presents an opportunity to compare notes on our experiences, programmes and aspirations in the development of tourism in our region".

"UNWTO maintains great confidence in the East African Community´s ability to position itself as a leading tourism destination, by delivering one compelling, highly competitive offering. In this context, I wish to welcome the recent introduction of the East Africa Tourist Visa, which allows travel between Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda, boosting regional tourism and creating opportunities for tourists to explore the diversity of multiple destinations in the region," said UNWTO Secretary-General, Taleb Rifai.

Phyllis Kandie, Cabinet Secretary for East African Affairs, Commerce and Tourism, Kenya said: "By pulling and working together to address issues of competitiveness, positioning our destination globally and responding to environmental challenges, we can ensure that East African and indeed the whole African continent gets its fair share of tourist arrivals. Most importantly, we need to remember that we are not competitors. We are one people with a common destiny. Let us rise up to this challenge."

Alongside Mrs. Kandie, the African Tourism Ministers of Seychelles, Sudan and Uganda, as well as senior officials from the Ministry of Tourism of Tanzania also participated in the Forum. They were joined by high-level representatives for the African Airlines Association (AFRAA), the East Africa Community (EAC), the International Air transport Association (IATA), and Kenya Airways. Forum participants stressed the need to put in place joint institutional frameworks and policy measures to spur

further tourism growth throughout East Africa, including establishing a positive narrative of East-Africa as a destination, and developing regional policies in the areas of marketing and promotion, product development and travel facilitation (visa facilitation and connectivity).

In a Ministerial meeting held on the occasion of the Forum, a future common East African Tourism Agenda was outlined. The Agenda will include agreements on regional priorities and concrete actions for cooperation. The Ministers also agreed to work towards further mainstreaming tourism in the agenda of the African Union stressing that the sector can make a key contribution to the peace and development objectives of Africa.

In 2014, Africa welcomed 56 million international tourists representing an increase of 2% compared to 2013 and generating US$ 34 billion in exports (7% of total exports in Africa). The next 20 years show clear signs of continued tourism growth for the continent. According to UNWTO forecasts, Africa will receive 134 million tourists by 2030.

Useful links:
UNWTO Regional Programme for Africa
UNWTO East Africa Tourism Development Forum

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Madrid, Spain, 20 August 2015
PR No. 15054

Brand Africa – partnerships key to build brand equity for Africa

The UNWTO Regional Conference on Enhancing Brand Africa – Fostering Tourism Development concluded with a call for stronger regional cooperation and increased partnerships as means to build a stronger brand value for Africa (Accra, Ghana 17-19 August 2015).

Hosted by the Government of Ghana, the Conference was opened by the President of Ghana, Mr. John Dramani Mahama, who emphasized the importance Africa places on the potential of tourism to accelerate the development of its economies. "Tourism for us in Ghana is a major foreign exchange earner, contributing today 4.7% of our GDP. Through a number of strategies, Ghana has achieved the target of 1 million tourist arrivals, and we are working to improve on the arrivals and revenue from tourism. Tourism currently stands as the 4th largest contributor of revenue to the national economy after cocoa, gold and oil and gas", he said.

Addressing the issue of the region´s image, President Mahama stressed

the need to change perceptions and be innovative in telling the story of Africa "We must change the negative perception that has been built over the years. Africa is not one country, it is 54 different countries. Africa is the fastest growing continent in terms of population. Six African countries are among the top ten fastest growing economies of the world. There are more mobile subscribers in Africa than Europe and America combined. And there are many more unique selling points of this continent that we can package for the world. If we package Africa, the international media will respond", he added.

"It is a tragedy that many of the positive stories of Africa are often hidden from the headlines. Rarely do we ever hear news about Africa´s fastest growing economies, its medical breakthroughs or how new technologies are transforming its industries and societies. This absence leaves a wide hole in the full story of Africa. To not tell this full story is to flatten our perspective of Africa´s reality" said UNWTO Secretary-General opening the Conference, alongside President Mahama, the Minister of Tourism, Culture and Creative Arts of Ghana, Ms. Elizabeth Ofosu-Adjare and the Mayor of Accra, Mr. Alfred Oko Vanderpuije.

Zain Asher, anchor of CNN International's 'Newsroom' and 'CNN Marketplace Africa', recalled that half of the international tourists visiting Africa come from Africa and that Africa needs to "own its own story". Conclusions from the Conference include the need for African destinations to:

1. 'Own their narrative';
2. Engage civil society, particularly women and youth, in communicating 'new messages';
3. Embrace technology and social media (the campaign #theAfricatheMediaNeverShowsYou was shared as an example);
4. Build 54 strong country brands as the pillar of Brand Africa;
5. Enhance regional cooperation in areas such as visas and air connectivity;
6. Build partnerships with media, civil society and the private sector acknowledging the new role of destination marketing organizations as 'facilitators' of people's stories;
7. Invest in crisis preparedness in the area of communication;
8. Advance capacity building in communications and marketing.

Participating in the meeting were the Ministers of Tourism of Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Seychelles, Zimbabwe and Ghana, the representative of the African Union (AU), and public and private sector representatives from over 40 countries.

On the occasion, President Mahama was presented with the UNWTO/WTTC Open Letter on Travel and Tourism, which aims to rally the support of Heads of State and Government from around the world to advance the contribution that the sector can make to socio-economic development. Since it was launched in 2011, the Open Letter has been presented to 74 Heads of State and Government.

The conclusions of the Conference, which was supported by partners CNN International and Ethiopian Airlines, will be communicated to the 57th Meeting of the UNWTO Commission for Africa gathering African Tourism Ministers at the 21st UNWTO General Assembly taking place in Colombia between 14-17 September.

Useful links:
UNWTO Regional Conference Enhancing Brand Africa - Fostering Tourism Development
UNWTO/WTTC Open Letter on Travel and Tourism

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Madrid, Spain, 19 August 2015
PR No. 15053

UNWTO strongly condemns attack in Bangkok

UNWTO is deeply saddened and shocked by the attack in Bangkok, Thailand. On the behalf of the global tourism community, UNWTO offers its heartfelt condolences to the families and friends of the victims and reiterates its full support to the people and the Government of Thailand.

"These are direct attacks on the livelihood of the Thai people and their economy which is strongly linked with tourism. We stand by the Government and the people of Thailand in supporting its tourism sector as a vital pillar of the wellbeing of Thai people", said UNWTO Secretary-General, Taleb Rifai.

"Terrorism is a global threat impacting our societies, taking the lives of innocent people around the world and aiming to destroy our economies and our way of life. Thailand has a long tradition of being a hospitable and welcoming country and we fully believe it will continue to be so", he added.

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Madrid, Spain, 10 August 2015
PR No. 15051

UNWTO Conference to explore new ways to promote Brand Africa

The UNWTO Regional Conference Enhancing Brand Africa - Fostering Tourism Development will bring together a wide variety of African tourism stakeholders to explore how build a stronger brand for Africa as a tourism destination (Accra, Ghana, 17-19 August 2015).

Tourism is one of Africa's most promising economic sectors, but the sector's capacity to fully contribute to inclusive and sustainable development across the continent is often hindered by negative perceptions and the generalization of crises situations in specific locations. At the same time, the numerous positive stories from Africa remain untold to a global audience, further impeding positive perceptions of the region.

Against this backdrop, the upcoming UNWTO conference Enhancing Brand Africa - Fostering Tourism Developmentwill bring together a wide range of public and private-sector stakeholders in tourism, media and communications, and other related fields to:

● Analyze the situation of Brand Africa and its impact on tourism in the region
● Identify the key challenges facing Brand Africa and that of African countries
● Exchange national experiences on country branding and tourism branding
● Explore how African destinations can successfully build a strong brand in an increasingly competitive marketplace and a constantly changing business environment
● Create synergies among African countries towards greater cooperation in the promotion and positioning of a common African Tourism Brand
The Conference will be opened by H.E. Mr. John Dramani Mahama, President of the Republic of Ghana.

Among the confirmed speakers to gather in Accra, Ghana, are the Ministers of Tourism of Ghana, Cameroon, Namibia, Seychelles and Zimbabwe; the CEO of Ethiopian Airlines, Tewolde Gebre Mariam; and Zain Asher from CNN International, the media partner of the Conference, who will deliver a key note speech on "What is Brand Africa?".

Useful links:
UNWTO Briefing Paper: Towards Measuring the Economic Value of Wildlife Watching Tourism in Africa
UNWTO Regional Programme for Africa

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UNWTO welcomes China's decision to make tourism a tool to fight poverty

UNWTO welcomes the recent decision of the China National Tourism Administration (CNTA) and the State Council Leading Group Office of Poverty Alleviation and Development of China to promote rural tourism as an effective means to fight poverty.

In a recent meeting with Chinese tourism authorities, UNWTO Secretary-General, Taleb Rifai, welcomed China's continued recognition of tourism as an effective development tool as well as its special focus on rural tourism. "Tourism is well positioned to contribute to rural development as it is a labour-intensive sector providing a wide range of job and entrepreneurship opportunities in areas where other economic activities are often limited or in decay. Furthermore, tourism provides these opportunities locally, helping to curb rural migration", said Mr. Rifai.

Data from Chinese tourism authorities show that between 2011 and 2014, more than 10 million people, or 10% of the poverty-stricken population, were lifted out of poverty through tourism. In view of this impact, Chinese authorities are launching, within China's 13th Five-Year Plan Period, a nationwide tourism development plan to lift 17% of the country's impoverished population out of poverty by 2020.

CNTA and the State Council Leading Group Office of Poverty Alleviation and Development of China expect that by 2020, three million rural tourism businesses will be receiving two billion annual visitors, lifting two million of China's rural population out of poverty every year. The total income generated is estimated to reach over one trillion RMB Yuan benefiting 50 million rural residents.

Despite its wide-reaching socio-economic impacts, and having been identified by half of the world´s Least Developed Countries (LDCs) as a priority instrument for poverty reduction, tourism still receives limited attention as a tool for development. Against this backdrop, UNWTO recently called for higher financing for tourism in development in tourism on the occasion of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development:

"2015 is the year for action. As we move forward to adopt a new sustainable development agenda, we have a unique opportunity to raise the level of assistance in tourism to further harness its vast potential for stimulating green growth and inclusive development worldwide, particularly for the countries most in need", urged Mr. Rifai.

Maximizing tourism's contribution to poverty reduction is one of UNWTO priorities and main areas of work. In addition, the UNWTO Sustainable Tourism - Eliminating Poverty (ST-EP) Initiative supports

tourism activities that specifically deliver development and create jobs for people living on less than a dollar a day.

Useful links:
UNWTO Regional Programme for Asia and the Pacific
UNWTO Technical Cooperation and Services Programme
Sustainable Tourism - Eliminating Poverty (ST-EP)
Press release: UNWTO calls for higher financing for tourism in development cooperation
Download and share: Tourism - Driving Trade, Fostering Development and Connecting People

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Madrid, Spain, 15 July 2015
PR No. 15049

UNWTO calls for higher financing for tourism in development cooperation

Despite its wide-reaching socio-economic impacts, tourism still receives limited attention as a tool for development.On the occasion of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development (Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 13-16 July), UNWTO calls for higher support for tourism in international financing for development flows to maximize the sector´s contribution to sustainable development across the globe.

Tourism's underrepresentation in international financing for development flows remains a critical hurdle to overcome in order to fully deploy its development potential. Despite being a high impact economic activity, a major job generator and key export sector accounting for 6% of total world trade, tourism receives only 0.78% of the total Aid for Trade (AfT) disbursements and a mere 0.097% of the total Official Development Assistance (ODA)[1].

As world leaders gather at the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, UNWTO Secretary-General Taleb Rifai recalled that tourism has been identified by half of the world´s Least Developed Countries (LDCs) as a priority instrument for poverty reduction.

"For an increasing number of developing countries tourism means jobs, poverty eradication, community development, and the protection of natural and cultural heritage. Yet, in order to maximize tourism's contribution to the development objectives, it is critical to address the disparity between the sector´s capacity to foster development and the low

priority it has been given so far in terms of financial support in the development cooperation agenda", said Mr. Rifai.

Tourism's cross-cutting nature and multiple links to other economic sectors positions it as an effective multiplier in global development strategies as tourism often provides one of the few competitive options for developing countries to take part in the global economy. The sector is crucial for LDCs – in 2013, the 49 LDC countries received 24 million international overnight visitors and earned US$ 18 billion from international tourism. This represented 8% of total exports of goods and services of LDCs, and 12% for the non-oil exporters among them. Tourism was in fact one of the main contributors behind the graduation of Botswana, The Maldives and Cabo Verde from their previous LDC status.

"2015 is the year for action. As we move forward to adopt a new sustainable development agenda, we have a unique opportunity to raise the level of assistance in tourism to further harness its vast potential for stimulating green growth and inclusive development worldwide, particularly for the countries most in need", concluded Mr. Rifai.

Over recent years, tourism's ability and potential to drive sustainable development has been increasingly recognized – tourism is identified by half of the world´s LDCs as a priority instrument for poverty reduction and is one of the six initial programmes of the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns (10YFP) designed to accelerate the shift towards sustainable consumption and production worldwide – yet the levels of financing for development in tourism are still comparatively low.

In 2014, emerging and developing countries received 513 million international tourists or 45% of all international tourist arrivals in the world as compared to 38% in 2000. UNWTO forecasts this share to surpass that of advanced economies in the coming years and to reach 57% by 2030.

Useful links:
Download and share: Tourism – Driving Trade, Fostering Development and Connecting People
UNWTO/European Commission Directorate-General Development and Cooperation Guidebook "Sustainable Tourism for Development" (available in English and French)
Third International Conference on Financing for Development
Infographic: Why tourism matters
Press release: Tourism identified as key sector for high impact in Aid for Trade
Press release: UNWTO calls for increased support for tourism in the development agenda

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Madrid, Spain, 9 July 2015
PR No. 15048

International tourist arrivals up 4% in the first four months of 2015

International tourism demand continued to be robust between January and April 2015 with tourist arrivals increasing 4% worldwide according to the latest UNWTO World Tourism Barometer. Almost all regions enjoyed strong growth. Prospects for the May-August period remain upbeat, with close to 500 million tourists expected to travel abroad during these four months.

Destinations worldwide received some 332 million international tourists (overnight visitors) between January and April 2015, 16 million more than the same period last year, corresponding to an increase of 4%.

This result follows an increase of 4.3% in 2014 and consolidates the upwards trend of international tourism in recent years (+4.5% international tourist arrivals a year on average since 2010).

By region, the Americas (+6%) led growth, followed by Europe, Asia and the Pacific and the Middle East, all recording 4% to 5% more arrivals. By subregion, Oceania and South America boasted the strongest increase (both +8%), followed by the Caribbean and Central and Eastern Europe (both +7%), the latter rebounding from last year's decline. In Africa, demand weakened in 2014 after years of solid growth, affected mainly by the Ebola outbreak among other challenges. Limited data currently available for January-April 2015 points to a 6% decline, as African destinations struggle to recover from the misperceptions affecting the continent.

"It is encouraging to see the tourism sector consolidating its excellent results despite security concerns and unrest in many parts of our world", said UNWTO Secretary-General, Taleb Rifai. "This underscores that tourism is a surprisingly resilient economic sector which increasingly contributes to development in many countries around the globe. For national governments, it is a reminder that tourism can be part of the solution to foster socio-economic development and job creation", he added.

Strong results across many destinations with a rebound in Central and Eastern Europe

In the Americas (+6%) all four subregions continued to enjoy significant growth in January-April 2015, led by South America (+8%) and the Caribbean (+7%). Strong outbound demand from the United States fuelled results as 20 million US tourists travelled abroad through April, 7% more than during the same period last year.

Asia and the Pacific (+4%) consolidated its growth of recent years, with Oceania (+8%) and North-East Asia (+5%) in the lead. South-East Asia (+3%) recorded moderate results this four-month period as the rebound in Thailand (+25%) was offset by declines in other destinations.

Europe, the world's most visited region, enjoyed continued strength with international tourist arrivals growing by 5% through April. Arrivals in Central and Eastern Europe increased by 7%, rebounding on the poor results of 2014 following the conflict in Ukraine and the slowdown of the Russian economy. Southern Mediterranean Europe (+5%) maintained strong growth, though for many destinations these are low season months. Western Europe and Northern Europe both enjoyed a solid 4% increase in arrivals, partly due to good results in traditional winter sports destinations.

International tourist arrivals in the Middle East are estimated to be up by 4% through April, further continuing the region's recovery which started in 2014 after three consecutive years of declines. Africa's international tourist numbers, on the other hand, declined by an estimated 6% as a consequence of the decrease in arrivals to North Africa (-7%) as well as to sub-Saharan Africa (-5%). Figures for both Africa and the Middle East should be read with caution, as they are based on limited available data for these regions.

"The Ebola crisis in West Africa and the security concerns are serious challenges for Africa's tourism and for the international community as a whole. We must work together in managing and overcoming these challenges and in supporting destinations for a prompt recovery. It is important to remember that tourism is the lifeline of many communities around the world and that we face today a global threat that affects all our societies", said Mr. Rifai.

Optimistic prospects for the coming months

Close to 500 million tourists are estimated to travel abroad between May and August 2015, the Northern Hemisphere holiday peak season, a total that accounts for some 41% of all international tourist arrivals registered in a year.

According to the latest results of the UNWTO Tourism Confidence Index, prospects for this period continue to be bullish and are the highest for this period since the pre-crisis year 2007. The sentiment is positive among all regions and areas of activity.

Business intelligence tool ForwardKeys also shows healthy growth in international air travel reservations for May-August 2015. Overall bookings are up 5% thanks to strong demand for domestic air travel (+7%) and continued growth in international travel (+4%). By region, air reservations increased most in Asia and the Pacific, the Americas and Europe, while reservations to and from Africa and the Middle East are weaker.

According to the forecast issued by UNWTO in January this year, international tourist arrivals are expected to increase by 3% to 4% for the full year 2015, in line with UNWTO's long-term forecast of 3.8% a year for the period 2010 to 2020.

Please note that results presented here reflect preliminary data reported to date and are subject to revision.

Madrid, Spain, 9 July 2015

PR No. 15048

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Relevant links:
UNWTO World Tourism Barometer, including excerpt with tables on international tourism arrivals per world region for free download
UNWTO Tourism Highlights, 2015 Edition (free download)
Infographic: International Tourism in 2014 (International Tourist Arrivals and International Tourism Receipts) (pdf)
Infographic: Why Tourism Matters (pdf)

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Madrid, Spain, 7 July 2015
PR No. 15046

UNWTO and Amadeus join forces to strengthen technology in tourism

Amadeus, a leading provider of technology solutions for the tourism sector, and UNWTO are joining forces to advance the use of innovative technology in tourism in areas such as education and multi-modality.

UNWTO and Amadeus, a UNWTO Affiliate Member since 2007, have signed a Memorandum of Understanding to consolidate their partnership in several areas. This includes the development of a UNWTO Prototype on multi-modality – the door-to-door planning and ticketing of trips involving all possible transport options – to further integrate different means of transport between destinations around the world.

"Innovative technological solutions are fundamental for the tourism sector's competitiveness and ability to create jobs and inclusive development worldwide. UNWTO is looking forward to working even closer with Amadeus, a highly valued Affiliate Member and key player in this

field, to strengthen the ties between tourism and technology", said UNWTO Secretary-General, Taleb Rifai.

  "It gives me great satisfaction to strengthen our relationship and build upon our respective areas of expertise: technology and tourism. Amadeus is committed to strengthening the sustainability of the travel and tourism sector and already has many initiatives in two of the key agreed priorities, tourism education and innovation in technology. We look forward to amplifying these through the network of UNWTO affiliates and its events to shape the future of travel", commented Tomás López Fernebrand, Senior Vice President, General Counsel & Corporate Secretary of Amadeus IT Group.

  UNWTO and Amadeus will also collaborate on issues of sustainability, Corporate Social Responsibility and education through the participation of Amadeus in the UNWTO Talent Development in Tourism pilot project and in various UNWTO capacity building initiatives.

Useful links:
UNWTO Affiliate Members
Amadeus Corporate Social Responsibility
Amadeus video on multi-modality

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Madrid, Spain, 7 July 2015
PR No. 15045

UNWTO strengthens ties with its Affiliate Members

  UNWTO signed this week new Memoranda of Understanding (MoU's) with five of its Affiliate Members – the Real Academia de Gastronomía (Spain), Spain Cares (Spain), Student Marketing (Slovakia), the Universidad Internacional de la Rioja (Spain), and VIP World Events (Spain) (Madrid, Spain, 6-7 July 2015).

  The MoU's aim to enhance collaboration between UNWTO and the respective Affiliate Member in the areas of research and the promotion of best practices. In particular, the future cooperation activities include:
- Real Academia de Gastronomía: Development of gastronomic tourism and collaboration with the UNWTO Gastronomy Network.
- Spain Cares: Research on health tourism, including collaboration in the publication of a Global Report on health tourism and public-private collaboration in specialized segments.

- Student Marketing: Cooperation in the publication of a Global Report on Youth Tourism.
- Universidad Internacional de la Rioja: Research, knowledge exchange and promotion of best practices, namely on wine tourism, participation in the UNWTO Knowledge Network, the UNWTO Gastronomy Network and Working Group on Youth Tourism
- VIP World Events: Research on the high end segments of tourism.

"Partnerships are a priority for UNWTO and we are very pleased to consolidate our relationships with such active UNWTO Affiliate Members through these agreements" said UNWTO Secretary-General Taleb Rifai highlighting that "cooperation between public, private sector and the academia are fundamental pillars to advance knowledge and competitiveness in our sector".

In a structure unique to the United Nations system, in addition to its 156 Member States, UNWTO counts on over 450 Affiliate Members from various fields in the public and private sector, civil society and academia.

Useful links:
UNWTO Affiliate Members

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Madrid, Spain, 29 June 2015
PR No. 15042

UNWTO and the Turkic Council to work together on tourism development

UNWTO and the Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States (Turkic Council) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding to strengthen collaboration in advancing tourism as a key driver of socio-economic growth and inclusive development (Madrid, Spain, 26 June 2015).

The MoU will enhance the cooperation between UNWTO and the Turkic Council in areas such as cultural tourism, including the development of the Silk Road, as a means to increase the competitiveness and diversification of the sector in the Member States of both Organizations.

The agreement was signed by UNWTO Secretary-General, Taleb Rifai and the Secretary-General of the Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States, Ambassador Mr. Ramil Hasanov, at the UNWTO Headquarters in Madrid, in the presence of the representatives of the Embassies of Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Turkey to Spain.

"This MoU comes to reinforce the strong relationship we have with the

Turkic Council", said Mr. Rifai on the occasion. "The Turkic Council Member States are valued Members of UNWTO, and I am confident that by joining forces we will be better able to harness tourism's full potential as a key driver of jobs and inclusive development in our Member States".

Ambassador Hasanov noted that "with the signing of the MoU between the two organizations, a joint and staunch step has been taken to contribute to developing the tourism sector along the traditional Silk Road, and that the Turkic Council is ready to organize joint events with the UNWTO to further this cooperation". He added that "the Turkic Council is working hard to finalize the Turkic Council-Modern Silk Road Joint Tour Package which will provide a unique opportunity for curious travellers."

The Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States (Turkic Council) is an intergovernmental organization established in 2009 with the signing of Nakhchivan Agreement by the Heads of States of its Member States: Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkey. As a new regional cooperation mechanism, it involves a wide range of areas from economy to transport, from sustainable development to education and from media to tourism with a view to accelerating cooperation, not only among its Member States, but also in the region. After the Fourth Turkic Council Summit at the level of Heads of State, hosted by Turkey on 5 June 2014 in Bodrum, on the theme of cooperation in tourism, the Council has increased its efforts to promote the tourism potential of its Member States while boosting regional collaboration in the tourism sector.

Useful links:
UNWTO Regional Programme for Europe
UNWTO Silk Road Programme
The Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States
Photos of the signing of the MoU

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Turkic Council:
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Madrid, Spain, 26 June 2015
PR No. 15043

UNWTO strongly condemns attack in Sousse, Tunisia

"Today our societies were attacked in three different continents showing that we face a truly global threat" said UNWTO Secretary-General, Taleb Rifai, strongly condemning the attacks in the Tunisian city of Sousse, in Lyon, France and in Kuwait city.

On the behalf of the global tourism community, UNWTO conveys its heartfelt condolences to the families and friends of the victims and reiterates its full support, particularly to the people and the Government of Tunisia, who have been long fighting strongly against these forces and restore confidence in its important tourism sector.

"These attacks are direct attacks to the livelihood of the Tunisian people. Tourism is a lifeline for the economy of the country and we stand by the Government and the people of Tunisia in continuing to support the recovery of this vital sector to the future and wellbeing of Tunisians", he added.

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Madrid, Spain, 25 June 2015
PR No. 15041

Silk Road Tourism Ministers commit to travel facilitation and closer marketing cooperation

The 7th UNWTO International Meeting on Silk Road Tourism agreed to advance travel facilitation, promote a "Visit the Silk Road" Programme and step up efforts to develop tourism routes and enhance human resources. (Xi'an, China 18-20 June 2015).

Jointly organized by UNWTO, the China National Tourism Administration (CNTA) and the People's Government of the Shaanxi Province, the 7th International Meeting on Silk Road Tourism held in the ancient Silk Road capital of Xi'an addressed key topics such as capacity building, marketing and promotion, heritage management and travel facilitation as a means to building an integrated tourism market along the land and maritime Silk Roads.

"Closer tourism cooperation is of great significance to the economic and social development of the countries along the Silk Road as well as to peace and stability in the region," said UNWTO Secretary-General, Taleb Rifai, while highlighting the way forward on the promotion of the Silk Road Tourism.

"It is now 21 years since 19 countries gathered in Uzbekistan and adopted the Samarkand Declaration on Silk Road Tourism, which called for 'a peaceful and fruitful rebirth of these legendary routes. We have come a long way over the years, yet we still need to address a number of challenges that continue to hamper a stronger tourism growth on the Silk Road namely visa facilitation, and connectivity" he added.

"Tourism is a window for opening-up an engine of development and a bond of peace," said Li Jinzao, Chairman of China National Tourism Administration. "Let's work together to champion the spirit of the Silk Road in this new era and create a bright future. The number of exchanges between China and other Silk Road countries has already exceeded 30 million" he added.

Tourism ministers and representatives participating in the meeting agreed to improve travel facilitation, conduct joint marketing activities, including a 'Visit the Silk Road' programme, deepen regional cooperation, expand the supply of tourism products by developing tourism routes and strengthen cooperation among tourism colleges and research institutions.

Participating in the meeting were Tourism Ministers and Tourism Board representatives from more than thirty countries, as well as representatives from UNESCO, BBC Worldwide, University College London, TripAdvisor, Ctrip, Hainan Airlines, Finnair and the World Indigenous Tourism Alliance.

On the occasion, the 1st Tourism Ministerial Meeting of Countries along the Silk Road Economic Belt, hosted by the China National Tourism Administration (CNTA) in collaboration with UNWTO, gathered the Ministers and Vice Ministers of Tourism of nearly 20 countries to discuss opportunities for tourism development along the Silk Road Economic Belt. The Meeting approved the Xi'an Initiative, a document setting the path for stronger tourism development in the framework of the Silk Road Economic Belt.

Useful links:
7th UNWTO International Meeting on Silk Road Tourism and 1st Tourism Ministerial Meeting on the Silk Road Economic Belt
UNWTO Silk Road Programme

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Madrid, Spain, 5 June 2015
PR No. 15038

Message by UNWTO Secretary General Taleb Rifaion the occasion of World Environment Day 2015

More than one billion tourists travel across international borders each year, many of whom are inspired to see our planet´s natural wonders – from majestic landscapes and pristine coastlines, to the rich biodiversity of our lands and our seas.

As one of tourism´s greatest assets, our natural heritage enlivens the global tourism sector, providing a source of livelihood and inclusive development for millions of people worldwide.

Yet our natural resources and biodiversity face unprecedented environmental challenges. Unrestrained consumption and production over the past decades have directly impacted our natural environment, placing fragile ecosystems, endangered species and natural habitats at risk, often times with irreversible consequences. Looming over all of these challenges is the global threat of climate change.

On the occasion of World Environment Day 2015, we are reminded of our immense responsibility to protect our environment in light of the choices we make.

One billion tourists are one billion opportunities for accelerating the shift. Though small actions may seem inconsequential, just imagine the widespread impact of one responsible action multiplied one billion times. One billion tourists can indeed become one billion global stewards – one united, global force protecting the future of our planet and all people.

Protecting our environment is a responsibility we all share. The more we travel the world, the more we become aware of our planet´s inexhaustible wonder, calling us to do our part in preserving our common heritage.

On World Environment Day, I would like to join the international community and invite all tourists to make their actions count while travelling. Together we can shoulder the great responsibility of consuming with care.

Useful links:
World Environment Day website
UNWTO Sustainable Development of Tourism Programme
Message by UNWTO Secretary-General Taleb Rifai (PDF version)

Brussels, Belgium/ Madrid, Spain, 3 June 2015
PR No. 15037

The European Travel Commission and the World Tourism Organization to unveil the secrets to success in the meeting industry

  The European Travel Commission and the World Tourism Organization to unveil the secrets to success in the meeting industry
   The European Travel Commission (ETC) together with the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and with support from VisitFlanders, will present the key criteria that influence the choice of a destination by meeting planners at the International Seminar on The Decision-Making Process of Meetings, Congresses, Conventions and Incentives Organisers, taking place 11-12 June in Antwerp (Belgium).
   Tourism for business and professional reasons is one of the fastest growing segments in the tourism sector and the second main purpose for travel after leisure, recreation and holidays. The meetings industry is gaining significant recognition among countries and cities alike as it poses a significant opportunity to spur revenue growth for tourism destinations. Competition is becoming fierce as new destinations enter the market, and the European tourism sector is thus called to understand meeting planners' needs and expectations.
  At this two-day ETC-UNWTO international seminar, leading meeting industry experts including Martin Sirk, CEO of the International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA), and Tom Hulton, Director of International Relations of the IMEX Group, will unveil the key criteria that influence meeting organiser's choice of a destination and address the economic and social impacts of meetings and events. Bruce Redor from Gaining Edge will provide a strategic overview of the meeting industry and outline trends and detailed findings from the forthcoming ETC-UNWTO study on the Decision-Making Process of Meetings, Congresses, Conventions and Incentives Organisers. The seminar will also provide tourism professionals and destination managers with a unique platform for exchanging best-practice examples of a successful MCCI destination.

Note to editors:
The European Travel Commission is an association of National Tourism Organisations (NTOs). It was created in 1948 to promote Europe as a tourist destination to the long-haul markets outside of Europe, originally in the USA and later in Canada, Latin America and Asia. It currently has 33 member NTOs, including 8 from outside the European Union.
Europe is the world's no. 1 tourist destination with 588 million international arrivals in 2014 and more than 50% of the market share of worldwide tourism

Useful links:
Further details on the seminar programme and registrations
Download the UNWTO Global Report on the Meetings Industry
ETC's corporate website
ETC's consumer portal

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ETC Executive Unit
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UNWTO Communications & Publications Programme
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Madrid, Spain, 28 May 2015
PR No. 15036

World Committee on Tourism Ethics proposes International Convention on Tourism Ethics

The transformation of the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism into an international convention was the main focus of the 15th meeting of the World Committee on Tourism Ethics (Rovinj, Croatia, 26-27 May 2015).

The transformation of the Global Code of Ethics into a full international convention as a means to boost the responsibility of governments in this field and advance the impact of the Code was the main topic discussed at the 15th meeting of the WTCE.

Alongside this issue, the WCTE looked into the level of implementation of the Code by public and private sectors as well as at the advances on its priority areas: the fight against child exploitation, accessibility, all inclusive holidays and its impact on local communities, and the issue of unfunded ratings in web portals.

Pascal Lamy, WCTE Chairman and former Director General of the World Trade Organization, highlighted "the importance of the implementation of the principles of the Code of Ethics by both UNWTO Member States and the Private Sector in order to promote an ethical and responsible tourism development."

"The World Committee on Tourism Ethics has done invaluable work in raising awareness and promoting responsible policies and practices in the tourism sector for over ten years", said UNWTO Secretary-General, Taleb Rifai, opening the meeting. "Tourism has immense potential to be a force for good, but it requires concrete action from all stakeholders. I therefore fully support the Committee's proposal to bring the Code further into an international convention", he added.

In the area of children's rights, Carol Bellamy, chair of the UNWTO World Tourism Network on Child Protection and former Director of

UNICEF, presented a report on child protection in tourism and supported the transformation of the Code of Ethics into a convention in order to help enforce the principles of child protection worldwide.

The Committee approved a set of specific recommendations on accessible tourist information which will be presented to the 21st session of the UNWTO General Assembly (Medellin, Colombia, 12-17 September 2015) for adoption. It addition, it noted the wide interest of Governments and national tourism administrations in the Code and the growing number of companies and associations that have adhered to the Private Sector Commitment to the Code.

The World Committee on Tourism Ethics (WCTE) is the independent body responsible for promoting and overseeing the implementation of the UNWTO Global Code of Ethics for Tourism (GCET), a set of principles designed to guide tourism development in a way that maximizes the socio-economic benefits of the sector, while minimizing any negative impacts.

The 16th meeting of the Committee will take place in November 2015.

The World Committee on Tourism Ethics is a subsidiary organ of the UNWTO General Assembly, to which it reports directly. Members are elected in their personal capacities and not as officials of governments or representatives of their countries.

Committee Chairman: Pascal Lamy (Former Director General of the World Trade Organization); members: Mr. I Gede Ardika (Former Minister of Tourism of Indonesia), Mr. Yoshiaki Hompo (Former Commissioner of Japan Tourism Agency), Ms. Fiona Jeffery (Former Chair of the World Travel Market), Mr. Khelil Lajmi (Former Minister of Tourism of Tunisia), Mr. Jean Marc Mignon (President, International Organisation for Social Tourism), Ms. Tanja Mihalic (Head of Institute of Tourism, University of Ljubljana), Mr. Ron Oswald (General Secretary, International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers´ Association), Mr. Eugenio Yunis (Executive Vice President, Federation of Tourism Enterprises of Chile); alternate members: Mr. Hiran Cooray (Chairman, Jetwing), Ms. Günnür Diker (Secretary-General, Association of Turkish Travel Agents), and Ms. Suzy Hatough (Director of Dar Al-Diafa for Tourism Human Resources Development Consultancy).
Useful links:
UNWTO Ethics and Social Responsibility Programme
World Committee on Tourism Ethics
UNWTO Global Code of Ethics for Tourism
UNWTO Private Sector Commitment to the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism
Photos of the 100th Session of the UNWTO Executive Council

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Madrid, Spain, 27 May 2015
PR No. 15035

UNWTO Conference to address quality in Mediterranean destinations

The ability to offer a high-quality experience is a crucial element for tourism competitiveness in Mediterranean destinations. The 2nd UNWTO Conference on Destination Management in the Mediterranean will focus on enhancing the quality of the visitor's experience through strategic tourism partnerships (Budva, Montenegro, 22-24 June 2015).

The Mediterranean is one of the most visited tourism regions in the world, accounting for one in three international tourist arrivals worldwide, over a quarter of total international tourism receipts, and almost 20% of the global cruise market.

The Conference, organized jointly by UNWTO and the Ministry of Sustainable Development and Tourism of Montenegro in the popular coastal destination of Budva, will explore how partnerships can promote quality and product diversification in the Mediterranean.

The Conference will address key issues such as: 1) the positioning of Mediterranean destinations in the global market, 2) product development, diversification and innovation as a means to improve the quality of the visitor experience, capture a wider range of market niches and minimize seasonality, 3) cruise and maritime tourism and 4) effective governance and policy instruments.

Speakers include representatives from the public and private sector from Croatia, Cyprus, France, Greece, Jordan, Spain, Portugal and Turkey.

In 2014, 343 million international tourists visited a Mediterranean destination. According to   UNWTO's long-term forecast, this number will reach over 500 million in 2030.

Useful links:
2nd UNWTO Conference on Destination Management in the Mediterranean
UNWTO Destination Management and Quality Programme
Contact:
UNWTO Communications & Publications Programme
Tel: (+34) 91 567 8100 / Fax: +34 91 567 8218

Dijon, France, 2 July 2015
PR No. 15034

European Cities Marketing Benchmarking Report 2015 confirms the emergence of a strong positive city tourism trend

A strong positive trend in percentage growth rate for ECM report cities has emerged again this year, achieving a rate of 5.7% in total bednights and 7.0% in international bednights. Sharp decreases in the number of bednights contributed by Japan and Russia seem to have been offset by the strong positive growth trends of the other seven top source markets, with China and Italy each reaching increases of over 12% since 2013.

European cities are still surfing on the wave of success : the UNWTO Annual Report 2014 affirms that "Europe continues to be the most visited region in the world with over half of the world´s international tourists." Furthermore, the ECM Benchmarking Report 2015 states that over the last 5 years (2010 2014), bednights in ECM Benchmarking Report cities have been increasing at a faster rate than of the 28 EU nations with + 5.8%, 1.2 points higher than the average growth rate for the 28 EU nations.

Top Performing Cities

The 2013 top five cities in terms of total bednights held their rankings in 2014. London, already being the top performing city, showed a robust growth rate of 6.1% since the previous year, whereas Berlin had the highest growth rate among the top 5 cities with 6.5%. Rome and Barcelona followed suit with positive growth rates in 2014, similar to 2013. In contrast, Paris managed to maintain its position at number two, despite a negative growth rate for the second year in a row. Madrid, Istanbul, and Amsterdam were the top performers in terms of growth rate with more than 10% increase over 2013.

While explaining Istanbul's remarkable growth, Özgül Özkan Yavuz, General Manager at Istanbul Convention & Visitors Bureau answered: "Istanbul has historically been a great cosmopolitan city at the heart of culture, and today the number of visitors to the city is growing exponentially as it becomes an ever more popular destination. Being easily accessible from around the world plays a big factor in this growth; Istanbul is the only city in the world spanning two continents."

Top Source Markets

Similar to 2013 and making up 20% of total bednights in the ECM Benchmarking Report cities, the US, German, UK and French markets have grown individually between 4.9% and 9% since 2013. Spain and Italy resumed positive growth rates after continuous decreases in number of bednights spent in European cities with respectively +7.7% and +12.4%. Not surprisingly, the highest top source market was China, with an impressive growth rate of 14.5% over 2013. Japan kept on its negative

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growth since 2013, though the most marked decrease in bednights belonged to Russia. Nonetheless, the Russian source market remains important to ECM Benchmarking Report cities and stands for 3% of total bednights registered in European cities.

Tourism Densities

This new section of the ECM Benchmarking Report examines the number of bednights a city hosts per citizen. In 2014, the average tourism density for the sample of ECM cities was 7.14 bednights per citizen. The two destinations with the highest tourism densities are Funchal and Venice. However, nearly two thirds of the sample (93 cities) revealed tourism densities below average, and about half of the sample shows densities of between 0.6 and 5 bednights per citizen.

Commenting on the results, Ignasi de Delàs, ECM President said: "These results provide crucial insights into European city competitiveness and competitor sets. The ECM Benchmarking Report clearly shows that the continuous success of city tourism in Europe is based upon a rich mix of source markets. With an average of 65% of international guests, European cities can cope with negative growth of markets like Russia or Japan, thanks to the recovery of the Spanish and Italian markets. Despite all economic or political factors, it is proven that the cities' strategic focus on international visitors is the main reason for the triumph of the cities, which gives City Tourism Managers every reason to be confident in the strength of the European tourism industry."

Produced by MODUL University Vienna, the European Cities Marketing Benchmarking Report provides the #1 source of city tourism statistics in Europe. ECM reports twice a year about the current state of the tourism industry. In March, the organisation provides first preliminary results and trends about the previous year, in June the ECM Benchmarking Report is presented containing detailed analyses and benchmarks of the past 5 years, as well as the forecast for the current year. For the 11th edition, European Cities Marketing (ECM) presented the ECM Benchmarking Report 2015 during its Annual Meeting & General Assembly in Turin, Italy. The report not only covers statistics portraying tourism development for 119 European cities but also forms the basis for discussing major trends and developments in Europe among the member cities. The 11th edition of the European Cities Marketing (ECM) Benchmarking Report provides benchmarking insight into bednights, bed capacities as well as city tourism vs. national tourism analysis. New to the report this year is a breakdown of tourist densities comparing city's population vs. bednights in 2014.

The report costs €990 with the full dataset of figures, and is free for members of European Cities Marketing. The report can be ordered from www.europeancitiesmarketing.com. To be up to date with these latest figures, please get in touch with European Cities Marketing and subscribe to the regular press releases.

European Cities Marketing is a non profit organisation improving the

competitiveness and performance of leading cities of Europe by providing a platform for convention, leisure and city marketing professionals to exchange knowledge, best practice and widen their network to build new business. European Cities Marketing is promoting and linking the interests of 110 members from more than 100 major cities in 36 countries.

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MODUL Research is a subdivision of MODUL University Vienna that aims to bridge the two domains of basic and applied research. MODUL Research engages in research projects that provide workable solutions to problems that private firms, industry associations, groups in civil society, and governmental organisations have identified as important.

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