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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 the Czech Republic, and Japan.

Vladimíra Filipová, František Drožen, and Marie Kubáňková present a case study related to SMEs in the tourism industry. The primary objective of their paper is to demonstrate a product innovation that contributes to a more efficient capacity usage in tourism SMEs and also the possibility of public support to finance this innovation.

The contribution of Hiromi Kamata presents the results of the segmentation analysis of Japanese spa tourists. The purpose of her study was to segment Japanese spa tourists with the focus on push and pull motivations using a factor-cluster market segmentation approach. The study also considered satisfaction and intention to repeat the visit by segments. This study describes how most tourists can be categorized as the unsatisfaction type.

Pavlína Pellešová focused in her paper on gross domestic product and gross value added with the aim to predict the development of the tourism in gross domestic product and compare it with the expected development of the World Council of Travel and Tourism.

In his short essay, Jan Školník discusses the role and challenges of destination management and marketing in Broumovsko destination. He highlights that only entrepreneurs who base their business on the quality of service and superior customer care and collaboration can be successful in the competitive tourism market.

I would like to wish to all members of the Editorial Board, present, and future authors, supporters, colleagues, and readers a great and sunny summer holidays!

Alžbeta Királová
Chair of the Editorial Board

Product Innovation and Public Support – Case Study of SME in the Tourist Industry

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Abstract

Recently, there have been notable changes altering the world economy that force businesses to become ever more competitive and to constantly invest in the development of innovative new products. These worldwide trends obviously affect the tourism industry that is traditionally represented by smaller and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) that have lower disposable resources for investment into research and development. Public support directed at SMEs can increase the capacity and contribute to the better efficiency of SMEs. The main objective of this article is to demonstrate a product innovation that contributes to a more efficient capacity usage in a case study of SMEs in the tourist industry and also the possibility of public support to finance this innovation.

Key words: tourism industry, decision-making tasks, management accounting

JEL Classification: M31, M21

1. Introduction

There have been notable changes altering the world economy in the past 20 years like the great economical developments in China and India

and also financial insecurity. These elements force businesses to become ever more competitive, hence they must constantly invest into the development of innovative new “breathtaking” technology, utilize new communication channels and change business processes to be more efficient and effective [29]. The competitive advantage and performance of a company is closely connected to its creativity and ability to innovate the portfolio of product, the production processes, and its communication and commercial activities [25]. These innovations create the capital of specific business knowledge and they also enable it to develop new business skills [25].

Innovations are a critical factor of the country development, because they are main source of competitive advantage and the primary factor influencing company value [30]. Technological innovations are seen as an endogenous factor that responds to economic challenges [2]. Investments in innovation and R&D are similarly to intangible assets investments costly and risky, but might bring a high rate of return [30]. They also differ from other type of investments as they are connected with externalities. These externalities transpire in inadequate private and social return of investment, that is one of the key reason for public support of R&D activities [21].

These worldwide trends obviously affect also the tourism industry, they cannot be isolated. Albaladejo and Pilar Martinez-Garcia [2] claim that the income from tourism grows at the same rate as the innovations. The demands of different visitors, a higher level of education and primarily easier access to information impose new challenges upon tourism marketing management; knowledge becomes key factor in sustainable development of the tourism industry [20]. Visitors (customers) perceive services at the destination as one bundle of services (service chain) and evaluate the quality of the destination as a whole [20]. Visitors, (customers) are ever more increasingly considering the impact of tourism on the environment and also the socio-cultural wealth of the region [1]. Therefore the more complex view must be taken in the destination management [20]. Following on from this, changes in the tourism industry as well as in other industries do reflect innovations, new knowledge and technologies that enable development of original products and services. Entrepreneurs are increasingly exposed to the added value of their products, innovations and investments in research and development. The tourist industry is traditionally represented by more small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in comparison to other sectors. SMEs in general are a source of economic growth, generate jobs and create the wealth of the society [3, 17]. Even though SMEs face capacity and capital constraints, SMEs are generally more effective in using their given capacity and resources. SMEs also have lower disposable resources that they can invest into research and development [18]. Hence, public support directed at SMEs can increase the capacity and contribute to the efficiency of SMEs [4] and to the overall performance improvement [5].

The main objective of this article is to demonstrate a product innovation that contributes to more efficient capacity use in a case study of SME in the tourist industry and the possibility of public support to finance this innovation.

The paper is organised as follows: Section 2 describes the reference framework underlying the research. Section 3 outlines the methodology used for the empirical analysis. Case study is provided in Section 4, whereas results and discussion in Section 5. And finally Section 6 shows the limitation and also shows suggestions for the future research.

2. Reference Framework

2. 1. Decision-making tasks

Managerial accounting is a system for processing financial information in a manner appropriate for managing business. Managerial accounting supports decision-making tasks such as proper product pricing, improvement of capacity utilization or even the increase of overall business performance. Although each decision is rather original, a few common features can be found, like the processing of solutions, or data resources that distinguish two basic types of decision-making tasks – the first decision making task in the given capacity and the latter decision making task concerning capacity alteration [13]. Decision making tasks in the given capacity means that companies want to use more efficiently existing capacity (machines, buildings, patents) and increase revenues, profit margin, gross profit by restructuring product portfolio [13]. These tasks are very common in the short or mid-term time frame. Strategic decisions are commonly connected and based on these capacity changes. Companies might solve investments in the form of buildings, land and intellectual property, whereas these tasks cover both the simple renewal of investments, modernization, expansion [13] as well as firm acquisitions and R&D investments. Relevant cost and revenues associated with these decisions might be considered [26].

2. 2. Innovation, research and development

Innovation is defined by the European Commission as “*expanding the range of products and services and related markets, creating new methods of production, supply and distribution, the introduction of changes in management, work organization, working conditions and skills of the workforce*” (European Commission, 1995). Van de Ven [28] adds to the definition of innovation the methods to produce new ideas: restructuring of used schemes that are presented in a unique way. He describes innovation as new idea that is developed and implemented within the given time by a certain group of people within a limited

framework; by which he also defines four basic factors of innovation - new ideas, human factor, interactions and structural framework [28]. Innovation is a critical factor in the development of a given country, as it presents the main source of competitive advantage [30]. The link between R & D and innovation defines the Frascati Manual, which states: *“Research and development (“ R & D “) is just one of the activities and can be performed at different stages of the innovation process. It can serve not only as the original source of creative ideas, but also as a way of solving the problem, which can be used at any moment until the implementation.”* [19].

2. 2. 1. Public support of research and development and conditions in CZ

Private investment in R&D projects cannot bring the adequate revenues to private investors [12] as the social benefit of R&D exceeds the pure economical return rate [7]. R&D projects are typical projects whereas the government offers public support to balance the difference and stimulate investments. There are two basic types of public support – direct and indirect. Direct support is granted to individual companies for specific R & D projects, as it can increase the number of innovations and associated sales of innovative products [8]. The other indirect tools motivate companies to engage in R & D activities by offering tax incentives.

Czech tax legislation imposes a series of conditions for applying for tax credits for R & D projects in the § 34 para. 5 of Act no. 586/1992. Firstly, companies cannot combine the tax credit of a given project with other public support. Secondly, a written document must be provided. This document must at least: a) **define project objectives with an appreciable element of novelty and clarified research or technical uncertainty**, b) **describe concrete R & D projects that result in the defined objectives**, c) provide an accurate calculation of estimated total expenses (costs) on a yearly bases, d) specify responsible persons and their qualifications, e) outline method of monitoring and evaluation of project progress and results achieved. Expenses (costs) that may be deducted from the tax base must be expenses (costs) incurred to generate, assure and maintain income and must be recorded separately from the other expenses (costs) of the taxpayer.

2. 2. 2. Czech methodological R & D outputs classification

The different types of the results of research and development are defined by a methodology of the Government Council for Research, Development and Innovation. Software is defined as follows: Result “Software” implemented during the initial research and development results, which were created by the author or team, whose author was a member. This is the result when the software was created in connection with the research activities and its author is one or more persons involved

in the recipient's (or another party) research activity, and which can be used in accordance with the license conditions of the owner and in accordance with section 16 of the Act. Software that falls under the definition of research and development is not the software that was created for the exclusive use or designed and solely for the needs of the public support provider.

We have outlined a research that integrates applying for tax credit to support product innovation that is represented by a new R&D output that will be examined in the case of a private SME that is active within the tourism industry in Prague.

3. Methodology

3. 1 Case Study Approach

Case study is a popular method commonly used in the literature dedicated to tourism as it can highlight how specific soft elements of various tourism products function [22], it can gather arguments for the nomination of a particular monument for inclusion into the UNESCO World Heritage List [14]. Case study was even used to examine the adoption of e-commerce in the tourism sector as a tool to widen market reach and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of business operations [5], therefore we have decided to use a case study method as an example.

3. 2. Tourism industry in Prague

Prague, the capital city, is internationally renowned for its unique ambience and the influx of international visitors serves as a key element of the new cosmopolitan identity in the by post-socialist period [23]. Prague is indeed a dominant magnet for tourists, being listed as a UNESCO city it provides an all-year-round tourist destination [10]. Therefore many new hotels were opened in 1990s – whereas in 1990 there were 15,000 beds available, it was 50,000 in the first years of the 2000s [9]. Low cost airlines served as a great input that increased hotel usage and Prague has become a well-preserved and well-exhibited urban jewellery box, with an up-to-date hotel industry and services [11].

Prague has a great variety of romantic scenery, so it's no surprise that a lot of films were produced there in its splendor, including *Last Knights*, *A Knight's Tale*, *Casino Royale*, *Paradise Found* to name but a few. With a magical atmosphere, little alleys, legendary stories that provide a great background for thematic walks, either with a personal tour guide or with an interactive application using interactive, GPS-based map for a virtual tour, or even a "treasure hunt" game [24].

3.3. Data collecting

The data for the case study was gathered in the period of two years in 2012 – 2013. The case study consists of the following steps:

- 1) We presented our project to the company manager who supported us and introduced us to the whole R&D team.
- 2) We were able to take part in the meetings of the R&D team and subsequently we were given access to notes that were provided.
- 3) We presented the first form of reports for tax credit to the R&D team and after a discussion the final version was provided (see Appendix 1).

4. Case Study

4.1. Prague walking tours provider

Daily Walks is an SME focused on foreign tourists in Prague, offering thematic walks in Prague on a daily basis without a need to book in advance. Customers can simply show up at a given time at the meeting point (Astronomical Clock, St. Wenceslaw Horse Statue or the Powder Tower) and meet a tour guide with a coloured umbrella. This company was founded in the 1990s by an English man who introduced this innovation to the Prague tourist market. Before he began to provide these kind of services, Prague Information Service had offered walking tours upon reservation. Daily Walks was originally primarily focused on visitors from the UK and the United States who were already familiar with this type of services from their home countries. Company Daily Walks remained for a very long time the market leader and predetermined a variety of walking tours to other companies. Whenever it introduced a new product (4 hour tour, 6 hour program with boat and lunch) other competitors quickly followed suit. Daily Walks use leaflets and maps for advertisement, distributed mainly at the airport, in taxis, hotels and restaurants in Prague. For every new product a new and eye-catching design was created. As the attraction and uniqueness was contained in each new program (historical tram, scooter, funicular, traditional lunch) and design was usually inspired by an historical photo of Prague, it is very difficult to effectively protect the ownership under Intellectual property law and prevent competitors to copy it.

In 2004 and 2005, high profitability attracted new entrepreneurs and new direct competitors providing walks and rides in and around Prague appeared on the market. Also new restaurants and clubs were opened. In addition to this, new companies were offering cultural, sports or adrenaline experiences. Therefore, the capacity of tourism industry providing services in Prague significantly expanded. In 2008 the industry was hit by the financial crisis and the number of foreign visitors in Prague declined slightly. Revenues of the Daily Walks company fell steadily, due

to the new phenomenon of walks provided completely free of charge. Free tours have had a very negative impact on sales and the overall profitability, this has decreased to almost zero.

4.2. Product innovation – new software

Daily Walks faced a serious decision, whether to leave the market or change the offer to increase profitability. It was an idea of one business partner to create a new type of software - a new application for smart phones and tablets that would provide visitors with the best price option in real-time. The whole idea was based on the real-time information and the business potential was connected with income from both visitors (even though the price was supposed to be very low – cca 50 CZK) and tourist providers. The main advantage of this new application was that it presents a very flexible tool for tourist providers and showed how to make a more effective use of spare capacity. This can be illustrated better with a short example: let's say that a restaurant owner in Řetězová Street has at a specific day at 15 pm a half-empty restaurant. She/he could put out a limited time offer for a specific product (eg. meal, beverages, desert and coffee) at a bargain price so that it could be proven that this offer is competitive compared to the available public price list. All visitors who purchased this app and downloaded it to their electronic devices, would receive instant notification of this offer.

The company decided to collaborate with the development of new software with the Faculty of Electrical Engineering (hereinafter referred to as "FEL"). Faculty staff created not only new software, but they were also involved in the reporting of tax deductions that can be used for investment into this innovation.

4.3. R & D project developed for the benefit of tax deductions

R&D documentation was prepared in which the project was clearly defined, its goals described and quantified, plan of costs included and the appointment of principal investigators and opponents was made clear. The role of the opponents (the staff of other faculties of ČVUT) was to monitor at regular stages the progress of the project, compliance with the documentation, and to resolve any differences.

The project took place in 2012 and 2013, accompanying project documentation and notes from opposition procedure were then submitted to the Tax Authority as part of the tax return in which the company claimed a tax deduction. After adding some documents, especially time sheets and the method of calculation of the personnel costs, the tax authority approved the tax credit.

4.4. Savings quantification

The total cost of implementing this research project was 500 thousand CZK (see the budget in Appendix 1). This amount was therefore deducted in accordance with the structure of the tax deduction twice – first time as “classic” costs and second time as tax credit - a deduction for R&D. The total amount of this saving was 30% of the total amount that means 150 thousand CZK. If the company did not use the tax credit, the “classic” tax shield would appear (similar to other costs) in the amount of 75 thousand CZK. The additional 75 thousand CZK on R&D has contributed to the state.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

Public support can increase the profitability of R & D projects that would otherwise have been inadequate for private investors [12]. Tax incentives encourage the expansion of innovative activities [21], making an important contribution to maintaining the competitiveness of a company [30]. The tourism industry is definitely not a typical “R&D intensive” industry. One of the options is, however, the research and development of new products in the form of software applications for visitors of a certain destination [24]. This article presents the development of new software for visitors in the capital city of Prague, which gives them the possibility of advantageous offers from restaurants, bars and other tourist attractions. The new software enables tourist operators and travel agencies to make better use of existing capacity, with targeted price and time limited offers addressed specifically to foreigner visitors. Valenta [27] created classification of innovations tailored for innovative technological products. This classification distinguishes between the characteristics of innovated products, those that are retained and those that are upgraded. If we wanted to relate this classification to the upgraded software, we can probably classify it into the sixth grade – generation, particularly regarding the new control functions that this software offers for users, ie. the opportunity to work in real-time. The new software can be classified according to the Czech methodological R & D outputs classification.

This article presents a method of preparation of the documentation for the application of tax credit for research and development, namely:

- the content and the manner of developing one's own R&D project
- establishment of an independent body which will serve as an opponent of the project and supervise the implementation

The proposed procedure can be an inspiration, it can help SMEs by applying for tax incentives and therefore can help SMEs to become more active in R&D activities.

6. Limitation and Further Research

There are some limitations to be noted. The selected research method exclude statistical generalisation, the case example was solved under the conditions of Czech legislation. Moreover R&D projects are rather complex issues, financial authorities in different municipalities may take distinctive opinions. Our paper summarizes the best possible practice of R&D projects in the tourist industry that was subsidised by indirect public support so it can provide a vital example, even though it cannot be generalised.

One possible direction for future research is to conduct a survey of SMEs applying the tax deduction on R & D or in accordance with Galal & Wiener [6] the attention could be focused on further research of the social impact of R & D activities support in SME or mapping differences between the approach to R & D in SMEs, which do not apply the tax deduction, as recommended by Lokshin & Mohnen [15].

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Appendix 1.

A. Project presentation

Project goal and result

The project aims to create a product innovation represented by new software, which will be classified in accordance with the Methodological Council for Research and Innovation as software. This software is protected by intellectual property law, it will be used in accordance with the license conditions of the owner and in accordance with § 16 of the Act.

Application of the software will enable real-time information on spare capacity offer in the tourism market in the capital city of Prague.

Technical description of the project

The technical solution is not subject to disclosure because of classified information.

Project benefits for the development of Daily Walk Company

The new product will bring company additional income by

- 1) Application will be sold to the foreign visitors
- 2) Access to the application will be for a fee granted to service providers and tourism products that enable them to effectively address foreign visitors in the capital city of Prague

Ad a) according to the company estimation the application will be sold in 2013 to 200 visitors, in 2014 to 600 visitors and in 2015 to 1500 visitors, from 2016 the estimated sale is to 2,200 visitors annually.

Ad b) In the first year of the project, the company expects 800 advertisements, in 2014 – 1,000 advertisements and in 2015 – 3,000 advertisements, from 2016 the estimated number is 5,000 annually

Total revenue associated with the new product – software the company expects of 100,000 CZK, in 2014 of 220,000 CZK, in 2015 of 680,000 CZK and then from 2016 onwards on the level of 900,000 CZK annually.

Grantee

The principal grantee of the project is manager and statutory representative of the company, who has extensive experience in the business of tourism in the capital city of Prague and has extensive experience with the market, customers and competition structure.

On the implementation of the project will participate FEL ČVUT staff who will deal with their own software solution and method of application distribution via Internet.

Timetable

1.stage 1.4.2012 - 31.12.2012

The goal of this stage is to find the **optimal software** for creating the application.

The technical solution is not subject to disclosure because of classified information.

2.stage 1.1.2013 - 30.3.2013

The aim of this phase is to verify the functionality of the **new software** performing a **test operation** and simultaneously **processing intellectual property protection**.

Budget

Indicator	Unit	I. stage	II. stage	Total
Personal	k CZK	50	30	80
	Brutto salary	Capacity	Capacity	
CEO – Company E	61	0,20	0,40	
ČVUT expert services	k CZK	250	120	370
Intellectual Property protection	k CZK	50	50	
Total	k CZK	300	200	500

The preliminary project budget includes:

- 1) Personal costs which were determined by estimating the working capacity of each project implementation team member and brutto salary (which the staff have in their work agreements);
- 2) The costs of expert services of FEL
- 3) The costs of documentation preparation and registration fees for industrial designs.

A Segmentation Analysis of Japanese Spa Tourists

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to segment Japanese spa tourists according to push and pull motivations using a factor-cluster market segmentation approach. From the result of segmentation, six motivation factors were derived from their overall motivation: Inn, Sight and nature, Relaxing, Companion, Destination, and Hot spring. The respondents were divided into three segments according to the motivation factors. This study also considered satisfaction and intention to repeat by segments. Tourists in each segment were categorised according to four types: Unsatisfaction, Satisfaction, Dissatisfaction but did not search for an alternative, and Dissatisfaction and searched for a better alternative. This study describes how most tourists can be categorised as the unsatisfaction type.

Key Words: Benefit Segmentation, Satisfaction, Intention to repeat, Japanese Spa tourists, Unsatisfaction tourists

JEL Classifications: L83, M30, M31

1. Introduction

The purpose of this study is to segment Japanese spa tourists according to push and pull motivations using a factor-cluster market segmentation approach. In this paper, a spa is defined as an 'onsen', which is a Japanese-style spa, and it refers not only to the hot springs themselves but also to the areas surrounding them. 'Spas' (onsens) are one of the most popular tourist destinations in Japan. Many domestic rankings of popular tourist spots include spa destinations. There are approximately 3,000 Japanese spa destinations. These destinations offer many different kinds of attractions, such as effective health and beauty remedies, relaxation, and a serene atmosphere. As Lee and King (2008) mention, the hot springs tourism sector in Asia is different from that in the West. In Asia, natural hot springs have been traditionally used for leisure purposes, and their medical and therapeutic aspects are emphasised. Each spa destination has its own unique attractiveness, and tourists visit specific spa destinations to enjoy these attractions. However, spa tourists are not homogeneous. Each spa tourist probably makes

decisions about travel based on factors that are uniquely important to him or her. Spa destinations and related companies should distinguish spa tourists according to these important factors. For this purpose, market segmentation using a tourist motivation approach appears to be the most useful method. When the most popular characteristics of a particular segment are revealed, destination brands and related companies can fine-tune their marketing strategies to cater more comprehensively to tourists' requirements.

In this study, a benefit segmentation analysis will be conducted to discover what the characteristics of spa tourism are in Japan. Additionally, satisfaction and repeat business are also important for spa destinations. This study also compares the different segments.

2. Literature Review

Identifying tourist segments is one of the most popular areas in tourism studies. Segmentation criteria include demographic and geographic information, travel profiles, and the benefits to tourists. Haley (1968) developed the benefit segmentation method of marketing. The benefits sought by consumers in selecting particular products are the most basic reasons for the existence of genuine market segments, and they are better determinants of behaviour than other factors. Benefit segmentation has been widely used to categorise tourists. According to Cha et al. (1995), there are two dimensions to tourist motivation – push and pull motivation. Tourists are pushed by their own internal forces, and pulled by external forces, such as the attributes of the destination (Bieger and Laesser, 2002). Several studies have focused specifically on the segmentation of tourists and conducted data-driven segmentation (Loker and Perdue, 1992; Shoemaker, 1994; Cha et al., 1995; Bieger and Laesser, 2002; Lee et al., 2006). Factor-cluster analysis is typically used in benefit segmentation, while factor analysis is used to find an underlying construct of benefit dimensions characterised by 'push' and 'pull' motivational factors. Cluster analysis is used to segment respondents into homogeneous groups. One example of benefit segmentation using both factor and cluster analyses in tourism is the study by Cha et al. (1995), which focused on Japanese tourists overseas. It suggested there are six motivating factors for tourists: relaxation, knowledge, adventure, travel bragging, family, and sports. Overseas, Japanese tourists were segmented into three clusters: sports seekers, novelty seekers, and family/relaxation seekers. Jang et al. (2002) also focused on Japanese tourists visiting the USA and Canada. Their study derived eight motivational factors from 42 items. Using these eight factors, the tourists were segmented into three clusters: novelty/nature seekers, escape/relaxation seekers, and family/outdoor activities seekers. Jang et al. pointed out that these results were partly supported by Cha et al. (1995), in the sense that

knowledge emerged as a common factor. Jang et al. also considered the question of profitability (and the risks involved) when targeting individual segments for marketing purposes.

Satisfaction and revisit intention are often studied in tourism research (Pizam & Milman, 1993; Yuksel & Rimmington, 1998; Kozak, 2001; Kozak et al., 2005; Yoon & Uysal, 2005; Um et al., 2006; Kim, 2008; Chi & Qu, 2008). Satisfaction is one of the key factors in attracting tourists, and improving the tourist satisfaction level is a focus in the management of tourist destinations. Another key factor is the creation of repeaters, as satisfaction and revisit intention share a significantly positive relationship. Kozak (2001) estimated the relationships among tourist satisfaction, previous visits, and behavioural intention to revisit. The study compared results obtained from a mature and a less developed destination. This comparison demonstrated that the level of overall satisfaction and number of previous visits considerably influenced intentions to revisit. Baloglu et al. (2008) segmented tourists by motivation and tested the relationship between destination performance, overall satisfaction, and behavioural intention. The results of their study show the different relationships by segments. With regard to intention to repeat, the behaviour of variety seeking has also been applied to tourism research (Bigne et al., 2009; Assaker and Hallak, 2013). Variety seeking is one of the behaviours of brand choice. It is a key determinant of the consumer's decision to switch providers (Bansal et al., 2005). Variety seeking is intrinsically motivated, and it has the following features: it involves switching brands, products, or providers for the sake of variety and not because of the functional value of the alternatives (Bigne et al., 2009). Bigne et al. (2009) tested intention to repeat in the long and short term. They built a model to describe how intention to repeat was affected by some factors. Variety seeking was found to be one of the factors. Therefore, variety seeking affects intention to repeat in both the long and short term, whereas satisfaction only affects long-term intention to repeat.

Miura (2013) described how many Japanese consumers (not only tourists) are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied using a graph with two axes: satisfaction for consumption level and variety seeking intention (see section 4.2 for more detail on this). Miura created the word 'unsatisfaction' to define these consumers. This unsatisfaction category can probably be applied to tourism, and Miura's figure will be applied to spa tourists in this study.

Spa tourism is very popular around the world. According to Radnic et al. (2009), in Europe, thermal spa tourism has been developing in conjunction with overall social development. Previously, almost all spa tourists were senior citizens on lower incomes, and they spent a lot of time in spas for medical treatment. At present, thermal spa tourists are mainly 30 and 40 year-olds, have higher incomes, and frequently go to spas on shorter vacations. These tourists seek various therapies (medical, thalassotherapy, etc.) and recreational programmes. Radnic et al. (2009)

summarised the thermal spa trend as a modern, complete, and complex health and recreation tourism. Snoj and Mumel (2002) measured the perceived differences in the service quality of health spas in Slovenia. The results of their survey in 1999 have some implications for the management of spas: the spa tourists assessed the two most important quality dimensions as 'empathy' and 'reliability', and the two least important as 'physical evidence' and 'responsiveness'. Tabacchi (2010) focused on the US spa industry and surveyed the business environment. The US spa industry faces severe price competition, and, as a result, some spas now offer high volumes of low-priced treatments. Tabacchi (2010) pointed out that the commoditisation of some services is a risk for spas and that the most successful spas will focus on their total operation to promote their brand.

As mentioned in the Introduction, the hot springs tourism sector in Asia is different from that in the West. In Japan, almost all Japanese-style inns (ryokan) have various hot spring baths, both indoors and outdoors. Typical tourists spend their time in spa destinations soaking themselves in hot springs, eating local foods, strolling, visiting nearby tourist spots, and engaging in various other activities (hiking, skiing, etc.). They also seek to enjoy time with family, friends, or colleagues in spas. Some people go to a spa with their parents and relatives when they go home for a vacation. Japanese-style spa tourism is mostly for pleasure travel rather than being medical or healthcare related. Based on these differences, it can be predicted that the motivation factors for Japanese spa tourists will be different to those for tourists from other countries. Kamata and Misui (2015b) used 54 potential motivation items for spa tourists. Then seven motivational factors were derived from these 54 items. They divided the respondents into five segments according to these seven motivation factors through cluster analysis, and revealed that the common, important factors of all segments were the spas' 'soothing quality' and the 'release from routine'.

This present study aims to identify the characteristics of Japanese spa tourists through a benefit segmentation approach. The results are expected to provide unique insights into Japanese spa tourism. It will also be seen that satisfaction and intention to repeat are among the behaviour characteristics of Japanese spa tourists.

3. Analysis

3.1 Method

This study adopts two kinds of analysis: factor analysis and cluster analysis. These analyses are a very popular method for benefit segmentation. Factor analysis is used to discover the underlying construct of the benefit dimensions. Tourist motivation consists of many kinds of motivation factors. However, it is difficult to isolate each characteristic and factor and use these for segmentation purposes. Factor analysis helps

to discover the factors for ease of interpretation. Cluster analysis is one of the most popular methods of identifying segments. It enables the identification of some homogeneous groups (segments) using data that describe pull or push motivation. This combination of factor and cluster analysis has been adopted in many tourist segmentation studies (Calantone and Johar, 1984; Shoemaker, 1994; Cha et al., 1995; Dolnicar, 2004; Jang et al., 2002; Airmond and Elfessi, 2001; Kamata and Misui, 2015a,b,c).

3.2 Data

Web-based research was conducted to collect data from 1,127 tourists visiting spas between August and September 2015. This study focused on overnight tourists between the ages of 20 and 60 (non-students), who resided in the Tokyo metropolitan area or in the Kansai area (Osaka, Kyoto, and Kobe). Respondents were asked to answer questions about their motivations for traveling to spa destinations. Both 'push' and 'pull' motivating factors were considered, as in the results of Kamata and Misui (2015b). The respondents answered by using a five-level scale. For 'push' motivations, this scale ranged from 1 (no expectation) to 5 (great expectations). For 'pull' motivations, it ranged from 1 (unimportant) to 5 (important). The respondents' travel profiles (comprising duration, companion, expenses, and number of repeat visits) and demographic profiles (comprising gender, age, family status, and educational level) were also ascertained.

Using this data, the tourists were divided into segments. A factor-cluster analysis was performed. Then the sociodemographic and travel profiles of each cluster were developed and compared, with a chi-squared test used to find statistical differences among these clusters. This analysis clarified the number of segments and the characteristics of each of them.

4. Results

4.1 Benefit segmentation

First, the 25 push motivation items and 21 pull motivation items were factor analysed using the maximum likelihood method with a promax rotation procedure. Eight of the original 46 items were dropped because their factor loading was lower than 0.4. Eventually, 21 push motivation items and 17 pull motivation items were analysed and six factors were derived with an eigenvalue of >1 . The total variance accounted for was 50.4%. The summary of factor analysis results is shown in Table 1. Six motivational factors were derived from the factor analysis. Each factor was named and categorised based on the items constituting them. Each motivational factor reflected the elements it contained. Sight and nature, Relaxing, and Companion are the 'push' motivation items. Inn, Destination, and Hot springs are the 'pull' motivation items.

Table 1

Results of the factor analysis

	FC1	FC2	FC3	FC4	FC5	FC6
Inn (pull)						
Staff service	0.83					
Atmosphere of the inn	0.79					
Contents of cuisine	0.73					
Dining place	0.72					
Room facilities	0.69					
Tranquility of the inn	0.62					
Customer segment	0.55					
Sights from the hot spring baths	0.46					
View from the room	0.45					
Café or lounge at the inn	0.38					
Congestion level	0.35					
Sight and nature (push)						
I want to visit a famous place		0.96				
I want to discover an unknown place		0.84				
I want to be exposed to culture and history		0.82				
I want to visit a Mecca place		0.75				
I want to visit a place everyone is talking about		0.72				
I want to find a great place		0.61				
I want to experience original things about a destination		0.59				
Tourist spots surrounding the destination		0.54				
I want to see beautiful sights		0.54				
I want to be close to nature		0.46				
I want to experience the seasons		0.42				
Relaxing (push)						
I want to have a relaxing time			0.67			
I want to spend my holiday effectively			0.64			
I want to escape from my work or chores			0.59			
I want to travel somewhere far away from my home or office			0.58			
I want to go at my own pace			0.58			
I want to refresh my mind			0.57			
I want to spend time without thinking about tomorrow			0.55			
I want to enjoy local foods and beverages.			0.53			

Pokračování tabulky 1

	FC1	FC2	FC3	FC4	FC5	FC6
Companion (push)						
I want to share a room with a member of my party (including pets)				0.69		
I want to share intimate moments with a member of my party (including pets)				0.68		
I want to present this trip to a member of my party (including pets)				0.59		
Destination (pull)						
Restaurants at the destination					0.73	
Restaurants on the way to the destination					0.66	
Hot springs (pull)						
Special benefits of the hot springs						0.66
Continuous flow from source (Gensen kakenagashi)*						0.65
The kinds of baths						0.50
Reliability using Cronbach's alpha	0.91	0.92	0.84	0.69	0.74	0.80
Eigenvalue	12.80	3.35	2.36	1.42	1.14	1.10
Variance explained (total: 50.4%)	33.6	8.8	6.2	3.7	3.0	2.8
Correlation factor (after Promax rotation)	FC1	FC2	FC3	FC4	FC5	FC6
FC1	-	0.45	0.47	0.62	0.55	0.52
FC2		-	0.52	0.42	0.54	0.57
FC3			-	0.46	0.29	0.40
FC4				-	0.48	0.39
FC5					-	0.52
FC6						-

Note about continuous flow from the source (Gensen kakenagashi):

'Whilst heat might be added, there is no water added to this type of bath. With this kind of system, the high temperatures at the source are made more moderate and suitable for bathing by the use of heat-exchange devices, either at the point where the water enters the bath or in the bath itself' (The Japan Association of Secluded Hot Spring Inns).

A cluster analysis (k-means) using these six motivational factors was applied to three segments. Table 2 shows the result of this cluster analysis. The highest rating motivation factors among the three clusters were for the Inn and Hot springs. The relaxing factor had a high rating in all respondent clusters. The characteristic of each segment was derived by carrying out a Chi-square test that used the demographic and travel profile data (Table 3). Each segment was named after a characteristic. Each characteristic is summarised as follows:

Segment 1 'Relaxation seekers': The important factors for this group

were the Inn and Relaxing factors. They first decided to 'member' for their travel. Children have a relatively high ratio as a member in this segment. These tourists were mainly aged between their forties and sixties.

Segment 2 'Annual event seekers': For these tourists, relaxing factors were important. They first decided to stay in an inn. They had a relatively high number of repeat visits because the trip is an annual event for them. They tend not to buy souvenirs. These tourists were mainly in their forties and fifties.

Segment 3 'Active tourists': The tourists in this segment were active tourists; for them, all of the factors were important. They first decided to pick a destination, and it was their first time to visit a spa. They gathered travel information through websites and by word of mouth. They tended to stay at expensive inns with their parents or partners. They tended to pay high prices for food and drink. These tourists were mainly in their twenties.

Additionally, Table 3 yields several implications. Throughout the three segments, tourists tended to search and collect information through websites. They also arranged their travels personally, and not through travel agents. The results showed that the Internet is one of the key tools for attracting tourists in Japan.

Table 2

Results of the cluster analysis

	Segment 1 Relaxation Seekers	Segment 2 Annual event Seekers	Segment 3 Active Tourists		
Sample (number of respondents)	585	171	371		
%	51.9	15.2	32.9	F value	S.L.
Inn	3.24	2.30	4.06	445.575	0.000
Sight and nature	3.11	1.97	3.96	326.317	0.000
Relaxing	3.81	3.13	4.41	206.780	0.000
Companion	3.18	2.37	3.92	254.397	0.000
Destination	3.00	1.85	3.86	264.520	0.000
Hot springs	3.32	2.34	4.18	477.147	0.000

Table 3

Travel profile and demographic variables of the three segments (selected variables)

		Segments (number of respondents/share)			χ^2	S.L.
		1	2	3		
		Relaxation seekers	Annual event seekers	Active tourists		
<i>Demographic</i>	Share of the sample	N= 585 51.9%	N= 171 15.2%	N= 371 32.9%		
<i>profile</i>						
Gender						
Male	50.4	72.0	74.9	64.7	0.02	7.98
Female	49.6	28.0	25.1	35.3		
Age						
20-29	25.0	5.1	4.1	7.8	15.82	0.04
30-39	26.0	22.1	14.6	23.7		
40-49	25.2	30.3	27.5	30.5		
50-59	25.8	27.5	34.5	24.5		
60-69	24.1	15.0	19.3	13.5		
<i>Travel profile</i>						
Number of repeat visits						
0 (first time)	27.1	27.5	21.1	29.1	29.15	0.00
1	15.0	17.4	8.2	14.3		
2	13.4	11.8	12.9	16.2		
3	3.8	3.8	2.3	4.6		
4	12.7	11.3	17	12.9		
5 or more	28.0	28.2	38.6	22.9		
Decision process						
Make a decision instantly on the spa	83.9	86.0	86.0	79.5	12.10	0.06
Compared with other spas	12.8	10.3	11.7	17.3		
Compared with other trips	2.8	2.9	1.8	3.0		
Compared with other activities	0.6	0.9	0.6	0.3		
Number in party						
1	3.5	3.6	6.4	1.9	62	0.01
2	43.1	42.2	35.7	19.7		
3	19.3	20.5	20.5	18.7		
4	19.2	19	5.8	5.7		
5	5.4	5.1	2.3	2.2		
6	2.8	3.4	2.3	2.2		

Pokračování tabulky 3

7	2.3	2.7	2.3	1.6		
8	1.2	1.4	1.2	0.8		
9	0.6	0.9	0.0	0.5		
10 or over	2.6	1.2	7.0	2.7		
Members of party						
Single	2.1	2.3	1.8	1.1	42.38	0.01
Spouse	41.2	41.2	38.2	42.7		
Parents	7.8	7.6	6.0	9.2		
Parents in law	2.0	2.0	3.2	1.5		
Brothers/sisters	3.5	3.2	3.2	4.0		
Children	22.2	23	19.9	21.8		
Relatives	2.2	2.2	2.8	1.8		
Friends	10.7	10.7	14.7	9.0		
Partner	5.5	5.5	2.4	7.3		
Colleague	1.1	0.8	2.8	3.7		
Pets	0.5	0.3	0.8	0.5		
Others	1.2	1.4	2.4	0.4		
First decision						
Member	27.5	29.6	24	25.9	20.70	0.02
Destination	38.0	37.6	33.3	40.7		
Transportation						
tools	3.7	3.4	4.7	3.8		
Inn	16.8	15.9	20.5	16.4		
Day	13.3	13.3	14.6	12.7		
Others	0.7	0.2	2.9	0.5		
Transportation cost						
0	7.0	5.6	9.4	8.1	18.28	0.05
~5,000	50.2	52.8	53.8	44.5		
5,001-10,000	22.6	22.2	22.8	23.2		
10,001-20,000	11.5	10.9	8.8	13.7		
20,001-30,000	3.5	2.6	2.3	5.4		
30,001~	5.1	5.8	2.9	5.1		
Accommodation fee						
0	6.5	6.2	5.8	7.3	31.85	0.00
~5,000	5.7	5.6	8.8	4.3		
5,001-10,000	21.0	19.5	28.7	19.9		
10,001-20,000	32.9	35.2	36.3	27.8		
20,001-30,000	14.7	15.7	9.4	15.6		
30,001~ 6.5	19.2	17.8	11.1	25.1		
Cost of food and drink						
0	4.7	4.1	8.2	4	50.62	0.00
~5,000	52.6	54.9	67.8	42		
5,001-10,000	25.5	25.3	15.8	30.2		
10,001-20,000	11.1	10.8	5.3	14.3		
20,001-30,000	3.0	2.2	1.8	4.9		
30,001~ 4.7	3.1	2.7	1.2	4.6		

Pokračování tabulky 3

Souvenirs purchased						
0	10.7	9.7	22.8	6.7	73.81	0.00
~5,000	69.7	75.7	64.3	62.5		
5,001-10,000	13.7	10.8	9.4	20.2		
10,001-20,000	3.5	2.1	1.8	6.7		
20,001-30,000	1.3	0.9	1.2	2.2		
30,001~	1.1	0.9	0.6	1.6		
Travel arrangement						
Travel agency	10.3	8.9	6.4	14.3	24.61	0.00
Personal	70.2	71.8	70.2	67.7		
By member	13.7	14.5	17	10.8		
With member	5.3	4.3	4.7	7.3		
Other person	0.4	0.3	1.2	0		
Others	0.2	0.2	0.6	0		
The means of information gathering						
Travel agency						
tours	6.1	8.2	1.2	14.3	105.61	0.00
Travel agency						
website	18.8	25.8	20.5	35.3		
Inn or transport						
company' website	32.0	50.4	39.2	47.7		
Recommended						
website	15.2	21.2	11.7	29.9		
Word of mouth						
of friends, etc....	10.9	14	17.5	19.4		
TV programmes	2.7	3.4	2.9	5.7		
Magazines	5.6	7.9	1.8	12.1		
Annual event	5.1	6.8	13.5	6.9		
Others	3.5	4.4	11.7	3.5		

4.2 Satisfaction and intention to repeat by segmentation

Next, each segment's satisfaction and intention to repeat were compared. As shown in Table 4, Segment 3 'Active tourists' were most satisfied and intended to repeat a trip to the same spa destination. In this study, variety seeking describes the answer to the following question: 'Do you think there are any better tourist destinations that would satisfy you more?' If respondents answered 'Agree' or 'Rather agree', they tended to seek variety. Interestingly, in Table 4, the highest proportion of variety seekers was the Segment 2 'Annual event seekers'. These tourists go to a spa destination as an annual event; however, they think that some destinations might satisfy them more.

This study also asked respondents about their intention to share their experience via social networking services (SNSs). Segment 3 'Active tourists' displayed strong intentions to share their experience via an SNS.

Table 4

Overall satisfaction and intention to repeat for the three segments

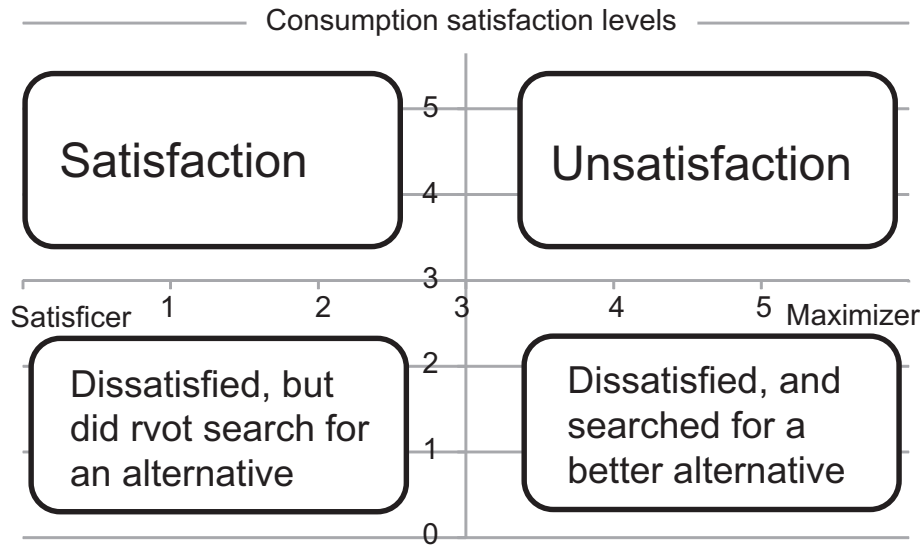
		Segments (number of respondents/share)				
		1	2	3		
		Relaxation seekers	Annual event seekers	Active tourists		
	Share of the sample	N= 585 51.9%	N= 171 15.2%	N= 371 32.9%	χ^2	S.L.
Overall satisfaction						
Very satisfied	39.9	32.3	32.2	55.5	89.11	0.02
Rather satisfied	48.1	52.5	47.4	41.5		
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	10.3	13.8	15.2	2.4		
Rather dissatisfied	1.7	1.4	5.3	0.5		
Dissatisfied	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0		
Intention to repeat (next vacation)						
Agree	29.4	21.5	25.7	43.4	94.11	0.00
Rather agree	39.3	40.3	31.6	41.2		
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	22.6	28.5	26.9	11.3		
Rather disagree	7.1	7.7	14	3		
Disagree	1.6	1.9	1.8	1.1		
Intention to repeat (someday in the future)						
Agree	40.1	30.6	38.6	55.8	12.10	0.06
Rather agree	43.7	47.5	42.1	38.3		
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	13.4	17.9	14.6	5.7		
Rather disagree	2.1	2.7	4.1	0.3		
Disagree	0.7	1.2	0.6	0		
Another tourist destination was more satisfying to me						
Agree	26.4	20.3	36.8	31.0	52.32	0.00
Rather agree	42.6	42.4	32.7	47.4		
Neither agree nor disagree	27.1	33.3	22.8	19.1		
Rather disagree	3.4	3.6	5.8	1.9		
Disagree	0.6	0.3	1.8	0.5		
Intention to share my experience through SNS						
Agree	13.1	7.9	8.8	23.5	145.13	0.00
Rather agree	30.3	28.9	15.2	39.6		
Neither agree nor disagree	34.3	40.9	31.6	25.3		
Rather disagree	14.7	15.9	27.5	7.0		
Disagree	7.5	6.5	17.0	4.6		

As shown in Table 3, these tourists gathered information from websites recommended by word of mouth. They not only gathered information, but also put their personal information on websites. The SNS strategy seems very important for tourists in segment 3.

As mentioned above, many Japanese people can be categorised as unsatisfaction customers, who will switch to another spa if they find it to be more satisfying. Miura (2013) provided four categories based on two axes: satisfaction of consumption level and variety seeking intention (Figure 1). Miura defined variety seeking attention according to whether the customer was satisfied by a specific good or service.

Figure 1

Four categories of customer



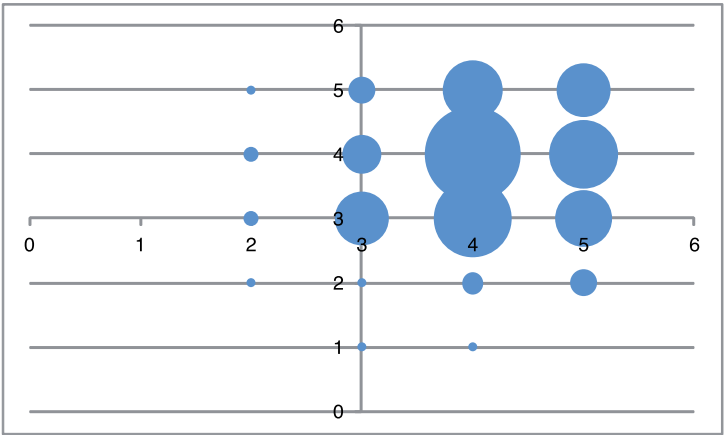
Source: Miura (2013)

This study sought to apply these four categories to three segments of Japanese spa tourists. The two axes used are as follows. One was overall satisfaction for this type of spa travel. The other described variety seeking. The question posed was: 'Do you think there are any better tourist destinations that would satisfy you more?' The answers 'agree' and 'rather agree' were interpreted as maximizer responses; on the other hand, 'disagree' and 'rather disagree' were regarded as satisficer responses. Across the two axes, the respondents were categorized into four types according to each segment, as shown in Figure 2.

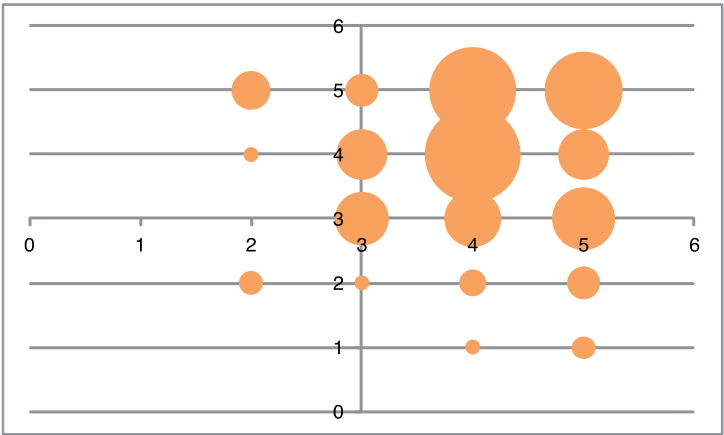
Figure 2

The four categories of Japanese spa tourists in each segment

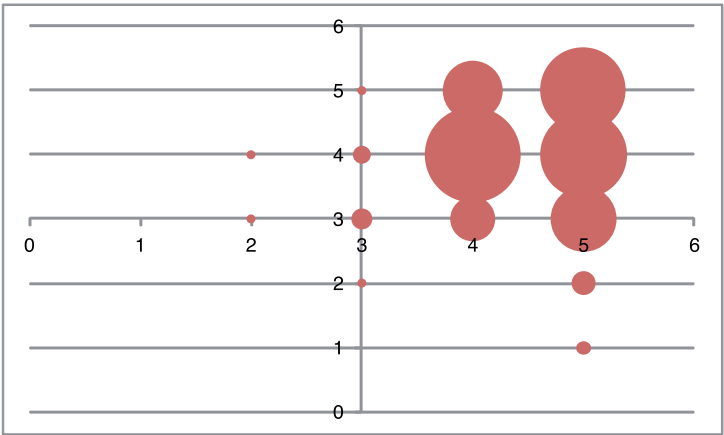
Segment 1: Relaxation seekers



Segment 2: Annual event seekers



Segment 3: Active tourists



From Figure 2, we can see that most tourists are unsatisfaction tourists across all three segments. In Segment 3 'Active tourists', there are many unsatisfaction tourists. This means that these active tourists will switch their destination to increase their satisfaction even though they were satisfied with the spa they visited. Then the tourism provider has to consider more attractive services or content for them.

5. Conclusion

This study sought to identify the characteristics of Japanese spa tourists through a benefit segmentation approach. Six motivation factors were derived from their motivation items: Inn, Sight and nature, Relaxing, Companion, Destination, and Hot spring. The respondents were divided into three segments according to the motivation factors. The highest share of segments were the Relaxation seekers, whose important factor is Relaxing. Other segments were Annual seekers and Active tourists. The common important factor among segments is Relaxing. As a result, tourists choose a spa when they think they will find it a relaxing experience. Eight items are contained in the 'Relaxing' factor, and these are what tourists mainly look for in spa attractiveness. These items describe a refreshing experience, or a release from daily routines. As a result, relaxing for Japanese tourists may mean being refreshed and finding a release.

This study also considered satisfaction and intention to repeat by segments. Based on the research by Miura (2013), tourists in each segment were categorised according to four types: Unsatisfaction, Satisfaction, Dissatisfaction but did not search for an alternative, and Dissatisfaction and searched for a better alternative. As mentioned above, many Japanese people could be considered as unsatisfaction customers. This study also describes how most tourists can be categorised as the unsatisfaction type.

Based on these considerations, each segment has particular characteristics. Relaxation seekers who seek a relaxing motivation factor are mainly in their forties to sixties, and they go to spas with their children. They first decided to member. Their overall satisfaction level is 'rather satisfied', and their intention to repeat is 'rather agree'. Annual event seekers had a relatively high number of repeat visits because their travel forms parts of an annual event. Interestingly, the tourists in this segment had the highest ratio of variety seeking. They go to a spa destination as an annual event; however they thought that some destinations might satisfy them more. Active tourists are those seeking all of the motivational factors. They tend to stay at expensive inns with their parents or partner. They tend to pay for foods and drinks. They displayed the highest satisfaction among segments and had the strongest intentions to repeat their trip; however, most of them were unsatisfaction

tourists. This means that they will switch their destination to one that will be more satisfying to them. They also had a strong intention to share their experience through SNSs. They not only gathered information on websites by word of mouth, but they also provided their information through SNSs. The strategy of using SNSs seems very important to them.

As regards future possibilities for research, further work needs to be done to clarify the characteristics of each segment. In this study, an empirical analysis was conducted; however, observations or interviews with tourists were not conducted. As a result, the reason for each characteristic is not explained well. For example, it is unclear why many tourists are categorised as unsatisfaction tourists. Additional research is certainly required, including comparative work on the number of complaints and the repeaters who declare dissatisfaction. Finally, the analysis on variety seeking could be improved with a more comprehensive body of data.

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Development of the Share of Tourism in Gross Domestic Product and Gross Value Added in the Czech Republic

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Abstract

The article is focused on gross domestic product and gross value added. The aim is to predict development of the tourism in gross domestic product and compare it with the expected development of the World council of Travel and Tourism. First of all there is description of share of tourism in gross value added in period of 2003 to 2014. Using statistical data analysis is performed to describe development of indicators mentioned above, then trend has been calculated based on set of statistical data and compared with prediction of World Council of travel and tourism.

Key words

Tourism, gross value added, gross domestic product, the share of tourism in Gross domestic product, the share of tourism in gross value added

JEL Classification

Z39, E60

Introduction

Tourism is in today's world an important part of national economics. Mainly because of its development cumulated potential (multiplier effects), which is associated with number of other economic sectors. It has positive aspects especially for the sector of accommodation, restaurants, transport, construction sector and more. The economic contribution of tourism, taking into account the effects in favour of other sectors, captures so called Tourism Satellite Account. It is a relatively new mathematical and statistical model of research and understanding of tourism. The basic building rock of this tool is a comprehensive approach to understanding the connections and relationships of individual indicators describing the demand and supply of tourism. The supply side of the tourism satellite account is closely related to the quantification of the corresponding economic variables in tourism as gross value added, domestic product, employment and capital formation.

1. Tourism and his role in economic

Tourism is according to AIEST (International Association of Tourism Experts) is defined as the sum of relationships and phenomena arising from the travel and stay of persons, meaning the place of stay is not place of residence or employment [2]. According to UNWTO (The United Nations World Tourism Organisation) tourism is summary of the activities of people traveling to places outside their usual surroundings and living in those places not longer than one year, for purpose of spending free time, business or other purposes. In standard proposal of EU tourism is activity of people traveling to places outside their usual surroundings and staying in these places for no longer than one year, for the purpose of spending free time, business or other purposes [3]. It is an open and dynamic evolving system, which consists of two subsystems, in particular subject and object of tourism [1].

Tourism is internationally defined as the activities of people traveling to places and staying in places outside their usual surroundings and living in those places for less than a comprehensive year, for the purpose of spending free time, business and other purposes unrelated to the activities for which they are rewarded for visiting such place [6].

Tourism has a national and regional level, a very positive impact on economic growth and employment. Tourism is on the national and regional level, an important economic activity with a broadly positive impact on economic growth and employment. Currently, the sector contributes to the gross domestic product of around 3% and directly employs over 230 thousand [5]. The economic importance of the sector is monitored using so-called Tourism Satellite Account (TSA). Satellite Account, except the most wanted information on the share of tourism in gross domestic product, it also contains many other detailed information from which it is possible to read which industries have closest to tourism.

The importance of tourism in the Czech Republic is slightly above the European Union average. Among European countries with a higher share of tourism in gross domestic product among traditional tourist countries such as Austria, Switzerland, as well as countries in the Mediterranean - Spain, Croatia, Greece and small island states of Malta and Cyprus [11]. The importance of tourism in the development of key economic indicators are very similar to the situation in Sweden (2.9 %) and the Netherlands (2.7 %). Slightly higher share has Germany (3.2 %). The highest amounts are in attractive tourist destinations such as Cyprus (9.1 %) and Portugal (8.2%) [5].

Tourism, according to the Ministry for Regional Development (MRD) has impact on the public budget revenues: taxes, contributions to social insurance, tourist and cultural charges; the largest share of the gains of tourism has inbound tourism, but negatively affect outbound; out of every hundred crowns spent on services and tourism products have been carried away to public finances 40.79 CZK; most comes in form of direct

tax revenue from contributions to social insurance. Due to investments in the construction of new rooms were of every one hundred crowns spent in tourism 31.33 CZK has been carried away to public budgets.

MRD states there is also influence of tourism on employment, in the form of a positive impact on employment not only in the industry but also in industry that follows and services in other sectors of the economy. Czech Statistical Office (CSO) sees the major economic benefits of tourism that it contributes to gross domestic product, positively affects the balance of payments country, the revenues of the state and local budgets, supporting investment activities, developing small and medium business creates new jobs and develops interregional cooperation.

According to the Concept of the State Tourism Policy in the Czech Republic for the period 2014 – 2020 [9]: according to the statistics, the TSA for 2010, the share of tourism in gross domestic product (GDP) was 2.7 %. In the long-term comparison the importance of tourism to GDP is falling, because the performance of the sector is growing, which is due to significantly faster growth of other sectors. Conversely, the share of investment activity in tourism is growing since 2009. Tourism in the Czech Republic employs more than 235 thousand people and is characterized by having the ability to generate employment. It also has an impact on selected sub-sectors of the economy such as a second home, personal transport via cars, train and airplane, additional passenger services, cultural services, sports services, etc.

2. Analysis of the share of tourism in gross domestic product

Expressing share of tourism in gross value added to gross domestic product is a key part of the tourism satellite account of the Czech Republic. The added value of tourism can be defined as the value added generated by individual characteristic industries of tourism and other sectors of the national economy to meet internal tourism consumption. It is not important whether the entire production of these industries is offered to visitors. To the account is not even taken the degree of specialization of the production process. Gross domestic tourism product is equal to the sum of gross value added and the balance of taxes and subsidies. Total production sectors typical for tourism in 2013 reached almost 440 billion. CZK. Most participating industries: food services (25 %), sports and recreational services (14 %), travel agencies (12 %), accommodation services (10 %) and passenger road and air transport (9, respectively 7 %). It must however be stressed out that the production sectors typical for tourism should not be confused with producing tourism. It expresses total production of these activities in the national economy, when it is not necessary to be consumed exclusively by tourists. Moreover production of characteristic industry consists only of characteristic products even if their share is absolutely predominant (in 2013 about 94 %) [5].

In the long-term comparison of ten years the share of tourism in gross domestic product decreases (see Table 1), although the performance of the sector is growing. It is mainly due to significantly faster growth of other sectors of the economy. The lowest share of tourism in gross domestic product in the years 2010 - 2012, specifically 2.7 %. While the highest contribution of tourism to GDP was in 2004, when it amounted to 3.6 %. Their highest share of gross value added for the whole economy amounted to tourism in 2003, amounting to 3.4 %. The lowest percentage was in 2008, and from 2010 to 2012 was 2.6 %, see Figure 1. The contribution of tourism to the main macroeconomic indicators of the Czech Republic expressed only so called direct impact of tourism [7].

Table 1

Development of GDP and GVA of the Czech Republic and tourism, including the share of tourism in GDP and GVA in the years 2003-2014

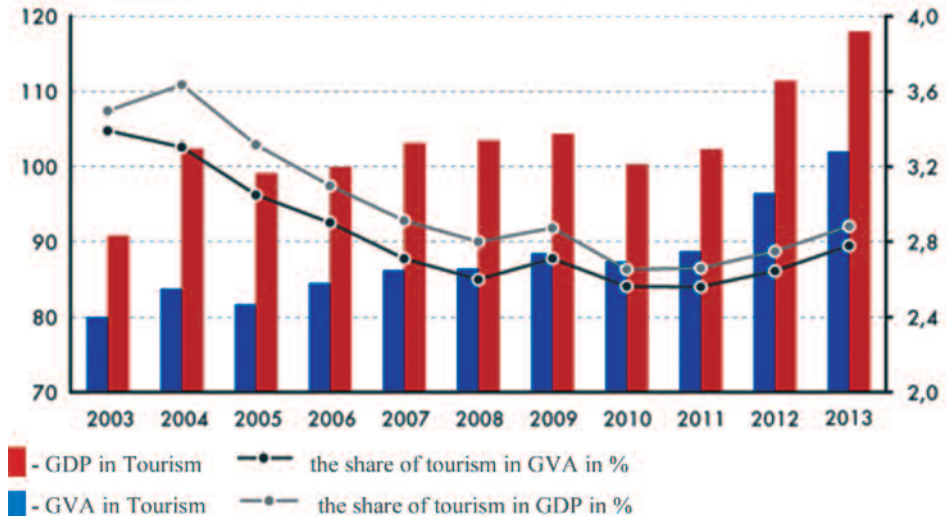
Year	GDP in the Czech Republic (million CZK)	Tourism GDP (CZK mil.)	The share of tourism in GDP (in %)	The share of tourism in gross value added (in %)
2003	2 596 094	90 792	3,5	3,4
2004	2 814 159	102 316	3,6	3,3
2005	2 987 125	99 079	3,3	3,0
2006	3 225 704	99 956	3,1	2,9
2007	3 538 933	103 079	2,9	2,7
2008	3 692 622	103 451	2,8	2,6
2009	3 629 511	104 293	2,9	2,7
2010	3 778 880	100 253	2,7	2,6
2011	3 845 020	102 275	2,7	2,6
2012	4 051 780	111 399	2,7	2,6
2013	4 090 642	117 932	2,9	2,8
2014*	4 265 268	102 793	2,8	2,7

Source: CSO (2016) [4], * Preliminary data

In terms of development year 2009 is important, when the economic crisis broke out. When most economic sectors began to show a fairly significant drop in gross domestic product, in the segment of tourism there was certain inertia and the impact of the crisis was not so drastic. Therefore in 2009 the share of tourism in gross domestic product and gross value added increased slightly and reached 2.9 %, respectively 2.7 %.

Figure 1

Gross value added (GVA in mld. CZK) and the gross domestic product (GDP in mld. CZK) in tourism and the share of tourism in the national economy of the Czech Republic in the period 2003-2013



Source: CSO (2016) [4]

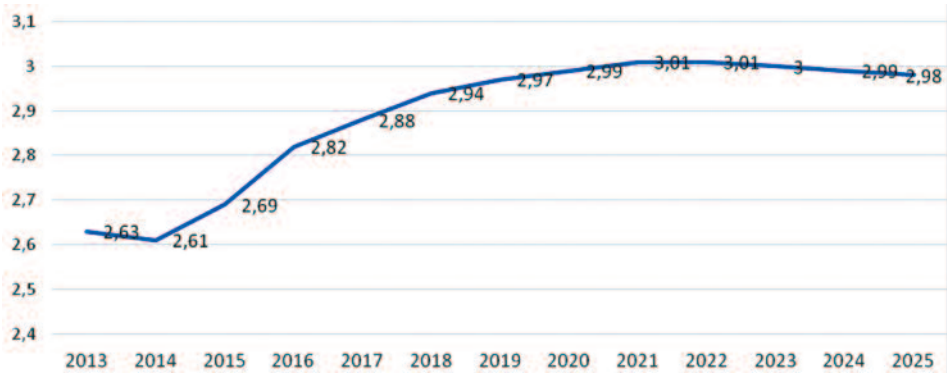
3. Results and Recommendations

Expected development of the share of tourism in gross domestic product in the Czech Republic by the World Council of Travel and Tourism displays the following Figure 2, where is given the expected development until the year 2025. In the following years, the expected growth of the share of tourism in gross domestic product in the Czech Republic until 2022, then there will be slight drop until the year 2025. The World Council of Travel and Tourism also foresees growth in the number of employed in tourism in the Czech Republic, which will follow the evolution of the share of tourism in gross domestic product.

The Action Plan on the Concept of the State Tourism Policy 2014 - 2020, the period 2015 - 2016 the Ministry for Regional Development [9] predicts that the GDP of tourism in 2015 can be expected to stagnate, however, in the period 2016-2017 can be expected slight increase in the range of about 1.3 % to 1.7 %. It is likely that growth of total GDP will be faster, however the current share of tourism in GDP (which is almost 3 %), will be slightly lower. The following figure 3 shows the prediction of the share of tourism in gross domestic product in the Czech Republic using a calculated trend, based on data obtained from the Czech Statistical Office for the period. Trend is decreasing, it may be caused especially by (as it was the case in previous years) the growth of industry performance

Figure 2

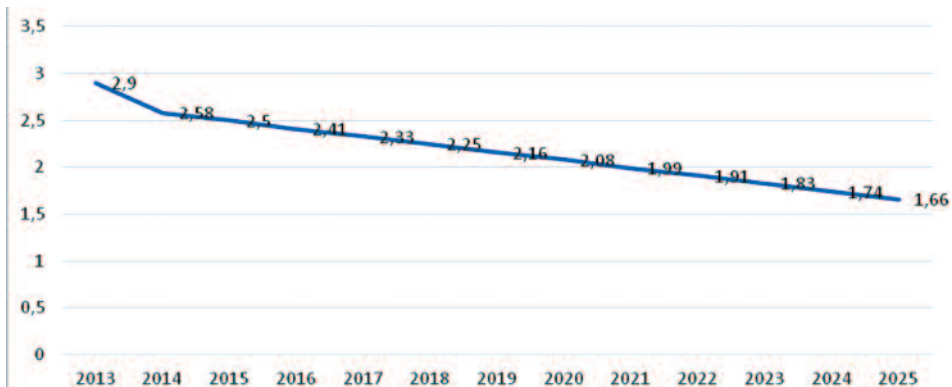
Forecast of the share of tourism in GDP in the Czech Republic between 2013 - 2025



Source: World Travel & Tourism Council (2015) [12]

Figure 3

Forecast of the trend in the share of tourism in GDP in the Czech Republic between 2013 - 2025



Source: Own calculation trend in the share of tourism in GDP according to data from the CSO

and significantly faster growth of other sectors of the economy. As another reason it is important to note that realized a statistical calculation does not reflect future economic situation in the Czech Republic in the period 2016 - 2025.

Conclusion

In the area of tourism have been realized the description of the share of tourism in gross domestic product in 2003 - 2013. The development in this period ranged from 3.6 % to 2.7 %. It is clear that the contribution of

tourism to GDP roughly followed the development of the Czech economy, ie. the different phases of the economic cycle when economic crisis had effect in the industry with a delay.

Based on the monitored data trend of the share of tourism in gross domestic product was calculated. The trend indicates that in the coming years the share of tourism in GDP will decline. The reason is considered to be growth of industry performance and faster growth of performance of other sectors. The calculated trend does not match with the assumptions of the World Council of Travel and Tourism which indicates growth in the share of tourism in gross domestic product in the Czech Republic until 2022, then there will be slight decrease until 2025. It may be caused because trend appears to be disregarding the future development of the Czech economy in the calculation of the trend.

The Ministry for Regional Development (MRD) assumes a certain stagnation in the share of tourism in GDP in 2015, however in the period 2016-2017 slight increase in the range of about 1.3 to 1.7% is expected.

MF, according to Macroeconomic Forecast of Czech Republic from October 2015, expects that real GDP will grow by 4.6% in 2015 and in 2016 by 2.7% in Czech economy [7, 8]. Prediction of GDP growth is based on the development in Q2 2015, when the dynamics supported a inly by a strong contribution from gross fixed capital formation. Prediction is not made for tourism, the prediction mentions it only in the services balance.

Concept of the State Tourism Policy in the Czech Republic for the period 2014 - 2020 when formulating the global objective is based on the fact that modern tourism policy should seek to increase the competitiveness of tourism in the Czech Republic in the European space and context, also should maintain the relative economic position of tourism in the national economy (GDP creation, employment, particularly in small and medium business).

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Short Essay

Broumovsko Regional Destination Management 2010-2015

Jan Školník, MBA

Broumovsko regional destination management

Broumovsko is a border region in north-east Bohemia, which overlaps with the protected landscape area (CHKO) of Broumovsko. The reasons for declaration of the CHKO are the same as those that determine the high attractiveness of the regional as a tourist destination. There is immense natural wealth, consisting primarily of the Teplice-Adršpach sandstone cliffs and the Polická chalk basin with its ample supplies of quality groundwater, combined with a valuable cultural landscape represented mainly by the Broumov basin with its centrally positioned monastery and the group of village churches designed by Christoph and Kilian Ignaz Dientzenhofer, leading architects of the high Baroque style. These attributes and the combination thereof make the region a unique tourist destination.

Although we do not have accurate data, it may be said that the economy in the Broumov region was and still is largely generated by industry, but a kind which does not disrupt the peaceful natural character of the area. The traditional textile industry, among other, makes Broumovsko one of the most industrially protected landscape areas in the Czech Republic. In terms of tourism, the area of the Teplice-Adršpach cliffs in particular is a predominantly tourist destination, while the rest of the regional is a significant but not predominant tourist area.

In 2008, the difference between the appeal and potential for tourism, whilst preserving acceptance among the local community, led the town of Broumov to cooperate with the Broumovsko Development Agency in compiling a tourism development strategy that clearly defined inadequate destination management as one of the causes of the described situation.

One of the primary tasks of destination management is destination marketing. This started in 2010 with the definition of the product, namely the region. Within the framework of superior regional strategies, the traditional and intuitively well-known Broumovsko tourist region (76%, IPSOS research agency for the Broumov region, 2014) came under the region of the Kladsko Borderland (Kladské pomezí). During that period (2006 - 2009), its destination management did not function adequately. Moreover, the Kladsko Borderland brand is highly problematic. It has very

low intuitive awareness rates in the Czech Republic (25%, IPSOS for the Broumov region, 2014) and in foreign language translations it tends to imply a region centred around the Polish town of Kladsko. Because destination management was only in its early stages, it was assumed that primary efforts would be devoted to marketing within the Czech Republic. We wanted to focus on foreign clients primarily through involvement of the larger territory of Eastern Bohemia, which we initiated at the time. Following unsuccessful negotiations to rename the Kladsko Borderland for instance to Náchodsko or Broumovsko, which we considered to be a more suitable brand, a decision was made to establish separate destination management for the Broumov region. We explain this result mainly through the alternative perception of potential, meaning the importance of tourism as an economic segment in the Broumov area compared to the rest of the territory.

Hence, in 2009 the Society for Broumovsko Destination Management was established alongside the Broumovsko Development Agency. Its founders, the towns of Broumov, Teplice nad Metují and Meziměstí and the Broumov Business Club, gave it a mandate to develop tourism in compliance with the Broumovsko Vision 2029, which states among other: "A dynamic balance is set between manufacturing sectors, services and tourism. The Broumov region is an attractive destination for both Czech and foreign tourists," or "Confident and responsible people identify with the Broumov region and stay here to live."

Its key mottos are: "Roots, Values, Identity, Tradition and Peace". Hence, Broumovsko is seeking a means of tourism development that will be in balance with other segments and preserve the appeal of living in the location. Both are mutually compatible, because tourists can contribute financially to the creation and maintenance of services that (also) serve the local community.

One of the first activities was a discussion of the main products, destination brands. Three were identified: Broumov Area, Broumovsko Bike Resort and Broumovsko Geopark.

The Broumovsko Geopark product reacts to the increasing share of tourists seeking attractive ways to learn about the development of the Earth, and this is logically linked to the geological history of the region. The Broumov area is particularly suitable for this type of tourism, because one can witness almost all of the phenomena that characterise the development of Earth, as presented at global geoparks, in this one place. In this regard, we believe the Broumov area will acquire the status of a national geopark this year. However, the geopark is a complex product, because it also presents and emphasises the geomorphological, archaeological, ecological, historical, cultural and aesthetically valuable phenomena of the landscape. More information is provided at <http://geopark.broumovsko.cz>. On the contrary, the Specialized Bike Resort Broumovsko is a product focussed on all types of cyclists, with emphasis on popular trekking and mountain bikes. The primary goal of

this product is to provide cycling visitors with the greatest amount of relevant information about cycling trails, routes and trips, points of interest on these routes and other services available in the area using suitable methods. More information is provided at <http://bikeresort.cz>. Within this activity, we strive to implement infrastructure for cyclist – most importantly the network of one-way trails in the Javoří Mountains. The main source of information is the Broumov Area brand at the website www.broumovsko.cz, where we focus on all target groups including geotourists and cyclists, albeit the information is not as in-depth as the specialised products.

We have created web portals for all the products based on the same database with maximum interlinking. We use Facebook profiles and communicate by other suitable means. An electronic bulletin is published every six weeks, with information about the offer and events in the region. A printed tourism newsletter is published twice per year. Maximum use is made of all possible communication channels. We are particularly interested in publishing information about our region and its offer in the media – ranging from television to internet portals to regional press. Yes, we also print various information leaflets, but we hardly see this as the primary activity content of destination management. Instead, it distributes advertising materials for the attractions and services in our area and motivates them to place the regional brand on them.

Besides marketing the defined brands, destination management is also in charge of coordinating activities within the Czech Republic. We have discovered that this is no simple feat – the specific aspect is primarily due to the rather poorly coordinated division of tasks on a national, provincial and regional level. Specifically, based on division by CzechTourism, Broumovsko is a part of the Hradec Králové tourist region, but this does not exist on a provincial level. There, Broumovsko is part of the important tourist area of the Kladsko Borderland, and has only been considered an area in its own right, as described above, in recent years, primarily because of its activity and contribution to expert discussions. Therefore, this year we are planning to join the professional Association of Tourist Area and also to coordinate the national tourism product Rock Cities of the Czech Republic, thus promoting cooperation with other regions that feature rock cities, such as Bohemian Paradise (Český ráj) and Czech-Saxon Switzerland (Českosaské Švýcarsko).

This brings us to the coordinating role within the region itself. Broumovsko, as described above, has immense potential for the development of tourism. Its natural wealth and baroque landscape is a rare backdrop for active relaxation. However, the scenery only has a marginal impact on the region's success. Those who fundamentally decide about its success or failure are people. Apart from the region's inhabitants themselves, these are primarily active local entrepreneurs who offer their services in tourism. The quality, availability, friendly attitude and superior level of service create a regional atmosphere that is

the decisive parameter for future development. However, entrepreneurial activity, beautiful and high-quality accommodation facilities and flawless services will only be partly successful without being followed up by a wide offer of services and extensive tourist infrastructure in the region. A region with a flawless marketing concept, massive advertising campaign and elaborate infrastructure will fail without willing entrepreneurs who base the success of their business on the quality of service and superior customer care.

“This is why, in our view, there is no option but to cooperate intensively, to coordinate activities within the area and make thorough use of the associated offer of services and strengths of the region. It is on these very principles, meaning principles of cooperation, that we build our strategy. We believe that by intensifying communication, supporting cooperation, combining and promoting the improvement of service quality, we can make our region even more successful. Regional development is a never-ending process, but we will continue to strive for the best results. If our activities appeal to you, we offer you the option of asserting your wealth of ideas and experience to influence the evolution of our region in the tourism sector.” This is how we started addressing the members of the destination fund in 2011. They not only became involved, but also contribute significant funds to the activities of the destination society. It was also thanks to discussions with them that in 2015, we were able to launch the pilot project of guest discount cards, handed out to visitors at selected accommodation facilities free of charge, but also available for purchase. We know discount cards or guest cards work better in other regions and abroad, but it is not easy to establish effective cooperation and we are delighted to have managed. Moreover, the project evolved from discussions on the lowest level of destination management, which is why we believe it is sustainable. The card offers visitors to the region the option of enjoying discounts at participating venues while discovering the area at the same time. It also works as a good communication tool and serves as a mini-guide to the region for visitors.

Another example of massive cooperation was the organisation of the 100+1 Broumovsko For/About Itself contest. This was linked with the Play Broumovsko exhibition organised in 2014 by the Broumovsko Development Agency on the vacant premises of the Veba textile plant. The exhibit of playful interactive items saw more than forty thousand visitors. More importantly, the exhibition, which also had a considerable economic impact, included a contest involving a map of the region that demarked regional producers and service providers. Any visitor or inhabitant of the region who purchased goods from a certain number of retailers, providers and producers was included in a draw for a new Škoda Fabia car if they used services from seventy providers. The winner was drawn at the end of the contest. By supporting the event, we wanted to communicate the scope of services and products in the region. During several meetings, we managed to promote cooperation between the individual partners and also

strengthened the economic multiplier effect of local consumption. We believe the project fulfilled its role within the framework of developing a regional identity, marketing the area and supporting the regional economy.

One of the strengths of destination management, which we operate under very modest conditions, is event management. We actively strive to work with the organisers of interesting events in the Broumov area and arrange cooperation so that these activities support the regional brand, while the region reciprocates by helping with promotion of the event itself. The Broumovsko Treasures music festival set in local churches or the Specialized MTB Trilogy Broumovsko, a special mountain bike race, are examples of successful collaboration. We are actively working to bring similar events, national or European competitions and races to our area.

We believe the success of our work is confirmed by the establishment of the independent, non-profit Society for Broumovsko Destination Management, founded in late 2013 by the Voluntary Union of Municipalities of Broumovsko, the Voluntary Union of Municipalities of Policko and the Broumovsko Development Agency. Institutionalisation has affirmed interest in the leading position of the tourism agenda for local municipalities and opened the door to other projects to support tourism.

In our presentations, we say that good destination management is systematic, consistent, and powerful and comes with a smile. This is precisely what we strive for in all of our activities. Just like presentations at conferences, advertising of the region at trade fairs, advertising in the media or national PR campaigns, it is important to be a reliable, trustworthy and quality partner for others involved in tourism directly in the area. The best and usually most effective advertisement is a satisfied customer, who comes back and recommends the region. Personal experience plays a crucial role for nine out of ten people, while mediated experience (recommendation) is important for eight and a half people out of ten. And everybody can contribute to a pleasant experience, feeling of hospitality and awareness of being welcome. Entrepreneurs and their employees in the service sector and every person on the street can smile. If our guests feel good and welcome, they will return. This is what our activities strive for.

The changes in Broumovsko are apparent. Recently, there has been a lot of investment into tourism. The number of accommodation capacities, social, cultural and sports facilities is increasing. We are convinced that this faith in the future of the region demonstrated through investments is owed in part to destination management.

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Jan Školník graduated from the Prof. Malik Management Institute in St. Gallen and earned his MBA – Senior Executive title at the Nottingham Trent University - B.I.B.S. Brno. He has worked in several management positions in retail and logistics. He launched his own business early on (in 1994), starting in transport. Later in 1997, he and his father purchased the company HOBRA – Školník s.r.o., a plant for the production of filtration media, equipment and fireproof insulation. As co-owner, he manages the company as its executive and director. He upholds the principles of social responsibility and in 2006 the company won the Via Bona award for corporate philanthropy awarded by the VIA Foundation. Today, the firm employs more than 100 people with a turnover of over CZK 250 mn. In addition to this, in 2004 he and his wife founded the non-profit “Broumovsko Development Agency” in which he is continuously engaged. The Agency contributes substantially to cultural and social events, the revitalisation of historical monuments and development of the region in which Jan Školník works and lives. The Agency is also a founding member of the Society for Broumovsko Destination Management, where he actively works. In 2014, he and the Agency were awarded the title of Socially Beneficial Entrepreneur of the Year in the given category of Entrepreneur of the Year, organised by EY.

Industry News

11th International Conference on Topical Issues in Tourism, Jihlava, Czech Republic

The International Conference on Topical Issues in Tourism was held on February 24th – 25th 2016 at the College of Polytechnics in Jihlava. The conference was focused on “Local heritage and Tourism. The paper of Doc. Ing Alžbeta Királová, Ph.D. and Ing. Iveta Hamarneh, Ph.D. titled “Food Tourism as A Factor of the Regional Tourism Development: Literature Review” is published in the conference proceedings. The conference proceedings will be sent for evaluation into Thomson Reuters Conference Proceedings Citation Index. This paper is based on research project “The Influence of Food Tourism on the Development of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises in the Czech Republic”, which is supported by the University College of Business in Prague (FRV 1/2015)

(ih)

The 5th International Scientific Conference - Current Trends in the Spa Industry, Hotel Industry and Tourism, Tábor, Czech Republic

The conference organized by the Silesian University in Opava was held on 23rd – 24th March 2016 in Tábor (Czech Republic). The paper „Importance of Tourism Industry in the Czech Republic“ of Ing. Iveta Hamarneh, Ph.D., was published in the conference proceedings.

(ih)

The 6th International week April 11 - 15, 2016 at the Kodolányi János University of Applied Sciences, Budapest, Hungary

The International week was held from April 11 till 15, 2016 at the Kodolányi János University of Applied Sciences. During the International week the International Conference “Responsible Business & Tourism Development and the Role of Education in Responsible Thinking” was organized. Ing. Iveta Hamarneh, Ph.D., Head of Department of Tourism Economy from University College of Business in Prague, presented the research paper “Gastronomic Tourism as a Vehicle of Regional Development”. This paper is based on research project “The Influence of Food Tourism on the Development of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises

in the Czech Republic”, which is supported by the University College of Business in Prague (FRV 1/2015)

(ih)

AdCamp 2016 - the 7th International Conference on Destination Marketing and Tourism Services Marketing, Zlín, Czech Republic

The 7th AdCamp conference was held on April 14 - 15, 2016 in Zlín (Czech Republic). This year, the original theme “Love for Brand” was chosen and top experts from all over Europe were invited. One team of students from the University College of Business in Prague, that participated in the competition were accompanied by Ing. Iveta Hamarneh, Ph.D., Head of Department of Tourism Economy from University College of Business in Prague.

(ih)

Scilab Environment – A Useful Tool for Processing Tourism Data

There is a wealth of data and information regarding tourism in databases such as Eurostat and the Czech Statistical Office. Managers often do not take full advantage of these data because they are afraid of applying methods of statistical analysis under real conditions. There is, however, a simple and effective tool for processing tourism data – Scilab. As free and open source software for numerical computation, Scilab (<https://www.scilab.org/>) has become very popular for tasks in economics as well as in tourism. The program includes many ready-made scripts and functions covering e.g. math and simulation, statistics, control systems, optimization and signal processing toolboxes. A great advantage of Scilab is that one does not have to be a specialist in computer science to use it. Members of the Department of Information Technologies and Analytical Methods at the University of Business in Prague use this program extensively for scientific computations and also in select master courses. In addition to the standard build-in functions, the Scilab File Exchange interface (<https://fileexchange.scilab.org/>) enables users to find desired programs. Lukáš Malec and Jaroslav Poživil (Department of Information Technologies and Analytical Methods) together with students Hana Tvrdíková and Lenka Netušilová have recently developed several scripts. Two multivariate methods are especially suited for descriptive tourism, where it is often the case that data, being small sample and collinear, are ill-conditioned. These methods are Fisher linear discriminant analysis with regularization, and one solution of partial least squares. While discriminant analysis studies the differences between at

least two sets of data measured on the same variables, the partial least squares variant investigates the similarity of possibly different variables in two sets (at our disposition), considering the same observations. Moreover, some programs dealing with the inequality phenomenon, analysis of contingency tables and estimation of future process are shared there to simplify the computational exercises. As a whole, the Scilab environment is a suitable tool for the modern tasks of the tourism industry.

(lm; jp)

Press Releases

Madrid, Spain, 9 May 2016
PR No. 16035

World Committee on Tourism Ethics: it is critical to advance the transformation of the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism into an international convention

The 17th meeting of the World Committee on Tourism Ethics, held at the UNWTO Headquarters in Madrid, Spain on 26-27 April 2016 discussed the advances in the process of conversion of the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism into an international convention and reiterated the importance of transforming the Code into legally binding international law.

The process of transformation is led by a group of UNWTO Member States which is currently drafting the text of the convention to be presented to the 22nd UNWTO General Assembly to be held in China in 2017.

Stressing the relevance of adopting a convention on Tourism Ethics, Pascal Lamy, Chair of the Ethics Committee and former Director General of the World Trade Organization, said “I am satisfied with the progress of the negotiations on the draft text of the Convention and sincerely hope that it will become the first international treaty on ethics in tourism, underlining the importance of evolving toward a responsible sector for all”

“Transforming the UNWTO Global Code of Ethics into an international convention represents a major step forward in ensuring that tourism development is a force for good in our societies and UNWTO Members States are committed to this objective. I trust that this Convention will be an example of how the tourism sector can lead in promoting a more inclusive and fairer development model” said UNWTO Secretary-General, Taleb Rifai.

Over the course of the two-day meeting, the Committee also debated how to increase the awareness of the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism and its core values such as accessibility for all, child protection and the obligations of tourism service providers in the field of safety and security standards in tourist accommodation and beach water sports.

The management of fraudulent online reviews and the existing mechanisms to prevent possible unfounded ratings was also discussed in a session which counted on the participation of Yelp’s Head of EU Public Policy, Kostas Rossoglou. The Committee will continue consultations on this topic with a view to develop guidelines and recommendations for the sector.

As the organ responsible for promoting and monitoring the implementation of the UNWTO Global Code of Ethics for Tourism, the

Committee commended the growing number of companies and trade associations that have adhered to the Private Sector Commitment to the Code. By April 2016, a total of 452 signatories from 64 countries had committed to promote and implement the Code in their business operations.

Note to editors:

The World Committee on Tourism Ethics (WCTE) is the independent body responsible for overseeing the implementation of the UNWTO Global Code of Ethics for Tourism (GCET), a set of principles designed to guide sustainable tourism development. The 17th meeting of the Committee was the fifth meeting in the current composition and under the chairmanship of Pascal Lamy.

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 (Advisor to the Board of Directors, 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

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Madrid, Spain, 4 May 2016
PR No. 16031

UNWTO Commission for the Americas expresses its full support to Ecuador

Ministers and high representatives of UNWTO Members States in the Americas meeting in Havana, Cuba, on the occasion of the 60th meeting of the UNWTO Commission for the Americas, have express their full support to Ecuador following the tragic earthquake that struck Ecuador's central coast on 16 April 2016.

In a joint Statement, they stressed that "Ecuador is a tourism success story; a country where tourism supports many livelihoods" and committed to "work, alongside UNWTO, to support Ecuador with the planning process for the rehabilitation of a sustainable tourism offer on the Coast of Ecuador and the promotion of tourism to the region".

Furthermore, participants expressed their full confidence in Ecuador's recovery and tourism development saying that "Ecuador will continue to shine as an increasingly important tourism destination in the Americas and that tourism will continue to play a vital role in advancing the country's development".

Useful links:

Statement of Support to Ecuador, 60th Meeting of the UNWTO Commission for the Americas

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Madrid, Spain, 29 April 2016
PR No. 16030

UNWTO Silk Road Task Force commits to work on joint marketing, training, infrastructure development and visa facilitation

The 6th UNWTO Silk Road Task Force Meeting held in Urmia, Islamic Republic of Iran on 22-25 April 2016, agreed to advance joint marketing, training, infrastructure development and visa facilitation. The Meeting brought together representatives from 14 countries to discuss the key priorities for the Silk Road Action Plan 2016/2017.

The 6th UNWTO Silk Road Task Force Meeting, hosted in the ancient Silk Road city of Urmia, was organized by UNWTO, the Iranian Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Association (ICHTO) and the West Azerbaijan Province. Over 500 public and private sector stakeholders attended the official opening of the meeting.

Opening the event, the Vice-President of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the President of ICHTO, Mr. Masoud Soltanifar, said 'We hope to cooperate with other countries, while bridging information dissemination, commercial and trade cooperation and cultural exchanges. In doing so, we will contribute to the promotion of the modern Silk Road spirit – contributing to world peace and development.'

At the opening, Mr. Zoltán Somogyi, UNWTO Executive Director said, 'We are at a crucial point of the Silk Road Programme as a growing number of countries are prioritising the Silk Road in their economic development strategies. There is also an increasing demand for transnational tourism routes and itineraries globally from the perspective of both public and private sectors and we must maximize this trend.'

The meeting focused on the three key pillars of the Silk Road Action Plan: i) marketing and promotion ii) destination management and capacity building and iii) travel facilitation. The Task Force agreed that, while the Silk Road presents extensive opportunities for development, success will be determined by establishing strategies and objectives that are achievable for all destinations.

The key priorities set by the Silk Road Task Force include:

- To develop a jointly shared Silk Road Mobile Application with relevant travel information of all participating Silk Road countries, including maps, images and relevant information on Silk Road heritage.
- To enhance the joint management of Silk Road heritage corridors through the unification of heritage guide and heritage protection standards, and the development of sustainable tourism products.
- To enhance the coordination among Silk Road countries to improve and facilitate travel across borders.

During the Meeting, Iran, represented by the Tourism Deputy of ICHTO, Mr. Morteza Rahmani Movahed, put forward two main proposals: i) to establish a Silk Road Heritage Guide Training Centre aimed at improving and unifying heritage guide standards across the Silk Road. Hosted by ICHTO, the centre would be developed in collaboration with UNWTO, UNESCO and the World Federation of Tourism Guides Association (WFTGA); and ii) to develop a new Silk Road Heritage Corridor connecting Iran with Iraq in order to further enrich and diversify the tourism offer of the Silk Road countries.

The 6th UNWTO Silk Road Task Force Meeting was attended by officials from UNESCO and the Iran Federation of Tourist Guide Associations, as well as representatives from the Silk Road Member States Bulgaria, Croatia, Georgia, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Kazakhstan, Mongolia, Pakistan, Russia, Spain, Turkey, Ukraine and Uzbekistan. A number of UNWTO

Affiliate Members joined the Meeting, including the International Centre of Wine and Gastronomy and the Spanish Institute for Quality Tourism. Turkish Airlines supported the event and shared its actions in promoting route development and connectivity across the Silk Road.

Additional information:

UNWTO Silk Road Task Force
6th UNWTO Silk Road Task Force Meeting

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Madrid, Spain, 20 April 2016
PR No. 16028

African tourism ministers convene in Côte d'Ivoire

Over three days (19-21 April) high-level tourism representatives from African countries, including 18 tourism ministers¹, are convening in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, to discuss the challenges of the sector and the priorities for the programme of work of UNWTO in the African continent. The event is held in parallel with the Sustainable Tourism Conference of the 10 YFP, focused on 'Accelerating the Shift towards Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns'.

Tourism and ethics, tourism and security, and the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development to be celebrated in 2017 are some of the topics in the agenda of the meeting. The events taking place in Côte d'Ivoire show clear support to the country following the tragic events that took place in Grand-Bassam last March and recognition by the Government of Cote d'Ivoire of tourism's role in development.

"Côte d'Ivoire is one of the most evident examples of the great potential of African tourism; it holds impressive natural assets and unique cultural diversity and traditions. Continuing to foster tourism in this part of the world can really make a difference, not only for society as a whole but for the perception of the African continent in the world," said UNWTO Secretary-General Taleb Rifai, opening the event.

During the occasion, the UNWTO Secretary-General and attending delegations visited Grand-Bassam to pay tribute to the victims of the

¹Algeria, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Morocco, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Sudan, Togo, Zambia and Zimbabwe

attack of March 13, 2016. “Thank you for coming to Grand-Bassam and paying respect to the victims. We thank you for maintaining the meeting, which is very important for us,” said President of Côte d’Ivoire Alassane Ouattara.

The importance of tourism to Cote d’Ivoire has been reflected in the acceptance by President Ouattara of the UNWTO/WTTC Open Letter on Travel and Tourism, geared to raise awareness and support of tourism at the highest political level.

Sustainability in the agenda of tourism in Africa.

Parallel to the Regional Commission, UNWTO organized the Sustainable Tourism Conference of the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns.

The event focused on ‘Accelerating the Shift towards Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns’ and discussed the importance of sustainability in the agenda of tourism in Africa, as well as in enhancing tourism investment and financing and collaboration among stakeholders to improve the tourism sector’s performance.

Through a combination of plenary sessions, interactive panels and roundtable discussions, examples of good practices from related projects and activities were presented and shared.

The UNWTO Regional Commission for Africa coincided with the holding of SITA - Salon International du Tourisme d’Abidjan - providing attendees with the opportunity to also participate in the fair that brings together local exhibitors as well as those from the neighbouring countries.

Note to editors

The 10YFP was adopted at the Rio+20 Conference as a framework for action on Sustainable Consumption and Production as a cornerstone of sustainable development. The well-being of humanity, the environment and the economy ultimately depend upon the responsible management of the planet’s natural resources. These challenges are mounting as the world population is forecast to reach 9 billion by 2050, with 1 billion people to be lifted out of absolute poverty and 1-3 billion additional middle-class consumers joining the global economy by 2030. The most promising strategy for ensuring future prosperity lies in decoupling economic growth from the rising rates of natural resource use and the environmental impacts of both the consumption and production stages of product life cycles. Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) is about “the use of services and related products that respond to basic needs and bring a better quality of life while minimizing the use of natural resources and toxic materials, as well as the emissions of waste and pollutants over the life cycle of the service or product, so as not to jeopardize the needs of further generations”. SCP is about doing more and better with less. SCP is about increasing resource efficiency and promoting sustainable lifestyles. It offers important contributions for poverty alleviation and the transition towards low-carbon and green

economies. It requires building cooperation among different stakeholders as well as across sectors in all countries.

Useful links:

To know more about the UNWTO Regional Commission for Africa

To know more about the 10YFP

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Madrid, Spain, 7 April 2016

PR No. 16027

UNWTO – a decade building capacity in tourism policy in Asia/Pacific

Under the title ‘Human Capital Development in Tourism’, the UNWTO Asia/Pacific Executive Training Programme on Tourism Policy and Strategy has gathered policy makers and tourism executives in Seoul, Republic of Korea, to enhance skills and understanding on the latest trends in tourism management. The initiative, organized by UNWTO and sponsored by the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism of the Republic of Korea, has reached a decade in this last edition, as the first Training Programme on Tourism Policy and Strategy in the Asia/Pacific region launched in 2006.

Group discussions, case studies and a series of lectures integrated the 4-day training programme aimed at building skills for public sector executives in tourism policy. The 52 participants coming from 21 different countries in Asia and the Pacific also had the opportunity to share their experiences and best practices in fields such as tourism strategic planning and implementation.

The topic for this year programme, ‘Human Capital Development in Tourism’, responds to the growing need of destinations in Asia and in the Pacific to enhance the quality of services, develop and retain human resources and improve the skills of tourism professionals as the sector gains increased relevance in the region.

“UNWTO has a strong commitment to talent development and capacity building. This training programme is probably one of the best examples of the efforts of the Organization in this field”, said UNWTO Secretary General, Taleb Rifai, opening the event.

“This is also a perfect example of how countries such as the Republic of Korea can contribute to tourism development. We are very thankful to

the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism for the longstanding support provided to this programme. We have run this programme for a decade now, and the support that the Republic of Korea has given us has contributed greatly to its success, making a real difference to the many countries from around the world that throughout this decade have joined the programme” he added.

Useful links:

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Madrid, Spain, 22 March 2016

PR No. 16026

UNWTO strongly condemns the attacks in Brussels

UNWTO is deeply shocked by the tragic attacks perpetrated in Brussels. On behalf of the international tourism community, UNWTO expresses its heartfelt condolences to the families and friends of the victims and to the Belgian people in this difficult moment.

“On the behalf of the international tourism community, UNWTO conveys its heartfelt condolences to the families and friends of the victims and expresses its full solidarity with the people and the Government of Belgium” said UNWTO Secretary-General, Taleb Rifai.

“This is not an attack on Belgium, it is an attack on us all and sadly these tragic events remind us again that we are facing a global threat that needs to be addressed globally” he added.

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Madrid, Spain, 18 March 2016
PR No. 16024

Swedish private sector commits to the UNWTO Global Code of Ethics for Tourism

Visita and Svensk Turism AB have become the latest private sector signatories to the UNWTO Global Code of Ethics. The signature of the commitment to the Code took place on the occasion of Sweden's Hospitality Industry Congress, held in Gothenburg (17 March 2016).

By adhering to the Code, the private sector signatories commit to respect its principles; to promote the Code among its partners, providers, staff and clients, making sure that its provisions are known and respected as far and wide as possible; and to report to the World Committee on Tourism Ethics on the measures taken to implement the Code.

As stated by Márcio Favilla, UNWTO Executive Director for Competitiveness, External Relations and Partnerships, on the occasion of the signature "tourism's exponential growth in recent years comes with increased responsibility for all and this is why today's commitment is so important; the UNWTO Global Code of Ethics constitutes the most efficient tool to channel corporate responsibility commitments towards our society and communities."

"Travel to Sweden is becoming more and more popular among tourists from Europe as well as for those traveling from long-haul markets such as Japan, China, India, Russia and the USA. Cooperation with UNWTO highlights Sweden's commitment to being a responsible, sustainable and attractive destination", said Maud Olofsson President of Visita. Eva Östling, CEO of Visita, added that "tourism is one of Sweden's most important industries with an export value of 97 billion SEK. But the potential is much higher. The goal is to double this in ten years".

Magnus Nilsson, President of Svensk Turism said "now we'll insert the UNWTO Global Code of Ethics for Tourism in the Swedish tourist industry's national strategy. With a focus on sustainability, we will work towards ensuring that by 2020 Sweden is the natural destination for the global traveler".

The UNWTO Global Code of Ethics for Tourism is a comprehensive set of principles designed to guide key-players in tourism development. Addressed to governments, the travel industry, communities and tourists alike, it aims to help maximise the sector's benefits while minimising its potentially negative impact on the environment, cultural heritage and societies across the globe. Adopted in 1999 by the General Assembly of the World Tourism Organization it was acknowledged by the United Nations in 2001.

The relevance that the private sector can have in promoting a more responsible tourism sector, lead UNWTO to develop since 2011 the Private Sector Commitment to the Code. As of January 2016, 451 companies and

associations from 64 countries –from airlines and hotels, to tour operators and associations– have joined the commitment to uphold ethical standards and ensure the implementation of the Code in their operations.

Additional information:

Download the UNWTO Global Code of Ethics

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Madrid, Spain, 17 March 2016

PR No. 16023

UNWTO projects a positive 2016 for tourism in Greece

UNWTO Secretary-General Taleb Rifai has expressed the confidence of the Organization in the continued growth of the tourism sector in Greece. In 2015, international tourist arrivals to Greece grew by 7% to reach 23.6 million, while exports generated by the sector increased by 6% to euro 14.2 billion.

Meeting Minister of Tourism of Greece Elena Kountoura at the side-lines of ITB to discuss the situation and prospects of tourism in Europe and Greece, Mr Rifai said “we have no doubt that Greece will maintain a powerful image worldwide as a major tourism destination and that the country will consolidate its growth in 2016, as shown by booking trends”.

Ms. Kountoura said “the Aegean islands are already showing a positive trend in bookings and are ready to welcome an increased number of tourists for the current season”. The diversification of the touristic offer, the development of new destinations and the opening of high-end accommodation facilities and services are some of the measures taken by the Greek government to enhance tourism, as highlighted by the Minister of Tourism of Greece in the meeting.

“Meeting with leading tour operators at ITB, we have received very positive feedback from the German travel market, which has confirmed the increased demand in bookings for Greece”, added Ms. Kountoura.

This news is timely for Greece as the country is advancing implementation of its new tourism policy framework, launched in 2015 to enhance international tourism.

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Madrid, Spain, 16 March 2016
PR No. 16022

UNWTO and Egypt discuss recovery measures at ITB

UNWTO Secretary-General, Taleb Rifai, met the Minister of Tourism of Egypt, Hisham Zaazou, on the side-lines of ITB to discuss the current measures being implemented by the country to stimulate recovery (Berlin, Germany, 9 March 2016).

The meeting followed up on the official visit of Mr Rifai to Egypt last month, where he had the opportunity to meet President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi and Prime Minister Sherif Ismail to discuss the tourism situation in the country and the recovery plans being implemented.

Meeting with Minister Zaazou in Berlin, the UNWTO Secretary-General commended the measures taken by Egypt to restore market confidence and expressed the full support of the Organization to this programme.

“The work of the Ministry and of Minister Zaazou in promoting the highest political support for the sector, enhancing tourism safety and security by successfully integrating the sector into risk and emergency management structures both at national and local levels, and the various marketing initiatives taken in key markets are the correct ways to restore confidence and accelerate the recovery of tourism in Egypt”, said Mr Rifai.

“We should never forget that Egypt’s tourism sector is one of the world’s most remarkable success stories. In the last decade, the number of visitors to Egypt practically tripled and so did the exports generated by international tourism. Despite current challenges Egypt is today, and will continue to be, a world-leading tourism destination, capturing one in every four international tourist arrivals to the Middle East”, said Mr Rifai.

Mr Rifai and Minister Zaazou also discussed the actions that the Ministry has swiftly taken to communicate with competent authorities and the public in source markets on safety and security issues, to unlock the support of airlines and tour operators, to incentivise demand, and to engage key players in Egypt in these concerted efforts. UNWTO experts have visited Egypt in recent months to support the Ministry in these areas.

The meeting was also an occasion to further discuss the upcoming UNWTO City Tourism Summit being held later in 2016 in Cairo.

“We are holding this important event in Cairo as a clear sign of confidence in Egypt, and we trust that it will be a great opportunity to showcase all the progress and initiatives that Egypt has been implementing to accelerate recovery”, added Mr Rifai.

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Madrid, Spain, 15 March 2016

PR No. 16021

Private sector committed to fight child exploitation in tourism

The 31st Meeting of the World Tourism Network on Child Protection, held on the occasion of ITB Berlin, focused on the role and initiatives of the private sector to fight Child Exploitation in tourism. Awareness raising, training of staff and the implementation of measures along the whole value chain of tourism were pointed out as critical.

“We need to unite to fight child exploitation and the commitment of the private sector is key” said UNWTO Secretary-General opening the meeting.

Carol Bellamy, Chair of the Network, recalled the role of the Network as a platform to share research and good practices in the fight against the exploitation of children in tourism.

At the meeting, the Chair of the High Level Global Task Force to End Sexual Exploitation of Children in Travel and Tourism, Najat Maalla M'jid, shared the first findings of the Global Study carried out by the Task Force. Lack of reporting, weak legislation and the anonymity of the Internet were pointed out as some of the main challenges in child protection from sexual exploitation in the sector. The report aims to also address the chronic lack of robust evidence and comparable data on this issue.

The Association of British Travel Agents (ABTA) stressed the importance of providing training to the staff on how to identify possible situation of child exploitation as well as dealing with new emerging trends in the sector such as ‘voluntourism’ while the TUI Group shared their initiative ‘A collective NO to sexual exploitation of children in holiday destinations initiatives to promote the inclusion of measures to prevent and fight the exploitation of children within the whole tourism value chain including actions on training, awareness raising among host communities

Other initiatives presented included a project from the Network of Strategic and International Studies which evaluates best practices from around the world and work of the Airline Ambassadors International which focus on training airline professionals to flight human trafficking.

The World Tourism Network on Child Protection is an open-ended network facilitated by UNWTO featuring the multi-stakeholder participation of a range of tourism stakeholders - governments, international organisations, non-governmental organisations (NGOs),

tourism industry groups and media associations. Its mandate is to prevent all forms of youth exploitation in the tourism sector (i.e. sexual exploitation, child labour and child trafficking). The Network's meetings, held annually at the worlds' foremost Travel and Tourism Fairs, serve as a platform to exchange experiences and best practices, present awareness-raising materials and capacity building tools, and promote the adoption of professional codes of conduct or other responsible practices in line with the UNWTO Global Code of Ethics for Tourism.

Useful links:

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Madrid, Spain, 14 March 2016

PR No. 18020

Public-private partnerships key to the success of Silk Road Tourism

The 6th Silk Road Ministers Meeting held at ITB Berlin on 9 March 2016 focused on the role of public and private sector partnerships (PPPs) in the development of tourism along the Silk Road. Participants discussed how PPPs can advance the issues of infrastructure, product development and marketing.

Addressing the meeting, UNWTO Secretary-General said “governments must lead and direct tourism policies, but the engine behind tourism development is the private sector, and thus one cannot work without the other”.

The role of PPPs was stressed by the President and CEO of the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), David Scowsill, who recalled the need to create “mechanisms to promote the consultation of the private sector in decision making and legislation”.

Ministers and high level officials from Bulgaria, Bangladesh, Kyrgyzstan, the Czech Republic, Cambodia and Iran shared their views and experiences in this area, while Kazakhstan presented the opportunities to promote the Silk Road arising from the upcoming Expo Astana 2017. Other major international events highlighted as key to forging partnerships between public and private stakeholders were the Silk Road Conference on Nomadic Tourism and Sustainable Cities (Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, 13-15 October 2016) and the Global Tourism

Economy Forum 2016 (Macau, China, 14-16 October 2016).

At the meeting, UNWTO launched the Silk Road Action Plan for 2016/2017. The Plan, which includes priority actions in 1) marketing and promotion; 2) capacity building and 3) travel facilitation, will be further discussed at the 6th UNWTO Silk Road Task Force Meeting to be held in Urmia, Iran on 22-25 April 2016.

UNWTO Affiliate Member TripAdvisor presented the TripAdvisor 2016 Travel Trends for the Silk Road. The research based on a survey of 10,678 travellers shows that 8 in 10 travellers have heard of the Silk Road and that the top ten countries associated with the Silk Road are China, Mongolia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Iran, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Azerbaijan. The research, conducted in collaboration with UNWTO, also found that travellers would be 41% more likely to travel to the Silk Road if they could obtain a single Silk Road visa.

The UNWTO Silk Road Programme is a collaborative initiative designed to enhance sustainable tourism development along the historic Silk Road routes. It aims to maximize the benefits of tourism development for local Silk Road communities, while stimulating investment and promoting the conservation of the route's natural and cultural heritage. Additionally, it is working to foster greater cooperation between Silk Road countries and regions, with the established aim of creating a seamless and memorable Silk Road travel experience.

Currently the Silk Road Programme engages 33 UNWTO Members States, UN agencies such as UNESCO and UNCTAD as well as an extensive network of private sector stakeholders.

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Madrid, Spain, 9 March 2016

PR No. 16019

**Safe and seamless travel, technology and sustainability:
priorities for tourism**

Ensuring safe and seamless travel, enhancing the opportunities brought by technology and accelerating the shift towards a more sustainable sector are the priorities for the sector said UNWTO Secretary-General, Taleb Rifai, opening the 50th edition of ITB Berlin. (Berlin, Germany, 8 March 2016).

Referring to the issue of tourism and security, he said: "Global challenges demand global solutions and tourism development greatly

depends upon our collective capacity to promote safe, secure and seamless travel. We need to cooperate, not isolate”.

Mr. Rifai called for the full integration of tourism into the national and international security agendas and alerted that “the security challenges we face today should not prompt us to build new walls” and that “enhancing security and enabling more seamless travel should always go hand-in-hand”.

On the issue of technology and innovation, the UNWTO Secretary-General said: “We need to better understand the impact of technology on our sector and maximize the new opportunities it creates to improve the competitiveness of destinations, make travel safer and easier, and manage our natural resources more effectively.”

Calling upon the tourism sector to embrace the sustainability agenda, Mr Rifai said it was time to “step up the efforts to advance policies and business strategies that ensure the contribution of the tourism sector to the Sustainable Development Goals”.

“Climate change mitigation, effective resource management, poverty reduction and inclusive growth need to be at the center of tourism development. We must make it clear that economic growth and sustainability are not at odds”, he added.

Addressing these priorities can only be achieved through increased international cooperation and cross-cutting national tourism policies. “Tourism’s ability to effectively support the economic, social and environmental foundations of many nations has raised the need for the sector to play a bigger role in national development, particularly at the highest levels of political decision-making“, Mr Rifai said.

Mr Rifai recalled that despite a slow and uneven global economic recovery, growing geopolitical challenges, health scares and security concerns, 2015 was another record year for international tourism.

International tourist arrivals grew by 4.4% to reach 1.2 billion (1.184 million), meaning 50 million more tourists travelled the world in 2015 than in 2014.

“Looking ahead, UNWTO is confident that despite increased volatility and uncertainty, 2016 will bring another year of growth to our sector, with an estimated increase of 4%”, he said.

Useful links:

UNWTO Secretary General’s Speech at the Opening Ceremony of ITB Berlin 2016

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Madrid, Spain, 1 March 2016
PR No. 16017

UNWTO and China organize First World Conference on Tourism for Development

The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and the Government of the People's Republic of China will organize the First World Conference on Tourism for Development in Beijing on 18-21 May 2016. Under the theme 'Tourism for Peace and Development', the event aims to kick start a high level debate on the contribution of tourism to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The high level segment of the Conference on 'Sustainable Development through Tourism' will analyze how to advance the contribution of tourism to the 17 SDGs, including the sector's ability to create jobs, promote local culture and be an agent of change towards more sustainable consumption and production (SCP) practices.

Moderated by CNN anchor and correspondent, Richard Quest, the high level segment will discuss how countries can align their national development strategies with the SDGs and the role of public and private partnerships in the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda.

"Tourism is one of the most dynamic economic sectors, with significant global reach, and as such 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, as stated in Goal 8, Goal 12 and Goal 14 of the SDGs," said UNWTO Secretary-General, Taleb Rifai.

The conference will be complemented with two high level sessions focusing on:

- 'Tourism for Poverty Reduction' which will discuss how governments, the international community, the private sector, and academia can collaborate to enhance tourism's contribution to poverty reduction and how to better integrate marginalized and disadvantaged groups, particularly youth and women, into the global tourism value chain.
- 'Tourism for Peace' which will focus on the links between tourism and the building blocks of peace – social justice, human rights, economic equity, sustainable development, democracy and non-violence. The session will also explore how to make the sector more "peace-sensitive" and outline opportunities and the way forward to ensure tourism can play an effective role in peace building.

Rural tourism to fight poverty in China

The celebration of the First World Conference on Tourism for Development in China comes after the decision 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.

The positive impact of tourism is behind the decision of Chinese authorities to launch the 13th Five-Year Plan Period, a nationwide tourism development plan to lift 17% of the country's impoverished population out of poverty by 2020. According to this plan, 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.

Useful links:

First World Conference on Tourism for Development
website: www.tourismfordevelopment.org

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Madrid, Spain, 26 February 2016
PR No. 16015

UNWTO confident in Egypt's tourism recovery

UNWTO Secretary-General, Taleb Rifai, has expressed the Organizations' full confidence in the recovery of tourism in Egypt during a recent visit to the country. On the occasion, Mr. Rifai met with Egypt's President, Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, in the presence of the Egyptian Minister of Tourism, Hisham Zaazou. The President reiterated his full support to the tourism sector and its utmost determination in ensuring that Egypt is a safe, attractive and leading tourism destination saying "if tourism recovers, Egypt will recover".

Meeting with Prime Minister Sherif Ismail Mohamed, Secretary-General discussed measures to accelerate the recovery of tourism to Egypt and praised the support being given to the sector. Both representatives welcomed the actions undertaken by Egypt to promote the highest political support for the sector, regain the confidence of source markets, enhance tourism safety and security and successfully integrate the sector into risk and emergency management structures, both at national and local levels.

"Egypt has undertaken strong initiatives in terms of communications with the competent authorities and public opinion in source markets on safety and security issues, unlocking the support of airlines and tour

operators, incentivising demand and engaging key players in Egypt in these concerted efforts. I trust these actions will herald results in restoring confidence and accelerating the recovery of tourism to Egypt”, said Mr. Rifai.

Mr Rifai also met with the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sameh Hassan Shoukry, to discuss the cooperation between the Ministries of Tourism and Foreign Affairs and UNWTO, including Egypt’s chairmanship of the UNWTO Executive Council and the forthcoming UNWTO City Tourism Summit taking place in Egypt later this year. The future of tourism in Egypt

Opening Egypt’s Tourism 2016 Conference ‘Planning for Growth’, Mr Rifai recalled that there is a strong pent up demand for tourism to Egypt, from source markets, both within and outside the region.

“We should never forget that Egypt is one of the world’s most remarkable tourism success stories. Over the last decade, the number of visitors to Egypt practically tripled and so did the exports generated by international tourism. Egypt is, and will continue to be, despite all challenges, a leading tourism destination.”

Tourism is a critical contributor to Egypt’s GDP, employment, foreign currency earnings and investment. Mr. Rifai called upon the international community to support Egypt’s tourism saying that “supporting the recovery of tourism to Egypt is supporting the future of Egypt and that of its people; supporting tourism to Egypt is promoting peace and stability”.

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Madrid, Spain, 17 February 2016

PR No. 16014

Andorra to host the 9th World Congress on Snow and Mountain Tourism

Discussing the challenges and opportunities in snow and mountain tourism as well as evaluating new business models and the need to incorporate innovative and sustainable practices are the main objectives of the 9th World Congress on Snow and Mountain Tourism. The event, organized by the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and the Government of Andorra, will take place in Sant Julià de Lòria, Andorra, on 2-4 March.

The current importance of snow and mountain tourism makes this Congress more relevant than ever. The joint initiative was launched two

decades ago as a common working platform between UNWTO and the Principality of Andorra.

“Snow and mountain tourism constitutes an added value to destinations and an opportunity for the development of local communities; nevertheless, we should never forget the importance of promoting the sustainable management of the natural resources considering that this type of tourism takes place in direct contact with nature” said UNWTO Secretary-General, Taleb Rifai, at the presentation of the Congress held at the Headquarters of the Organization.

The Minister of Tourism and Trade of Andorra, Francesc Camp, pointed out: “Adventure tourism is one of the most dynamic segments and represents a strong driver and key element of growth. Moreover, it offers many possibilities for the development of destinations that want to enhance sustained growth. Sports, nature and cultural immersion are not only the main components of this segment of tourism but also the main axes used by destinations to create memorable, authentic and exciting experiences.”

This 9th edition of the World Congress, on the theme “Mountainlikers, Sport and Adventure: A Promising Combination”, will provide an opportunity for both the public and the private sectors to share experiences and examples of innovative tools that can drive the management and promotion of mountain destinations.

More than thirty experts from Europe, the Americas and Asia will discuss the most important factors in mountain tourism as well as the different options to further develop this segment, including innovative marketing tools and products. Andorra, a leading mountain destination, represents an ideal setting to address these topics, particularly the possibilities to combine sport and adventure.

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Madrid, Spain, 2 February 2016

PR No. 16013

Updated UNWTO Statement on the Zika Virus

Following the declaration by the World Health Organization (WHO) of a Public Health Emergency of International Concern on 1 February 2016 on the Zika virus, UNWTO recalls that according to WHO there should be no restrictions on travel with the affected areas and that the following travel measures should be observed:

WHO statement on the first meeting of the International Health Regulations (IHR 2005) Emergency Committee on Zika virus and observed increase in neurological disorders and neonatal malformations, 1 February 2016

Travel Measures:

- There should be no restrictions on travel or trade with countries, areas and/or territories with Zika virus transmission,
- Travellers to areas with Zika virus transmission should be provided with up to date advice on potential risks and appropriate measures to reduce the possibility of exposure to mosquito bites,
- Standard WHO recommendations regarding disinfection of aircraft and airports should be implemented“.

UNWTO will continue to monitor the situation in close contact with WHO and the relevant tourism authorities.

UNWTO also recalls that health and tourism authorities are working together to inform residents, tourists as well as the industry about the precautions to be taken and the tourism sector is working closely with health authorities to follow WHO prevention recommendations.

As per the impact on the tourism sector, it is too early to make any effective assessment considering the evolving nature of the situation.

Relevant information:

WHO statement on the first meeting of the International Health Regulations (2005) Emergency Committee on Zika virus and observed increase in neurological disorders and neonatal malformations (1 February 2016)

WHO Information for Travellers

CTO and CHTA Statement on the ZIKA Virus

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Madrid, Spain, 25 January 2016

PR No. 16012

Tourism Ministers discuss collaboration between tourism and security

Ministers of Tourism and High Level officials from 86 countries gathered in Madrid to discuss the development of closer collaboration mechanisms between tourism and security administrations to ensure a safe, secure and seamless travel framework (Madrid, 22 January 2016)

The meeting stressed the global nature of security challenges and the

need to create global solutions while enhancing the collective support to countries affected.

Participants called for the integration of tourism in international and national emergency systems and highlighted the role of public-private sector cooperation, as well as the importance of strong communications and media partnerships.

“The role of tourism is still underestimated and the integration of travel and tourism into national emergency structures and procedures often happens only after a major incident has taken place. Today we are here to discuss how security issues are impacting our sector and what can be done to ensure we continue to advance towards safe, secure and seamless travel.” said UNWTO Secretary-General, Taleb Rifai

“Only by working together can we increase the resiliency of the tourism sector, reduce the risk of damage and loss, and accelerate recovery – and ultimately ensure the sustained growth of our sector and its contribution to economic growth, job creation and development”, he added.

“This meeting addresses a critical question facing us today – namely, how can we harness and expand the benefits of tourism, while safeguarding our societies?” said Mr Yuri Fedotov, Executive Director of the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC), who also highlighted the need for public-private sector cooperation. “While destinations are under pressure to ensure tourist safety and security, it is essential that both inbound and outbound States cooperate and put the necessary measures in place to ensure the safety of travelers, including the strengthening public-private partnerships”.

Ignacio Ibañez, Secretary of State for Cooperation of Spain, highlighted the role of tourism as an economic driver and a tool for development but also as an instrument of better understanding among cultures. “Tourism builds understanding between people of different cultures and is thus a factor driving security at the global level” he said.

At the meeting, the Minister of Tourism of El Salvador, Napoleon Duarte, shared a new initiative of the Ministers of Central America and the Dominican Republic, supported by UNWTO and UNODC, that will create a regional taskforce to engage tourism stakeholders and security forces.

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Shopping Tourism, key for destination marketing

“One of the most used tools in the promotion of destinations” this is how Shopping Tourism was described at the opening of the 2nd Conference on this segment, organized by the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) on the occasion of the Spanish Tourism Fair (FITUR) (22 January 2016).

Shopping Tourism “is a highly relevant component for travelers when choosing and preparing their trip” underlined Yolanda Perdomo, Director of the Affiliate Members Programme at UNWTO.

The event included the presentation of the latest figures, trends and strategies on shopping tourism and of how this segment is transforming the promotion of destinations worldwide. Jörn Gieschen, Researcher at the Instituto de Empresa (IE) and the MasterCard Observatory on Premium Markets and Prestige Products underlined that “shopping tourism is intimately related to city travel which constitutes 58% of the total”.

“There is an additional concept about shopping tourism: that of small and local shopping experiences which according to our research is much more attractive for travelers than the big global brands” he added. One of the trends shared was the so-called ‘Bleisure’ - the combination of Business and Leisure. “58% of business travelers add a day or even a weekend to their business trip” he said.

María José Pérez, from ‘Madrid 7 stars’, an initiative that engages 300 brands, commented that 80% of Chinese tourists who travel to Madrid position shopping as a major motivation.

Eva Ruiz Cendon, Director of Marketing at Mastercard indicated that “despite the fact that 80% of payments worldwide are done in cash, electronic and mobile payments offer excellent opportunities for businesses.” She also shared the company’s Priceless Cities Programme, that engages cities such as Madrid and New York. The initiative facilitates leisure activities in relevant destinations in cooperation with brands and shops.

One of the most awaited interventions of the 2nd Conference on Shopping Tourism was Michel Durrieu, Director of Tourism at the Ministry of Foreign affairs and International Development in France, who introduced the issue of sustainability linked to shopping tourism, mentioning a recent innovation: the digital certificate.

Speaking about the most visited city in the world, Paris, Durrieu added that shopping and gastronomy are major criteria to decide on destinations, and therefore should be included in any strategy. Diversity, price and quality, opening hours, customer orientation in shops, handicrafts and souvenirs quality were mentioned by the Director of Tourism in France, as key aspects to advance in shopping tourism.

Additional information:

UNWTO Global Report on Shopping Tourism

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Madrid, Spain, 22 January 2016

PR No. 16010

Investour consolidates role as catalyst of tourism development in Africa

Promoting sustainable development in Africa through the facilitation of networking and business opportunities in African tourism constitutes the main objective of the Tourism Investment and Business Forum for Africa, organized by the World Tourism Organization and Casa África at the FITUR International Tourism Fair. Some twenty African tourism ministers attended the seventh edition of this initiative, which was inaugurated by UNWTO Secretary-General Taleb Rifai, the Minister of Industry, Energy and Tourism of the Government of Spain, José Manuel Soria and the Director General of Casa África, Luis Padrón.

After seven editions with progressive increases in terms of both participants and projects, Investour has become one of the prime catalyst for the development of African tourism in Spain, and specifically at FITUR.

“The African continent offers a wealth of opportunities in many areas, but especially in the tourism sector. We feel very proud when we look back on this seventh edition of Investour and see the more than 1,000 projects that have been presented in recent years and how participation has multiplied, making this event an international point of reference,” said the Secretary-General of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), Taleb Rifai.

This seventh edition of the Tourism Investment and Business Forum for Africa, Investour, was attended by more than 400 professionals of the sector during its morning session, which was devoted to the discussion of current issues that are most relevant for the development of African tourism, such as investment, Africa’s image and air connectivity. The afternoon session focused on Business-to-Business (B2B) meetings between African and Spanish companies and destinations. More than 150 entrepreneurs participated in this session, which consists of one-to-one talks between companies seeking to explore shared interests. Exchanging experiences, formalizing contracts and incubating future investment projects are among the objectives of this forum.

Spain's Minister of Industry, Energy and Tourism, José Manuel Soria, was present at the inauguration of the Forum and stated that Investour makes available to the African countries the know-how of the sector in Spain and its companies with a view to helping them successfully carry out development projects in Africa.

"This event is a unique example of cooperation between entities of different natures, such as Casa África and the World Tourism Organization, which nevertheless share common interests: facilitating the exchange of experiences and promoting opportunities and investments in the African continent," said Luis Padrón, Director General of Casa África.

Investour was attended by representatives of the World Bank, private companies including Hyatt Hotels & Resorts, Bench Events and Amahoro Tours, airlines such as Ethiopian Airlines and organizations such as the Spanish Federation of Travel Agencies. The morning session also set the stage for the presentation of the forthcoming meeting of the UNWTO Commission for Africa, to be held in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, on 19-21 April.

At Investour, the African tourism ministers expressed their optimism regarding the growth potential of their countries. Africa's tourist arrivals are expected to grow by between 2% and 5% in 2016. According to estimates, the number of tourists travelling to Africa will reach 134 million in 2030 compared to the current 54 million tourists.

Useful links:

INVESTOUR 2016

UNWTO Regional Programme for Africa

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Madrid, Spain, 22 January 2016

PR No. 16009

UNWTO and neZEH partners present e-toolkit prototype to help hotels become Nearly Zero Energy

The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and its partners of the Nearly Zero Energy Hotels (NEZEH) initiative, have present the prototype of a new tool to engage the tourism sector in energy efficiency. The online tool was unveiled at the NEZEH International Conference held in the framework of FITUR Green (Madrid, 20 January 2016).

The neZEH toolkit is a practical instrument for hotel owners to assess their energy consumption levels and identify appropriate measures for

energy efficiency improvement and reaching nearly-zero levels. This tool will be available for users by mid-March, 2016.

The neZEH initiative aims to support the tourism sector in Europe to comply with European Union regulations for nearly zero buildings (nZEB) according to which all 28 EU countries will need to reach nZEB levels by 2020.

““As tourism is a force for good, we need to ensure the promotion and development of sustainable, resilient and responsible tourism, which requires vision, innovation, correct planning, good management, sound monitoring and the inclusion of all the relevant stakeholders, including consumers” said Mr. Márcio Favilla, UNWTO’s Executive Director for Operational Programmes and Institutional Relations at the opening of the Conference.

The project, co-financed by the European Union, builds upon the UNWTO Hotel Energy Solutions, which has since 2011 engaged 20,000 users worldwide and 1,500 hotels in Europe in better understanding how to become energy efficient and more competitive.

NEZEH is developed within the principles of the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns and particularly of the 10YFP Programme on Sustainable Tourism (10YFP STP), led by UNWTO together with the governments of Morocco, Republic of Korea and France, with the support of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

The initiative will provide technical expertise to the private sector while fostering tourism public policies in the areas of energy efficiency and help the tourism sector in its contribution to the newly adopted Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

About NEZEH

The nearly Zero Energy Hotels – neZEH - is a project co-funded by the European Commission in the frame of the Intelligent Energy Europe Programme, aiming to accelerate the rate of large scale renovations of hotels into nearly Zero Energy Buildings (nZEB) by providing technical advice to committed hoteliers and demonstrating flagship nZEB projects in the European hospitality sector.

The neZEH partnership is composed by 10 partners across seven European countries: Technical University of Crete, Renewable and Sustainable Energy Systems Lab (Greece) - the coordinator - World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and Network of European Region for a Sustainable and Competitive Tourism (NECSTouR), Sustainable Innovation (Sweden), Creara Consultores S.L. (Spain), Energy Institute Hrvoje Požar (Croatia), Istituto Superiore sui Sistemi Territoriali per l’Innovazione (Italy), Agency of Braşov for Energy Management and Environment Protection (Romania), Federation of European Heating and Air-conditioning Associations (Netherlands) and ENERGIES 2050 (France).

Useful links:

NEZEH Nearly Zero Energy Hotels

HES Hotel Energy Solutions

UNWTO Sustainable Development of Tourism Programme

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Madrid, Spain, 21 January 2016

PR No. 16008

Sustainable tourism initiatives recognized by the UNWTO Awards

The Itaipu Technological Park (Brazil), the Treetop Walking Path (Lithuania), the Sisterhood of Survivors Program (Nepal) and Re-Inventing the Government in Tourism (Indonesia) were the winners of the 12th UNWTO Awards for Excellence and Innovation in Tourism. The projects were selected among more than 100 candidatures from 30 countries (Madrid, Spain, 20 January 2016).

The Awards, recognizing innovation in four categories - Public Policy and Governance, Enterprises, NGOs and Research and Technology -, were announced last night at the UNWTO Awards Ceremony in the Spanish Tourism Fair (FITUR).

“The UNWTO Awards aim to honor those that everyday work for the benefit of host communities, supporting the livelihoods of local people and protecting our environment and our culture for future generations. All 16 finalists are an example to all of us of how the principles of the UNWTO Global Code of Ethics for Tourism and the objectives set in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) can inspire sustainable tourism” said UNWTO Secretary-General Taleb Rifai, opening the Ceremony.

The UNWTO Ulysses Awardees for Innovation, distinguished in the four categories, were:

UNWTO Award for Innovation in Public Policy and Governance

Winner:

Re-Inventing the Government in Tourism, Pemkab
Banyuwangi, Indonesia

First Runner-up:

East Africa Tourism Platform, Kenya

Second Runner-up:

Green Certifications Program, Puerto Rico Tourism Company, Puerto Rico

Responsible Tourism and Free of Crime in Medellín, Alcaldía de Medellín, Colombia

UNWTO Awards for Innovation in Enterprises

Winner:

Treetop Walking Path, Anykščiai Regional Park Direction, Lithuania

First Runner-up:

Bali Beach Clean-Up, Garuda Indonesia, Indonesia

World'S First 100% Electric Tour Bus, Switzerland Explorer Tours, Switzerland

Second Runner-up:

Plentiffulness Project, Projeto Fartura, Brazil

First Professional Experience Project, Meliá Hotels International, Spain

Innovation in Non-Governmental Organizations

(NGOs)

Winner:

Sisterhood of Survivors (SOS) Program, Samrakshak Samuha Nepal (Sasane), Nepal

First Runner-up:

Coral Reef Reborn, Yayasan Karang Lestari, Indonesia

Second Runner-up:

The Child safe Movement, Friends-International, Cambodia

Children in the Wilderness, South Africa

UNWTO Award for Innovation in Research and Technology

Winner:

Itaipu Touristic Complex, Fundação Parque Tecnológico, Brazil

First Runner-up:

Mobile Application Bike Rijeka, Rijeka Tourist Board, Croatia

Korea Medical Tourism Online Platform, Korea Tourism Organization, Republic of Korea

On the occasion UNWTO has also conferred the UNWTO Award for Lifetime Achievement to the late Arthur Haulot, founder of the International Social Tourism Organization for his contribution in promoting social tourism and the right to tourism for all and the UNWTO Ulysses Prize for Excellence in the Creation and Dissemination of Knowledge in Tourism to Dr. Richard Butler, author of one of the most influential theories about tourism – the Tourism Area Life Cycle (TALC).

The 12 UNWTO Awards Ceremony and Gala Dinner was organized by UNWTO and FITUR with the support of the Government of Macao (China), Tourism Board of Galicia (Spain), PortAventura, Amadeus, Hilton Worldwide, Etihad Airways, MAPFRE Asistencia, and the Government of Paraguay, as well as the news agency EFE and the trade media HOSTELTUR (Spain) as media partners.

The UNWTO Awards for Excellence and Innovation in Tourism are the

flagship awards for the global tourism sector, recognizing knowledge creation, dissemination and innovative solutions. The annual Awards Ceremony takes place at the International Tourism Trade Fair (FITUR) in Madrid, Spain.

Useful links:

UNWTO Awards for Excellence and Innovation in Tourism

UNWTO Awards Forum

UNWTO activities at Fitur 2016

12th UNWTO Awards Ceremony (Gala pictures)

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Madrid, Spain, 18 January 2016

PR No. 16008

International tourist arrivals up 4% reach a record 1.2 billion in 2015

International tourist arrivals grew by 4.4% in 2015 to reach a total of 1,184 million in 2015, according to the latest UNWTO World Tourism Barometer. Some 50 million more tourists (overnight visitors) travelled to international destinations around the world last year as compared to 2014.

2015 marks the 6th consecutive year of above-average growth, with international arrivals increasing by 4% or more every year since the post-crisis year of 2010.

“International tourism reached new heights in 2015. The robust performance of the sector is contributing to economic growth and job creation in many parts of the world. It is thus critical for countries to promote policies that foster the continued growth of tourism, including travel facilitation, human resources development and sustainability” said UNWTO Secretary-General, Taleb Rifai.

Demand was strong overall, though with mixed results across individual destinations due to unusually strong exchange rate fluctuations, the drop in oil prices and other commodities which increased disposable income in importing countries but weakened demand in exporters, as well as increased safety and security concerns.

“2015 results were influenced by exchange rates, oil prices and natural and manmade crises in many parts of the world. As the current environment highlights in a particular manner the issues of safety and

security, we should recall that tourism development greatly depends upon our collective capacity to promote safe, secure and seamless travel. In this respect, UNWTO urges governments to include tourism administrations in their national security planning, structures and procedures, not only to ensure that the sector's exposure to threats is minimised but also to maximise the sector's ability to support security and facilitation, as seamless and safe travel can and should go hand in hand", added Mr Rifai.

Growth in advanced economy destinations (+5%) exceeded that of emerging economies (+4%), boosted by the solid results of Europe (+5%).

By region, Europe, the Americas and Asia and the Pacific all recorded around 5% growth in 2015. Arrivals to the Middle East increased by 3% while in Africa, limited data available, points to an estimated 3% decrease, mostly due to weak results in North Africa, which accounts for over one third of arrivals in the region.

Positive prospects for 2016

Results from the UNWTO Confidence Index remain largely positive for 2016, though at a slightly lower level as compared to the previous two years. Based on the current trend and this outlook, UNWTO projects international tourist arrivals to grow by 4% worldwide in 2016.

By region, growth is expected to be stronger in Asia and the Pacific (+4% to +5%) and the Americas (+4% to +5%), followed by Europe (+3.5% to +4.5%). The projections for Africa (+2% to 5%) and the Middle East (+2% to +5%) are positive, though with a larger degree of uncertainty and volatility.

2015 Regional Results

Europe (+5%) led growth in absolute and relative terms supported by a weaker euro vis-à-vis the US dollar and other main currencies. Arrivals reached 609 million, or 29 million more than in 2014. Central and Eastern Europe (+6%) rebounded from last year's decrease in arrivals. Northern Europe (+6%), Southern Mediterranean Europe (+5%) and Western Europe (+4%) also recorded sound results, especially considering the many mature destinations they comprise.

Asia and the Pacific (+5%) recorded 13 million more international tourist arrivals last year to reach 277 million, with uneven results across destinations. Oceania (+7%) and South-East Asia (+5%) led growth, while South Asia and in North-East Asia recorded an increase of 4%.

International tourist arrivals in the Americas (+5%) grew 9 million to reach 191 million, consolidating the strong results of 2014. The appreciation of the US dollar stimulated outbound travel from the United States, benefiting the Caribbean and Central America, both recording 7% growth. Results in South America and North America (both at +4%) were close to the average.

International tourist arrivals in the Middle East grew by an estimated 3% to a total of 54 million, consolidating the recovery initiated in 2014.

Limited available data for Africa points to a 3% decrease in international

arrivals, reaching a total of 53 million. In North Africa arrivals declined by 8% and in Sub-Saharan Africa by 1%, though the latter returned to positive growth in the second half of the year. (Results for both Africa and Middle East should be read with caution as it is based on limited available data)

China, the USA and the UK lead outbound travel growth in 2015

A few leading source markets have driven tourism expenditure in 2015 supported by a strong currency and economy.

Among the world's top source markets, China, with double-digit growth in expenditure every year since 2004, continues to lead global outbound travel, benefitting Asian destinations such as Japan and Thailand, as well as the United States and various European destinations.

By contrast, expenditure from the previously very dynamic source markets of the Russian Federation and Brazil declined significantly, reflecting the economic constraints in both countries and the depreciation of the rouble and the real against virtually all other currencies.

As for the traditional advanced economy source markets, expenditure from the United States (+9%), the world's second largest source market, and the United Kingdom (+6%) was boosted by a strong currency and rebounding economy. Spending from Germany, Italy and Australia grew at a slower rate (all at +2%), while demand from Canada and France was rather weak.

Useful links:

International Tourist Arrivals 2015 infographics

UNWTO World Tourism Barometer

UNWTO Tourism Highlights, 2015 Edition

Tourism Towards 2030

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Madrid, Spain, 14 January 2016

PR No. 16004

Visa Openness levels continue to progress

The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) has been long advocating for the need to advance travel facilitation as a means to promote tourism development and multiply its socio-economic benefits. According to UNWTO's latest Visa Openness Report, the share of tourists requiring to obtain a visa prior to travelling continues to decline and is at its lowest

level ever. In 2015, 39% of the world population could travel for tourism without obtaining a traditional visa prior to departure as compared to only 23% in 2008.

On average, 18% of the world's population was able to travel to a destination without a visa in 2015, while another 15% could receive a visa on arrival and 6% was able to obtain eVisas.

Overall, emerging economies continue to be more open than advanced economies. At the regional level, South-East Asia, East Africa, the Caribbean and Oceania remain the most open areas while Central Africa, North Africa and North America were in 2015 the most restrictive subregions.

"Prioritizing travel facilitation is central to stimulating economic growth and job creation through tourism. We are pleased to see that a growing number of governments around the world think likewise" said UNWTO Secretary-General, Taleb Rifai.

"The current security challenges should not deter us from advancing visa facilitation. On the contrary, enhancing security and facilitating tourism travel should always go hand in hand. In fact, at a moment when safety and security are top of the agenda for all of us, we need to work closer together to promote a safe, secure and seamless travel environment by using the possibilities offered by technology and international cooperation in data sharing" he added.

Although much has been done, several areas of opportunity remain for destinations worldwide to promote a safer and more seamless travel experience. UNWTO recommends destinations to focus in particular in a stronger segmentation of travellers, in improving visa application processes and entry procedures, in making use of regional integration opportunities, and last but not least, on providing precise and accessible information for tourists.

Countries are further encouraged not to depend on reciprocal improvements, but rather revise their unilateral measures, a tendency which is proving to be stronger than ever.

The positive evolution registered in recent years is the clear result of determined actions taken by governments who have seen the positive impact of visa facilitation in terms of economic growth and job creation through tourism.

Research by UNWTO and the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) on the impact of visa facilitation on the G20 economies, as well as on the economies of Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), clearly shows that visa facilitation can boost demand, grow exports and create additional jobs.

Note to Editors:

Data on visa policies is collected by UNWTO on an annual basis since 2008 and validated through surveys and communication with the Organization's Member States.

Useful links:

Visa Openness Report 2015
UNWTO Facilitation of Tourist Travel

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Madrid, Spain, 12 January 2016
PR No. 16003

UNWTO strongly condemns attack in Istanbul

UNWTO is deeply shocked by the tragic attack perpetrated in Istanbul, Turkey. On the behalf of the entire international tourism community, UNWTO expresses its heartfelt condolences to the families and friends of the victims and to the Turkish people in this difficult moment.

“On the behalf of the entire international tourism community, UNWTO conveys its heartfelt condolences to the families and friends of the victims and expresses its full solidarity with the people and the Government of Turkey” said UNWTO Secretary-General, Taleb Rifai.

“This tragic event reminds us once more that we are facing a global threat that requires a firm and coordinated response by all governments and the international community. Turkey is a leading tourism destination and we are confident it will continue to be so” he added.

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Madrid, Spain, 12 January 2016
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Madrid, Spain, 7 January 2016

PR No. 16001

INVESTOUR 2016 brings new opportunities to do business in Africa to FITUR

The 7th edition of the Investment and Tourism Business Forum for Africa (INVESTOUR), to be held on 21 January 2016, will bring new business and investment projects from Africa to the Spanish Tourism Fair, FITUR. Organized by the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), Casa Africa and FITUR, INVESTOUR is a platform to promote tourism development in Africa, one of the fastest growing tourism regions in the world.

The event is structured around two sessions: a morning session dedicated to debating the challenges of investing in Africa and the trends shaping tourism in the region and an afternoon business-to-business (B2B) session. This year’s edition of INVESTOUR will focus on financing and investing in tourism-related projects, technological developments in the hospitality sector, eco-tourism in national parks and protected areas, the promotion of tourism destinations and cultural tourism.

“Tourism has demonstrated an ability to be an engine for sustainable development and growth in Africa. INVESTOUR is a unique platform to discuss and create synergies within the private sector to invest and explore new business opportunities in Africa and take full advantage of the recent expansion of the sector in the region” said UNWTO Secretary-General, Taleb Rifai.

“The opportunities that the African continent offers are immense. By facilitating business interactions and channeling investment interests, INVESTOUR provides a necessary mechanism to maximize these opportunities while being an excellent example of cooperation between the private and public sectors,” said the Executive Director of Casa Africa, Luis Padrón.

Since its first edition in 2009, INVESTOUR has brought together over 1,200 participants from 32 African countries and more than 800 projects. The 2015 edition of INVESTOUR counted with over 300 participants, including 15 African Ministers of Tourism, a total of 146 projects and over 40 B2B meetings.

Additional information:

Watch the video of INVESTOUR 2015

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Madrid, Spain, 5 January 2016
PR No. 16002

UNWTO recognizes Arthur Haulot with Lifetime Achievement Award

Conferred to recognize individuals with visionary leadership and significant contribution to the tourism sector, the UNWTO Lifetime Achievement Award has been bestowed on the deceased Arthur Haulot, founder of the International Social Tourism Organization (ISTO/OITS), for his pioneer work in promoting social tourism and the right to tourism for all.

Born in Belgium in 1913, Arthur Haulot founded the International Social Tourism Organization (ISTO/OITS) in Belgium in 1963. The Organization regrouped 170 active organizations in 35 countries in the Americas, Europe and Africa. The ISTO/OITS is currently an international non-profit organization whose mission is to promote access to leisure, holidays and tourism for all.

Mr Haulot was also President of the International Union of Official Travel Organisations (IUOTO), precursor of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO).

Mr Haulot was instrumental in the foundation of the European Travel Commission (1946), the first Regional Commission within IUOTO, where he became chairman and played a key role in the granting of United Nations (UN) consultative status to IUOTO in 1948 and the designation by the UN of 1967 as the International Year of Tourism. In 1973, he founded the International Bureau of Social Tourism and became its Secretary General until 1988.

Honorary doctorate from the Free University of Brussels, Mr Haulot was a writer, a poet and the founder of the Biennale de Poésie de Liege.

Arthur Haulot was also the director of 'Journal of Poets' and the president of the International House of Poetry. He was a member of the Socialist Party, established the basis of the National Youth Council and a respected Minister of Tourism, and one of the pioneers for ensuring the rights to tourism for all, social tourism.

Mr Haulot dedicated his life to tourism – in 1938 he was appointed as inspector at the National Holiday Office workers and later in 1939 as Commissioner General for Tourism (equivalent to Minister of Tourism in Belgium), a post he held for thirty-three years.

Mr Haulot passed away on May 25, 2005. The Award will be presented to his family during the UNWTO Awards Ceremony on 20th January 2016 in the framework of the Spanish Tourism Fair FITUR.

Additional information:

Know more about the UNWTO Awards

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Madrid, Spain, 22 December 2015

PR No. 15099

Innovative projects from Africa, Latin America, Asia and Europe amongst the finalists of the 12th UNWTO Awards

A total of 17 projects from Africa, Latin America, Asia and Europe have been selected, from a total of 109 candidacies, as finalists of the 12th UNWTO Awards on Excellence and Innovation in Tourism. The winners in the four categories - public policy and governance, research and technology, enterprises and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) - will be announced on 20 January 2016 at the UNWTO Awards Ceremony and Gala Dinner at FITUR in Madrid, Spain.

A public sector initiative to fight the sexual exploitation of children in the tourism sector in Medellin (Colombia); a project by the government of Banyuwangi in Indonesia promoting ICT in tourism; the East Africa Tourism Platform and its multi-destination knowledge management tool; and the Green Certification Programme of Puerto Rico, are the nominees in the category of Public Policy and Governance.

In the category of Enterprises, nominees include the Garuda Indonesia airline and its 'Bali beach clean-up' initiative which emphasizes the role of communities in preserving coastal areas; Switzerland Explorer Tours, with a 100% electric bus tour and sustainable tour experiences; Meliá

Hotels International (Spain) recognized for promoting employment opportunities for young people at risk of exclusion; the Treetop Walking Path in the Anykščiai Regional Park in Lithuania; and the 'Projeto Fartura' of Brazil and its Plentifulness Project linking gastronomy, research and travel in 145 Brazilian cities.

The work done in the areas of child protection and gender equality has been recognized by the jury in the projects selected in the category of NGOs. These include projects by Friends International from Cambodia, Children in the Wilderness from South Africa and Sisterhood of Survivors from Nepal. The list of finalists in the category of NGOs is completed with an initiative to protect ecosystems in Indonesia – the Coral Reef Reborn Project.

Finally, in the category of Research and Technology, the jury nominated the Itaipu Complex, a project promoting tourism-based territorial development in Brazil, the Bike Rijeka, a mobile application from Croatia; and the Korea Medical Tourism Online Platform from the Republic of Korea.

Finalists will present their projects and share their expertise during the UNWTO Awards Forum to be held on 18 January 2016 at Palacio Neptuno, Madrid. The Forum is also an opportunity to share and learn about the most innovative tourism trends with speakers from Hilton Worldwide, Facebook and Airbnb, among others.

The 12th edition of the UNWTO Awards on Excellence and Innovation are held in collaboration with Madrid International Tourism Trade Fair (FITUR/IFEMA) and with the support of the Macao Government Tourist Office (Macao, China), Port Aventura, the Galicia Tourism Board (Spain), Hilton Worldwide, Etihad Airways, Mapfre Asistencia, Amadeus and the Paraguay Tourism Board.

Additional information:

List of 12th UNWTO Awards Finalists

Know more about the UNWTO Awards

Register in the UNWTO Awards Forum and in the UNWTO Awards Ceremony and Gala Dinner

Note for Editors

The UNWTO Awards are the flagship awards for the global tourism sector. They recognize knowledge creation, dissemination and innovation in tourism and its contribution to sustainability and responsibility in the sector in line with the UNWTO Code of Ethics for Tourism and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

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Madrid, Spain, 11 December 2015
PR No. 15095

UNWTO and Mountain Tourism Cluster to partner on addressing seasonality

UNWTO and the Mountain Tourism Cluster have signed an agreement to collaborate on issues of seasonality in mountain destinations (Madrid, Spain, 4 December, 2015).

The agreement comes at a particularly relevant moment, as the international community celebrates International Mountain Day on 11 December. This year's celebrations focus on the promotion of mountain products as a tool to boost local economies. Tourism can play a fundamental role in this regard as one of the main economic sectors in many mountain destinations.

Seasonality is a common issue for a large number of tourism destinations worldwide, resulting in important economic challenges in terms of the profitability of companies and wealth generation in destinations. Seasonality also has considerable environmental and socio-cultural impacts including congestion management, use of natural resources, seasonable employment and social pressure.

A new UNWTO Affiliate Member, the Mountain Tourism Cluster works to find innovative and creative ways of overcoming seasonality and create sustainable development-related strategies in mountain destinations.

"Given the impact and complexity of seasonality in tourism, it is fundamental to ensure that innovative programmes are put in place by public and private sectors that increase visitation during off peak months and foster demand all year around. We are thus very pleased to be collaborating with the Mountain Tourism Cluster on research and actions aimed at this important challenge," said UNWTO Secretary-General, Taleb Rifai.

The agreement is another important step in UNWTO's work in the area of mountain tourism. Within this framework, UNWTO and the Government of the Principality of Andorra have co-organized the World Congress on Snow and Mountain Tourism since 1998. In March 2016, the 9th edition of this bi-annual event will explore the way in which sport and adventure activities can help mountain destinations maximize the socio-economic benefits brought by tourism all year round.

Additional information:

Know more about the World Congress on Snow and Mountain Tourism
3rd UNWTO Conference for Overcoming Seasonality
Mountain Tourism Cluster
International Mountain Day

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Madrid, Spain, 7 December 2015

PR No. 15094

United Nations declares 2017 as the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development

The United Nations (UN) General Assembly has approved the adoption of 2017 as the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development. The resolution, adopted on 4 December, recognizes “the importance of international tourism, and particularly of the designation of an international year of sustainable tourism for development, in fostering better understanding among peoples everywhere, in leading to a greater awareness of the rich heritage of various civilizations and in bringing about a better appreciation of the inherent values of different cultures, thereby contributing to the strengthening of peace in the world”.

“The declaration by the UN of 2017 as the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development is a unique opportunity to advance the contribution of the tourism sector to the three pillars of sustainability – economic, social and environmental, while raising awareness of the true dimensions of a sector which is often undervalued” said UNWTO Secretary-General, Taleb Rifai. “As the lead UN agency for this initiative, UNWTO is very much looking forward to proceeding with the organization and implementation of the International Year, in collaboration with Governments, relevant organizations of the UN system, other international and regional organizations and all other relevant stakeholders”, he added.

This decision follows the recognition by global leaders at the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) that “well-designed and well-managed tourism” can contribute to the three dimensions of sustainable development, to job creation and to trade.

The decision to adopt 2017 as the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development comes at a particularly important moment as the international community embraces the new Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), approved by the UN General Assembly last September. Tourism is included as targets under three of the SDGs - SDG 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all; SDG 12: Sustainable Consumption and Production and SDG 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.

Useful links:

Read the adopted resolution

Tourism and the SDGs

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Madrid, Spain, 7 December 2015

PR No. 15093

UNWTO Secretary-General addresses the Committee on Transport and Tourism of the European Parliament

With the aim of enhancing the links between tourism, economic growth and inclusive development in Europe, UNWTO Secretary-General, Taleb Rifai, addressed the Committee on Transport and Tourism of the European Parliament (Brussels, Belgium, 3 December 2015).

During his visit to the European Parliament, Mr. Rifai emphasized that the European Union (EU) has an opportunity to capitalize on the potential that tourism has to promote socio-economic growth, recalling that despite economic and geopolitical challenges, international tourism continues to grow above average for the fifth consecutive year, reaching over 1.1 billion international tourists in 2014.

“I believe that we have many reasons to be optimistic about the future of the tourism sector in Europe, the most visited region in the world, and its capacity to deliver economic growth and development,” he said.

István Ujhelyi, Vice-Chair of the Transport and Tourism Committee and responsible for the Tourism Task Force, recalled that tourism is one of the key socio-economic policy areas in Europe in view of its capacity to create sustainable jobs, one of the main objectives of both the Member States and the EU institutions. “We need more concrete policy actions and projects where tourism is visible, as the industry of peace these days,” he added.

During his address, Mr. Rifai called upon the EU to take the lead in three key areas in terms of tourism development – the fight against climate change through sustainability-related initiatives, entrepreneurship and business competitiveness and travel facilitation in view of its proven impact on economic growth.

“Europe is already well advanced in supporting energy efficiency and the use of renewable technologies and UNWTO is very happy to have contributed to these efforts with the Hotel Energy Solutions project, which supports SMEs in reducing carbon emissions, and the ongoing Nearly Zero Energy Hotels project” said UNWTO Secretary-General.

The issue of travel facilitation was also addressed by Mr. Rifai, who said that “security should and is a priority to us all; yet despite current challenges, Europe can and should continue to lead the way in travel facilitation, particularly from the growing markets of China, Brazil and many others in Asia, Latin America and Eastern Europe. It makes no sense to invest millions in promoting Europe as a number one destination to the world, if then Europe’s doors to the world are closed.”

On the occasion of his visit, Mr Rifai also met Ms Elżbieta Bienkowska, European Commissioner for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs and Mr. David-Maria Sassoli, Vice-President of the European Parliament, to discuss the cooperation between UNWTO and the EU institutions.

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