



2017
INTERNATIONAL YEAR
OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM
FOR DEVELOPMENT



UNWTO

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World Tourism Day: information on the activities of 2016-2017, adoption of themes and designation of the host countries for 2018-2019

I. World Tourism Day: 2016 celebrations and preparations for 2017

1. The 21st session of the General Assembly designated Thailand and Qatar as World Tourism Day (WTD) host countries for 2016 and 2017 and adopted the following themes for the official celebrations:

- World Tourism Day 2016: Tourism for All – Promoting Universal Accessibility
- World Tourism Day 2017: Sustainable Tourism – a Tool for Development, in line with the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development 2017 (IY2017).

A. World Tourism Day 2016

2. Organized by UNWTO and the Government of **Thailand**, the official **WTD 2016** celebrations took place in the city of Bangkok. The event counted with the presence of H.E. the Prime Minister of Thailand, General Prayut Chan-o-cha, tourism ministers, the private sector and representatives from civil society and media from around the world.

3. The [World Tourism Day 2016 “Tourism for All: Promoting Universal Accessibility” Declaration](#) calls upon all stakeholders:

- To ensure that the right to enjoy tourism by all becomes a reality and that the commitment of governments and companies to improve access for all is sustained by concrete actions;
- To engage in awareness-raising and training so as to reduce both physical and attitudinal barriers within the sector and to be able to embrace the undoubted competitive advantages of investing in Tourism for All;
- To implement the principles of Universal Design/Design for All when developing new tourism infrastructure, products and services and improving the existing ones;
- To promote the provision of objective and accurate information on the accessibility of all products and services, and in accessible formats, with the aim to enable travellers to accurately



assess whether their own needs will be met during the whole travel process;

- To mainstream accessibility in tourism policy and throughout the tourism supply chain with the aim to ensure that there are no broken links and that everyone can fully enjoy a seamless tourism experience; and
- To encourage multi-stakeholder cooperation at all levels that enables development of consistent and up-to-date policies and business practices in the sphere of accessible tourism.

4. The 2016 WTD campaign included a dedicated [WTD website](#) to share celebrations from around the world, a social media campaign and the publication of:

- [Tourism for All - promoting universal accessibility - Good Practices in the Accessible Tourism Supply Chain](#) in collaboration with the European Network for Accessible Tourism (ENAT) and the Spanish ONCE Foundation for the Social Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities, as well as
- [Manual on Accessible Tourism for All: Principles, Tools and Best Practices Module I: Accessible Tourism – Definition and Context](#), co-produced with the Spanish ONCE Foundation for social inclusion of people with disabilities and the European Network for Accessible Tourism (ENAT) and published in English with the support of the Korea Tourism Organization (KTO)

5. The celebrations were echoed in many destinations around the world and constituted a unique opportunity to promote value of accessible tourism as well as the work being developed in this area by UNWTO including the [UNWTO Recommendations on Accessible Information in Tourism \(2016\)](#) and the [UNWTO Recommendations on Accessible Tourism for All \(2013\)](#).

B. World Tourism Day 2017

6. Preparations for the official celebrations of **World Tourism Day 2017** in the **Qatar** are well underway. Celebrations will include a High Level Think Tank and Conference Sessions covering the five pillars of IY2017: i) Sustainable economic growth, ii) Social Inclusiveness, employment and poverty reduction, iii) Resource efficiency, environmental protection and climate change, iv) Cultural values, diversity and heritage and v) Mutual understanding, peace and security.

7. Members are encouraged to join the events in Qatar and celebrate WTD 2017 under the theme 'Sustainable Tourism – a Tool for Development' widely in their countries, taking this opportunity to highlight the contribution of the tourism sector to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

8. A dedicated WTD website and communication campaign is to be launched at the end of July. Members are encouraged to use the WTD materials and promote their events at the WTD official website.

II. WTD themes and host countries for 2018 and 2019

9. **WTD Themes:** The General Assembly at its 15th session decided that UNWTO, as a United Nations specialized agency, should in the future take into account, as far as possible, when choosing the World Tourism Day themes, those adopted for the international years and days declared by the UN.

10. Considering that UN theme for 2018 is not yet made public and that theme for 2019 (International Year of Indigenous Languages) is not so relevant in the context of World Tourism Day, the following

themes were approved by the 105th Executive Council to be proposed to the General Assembly (CE/DEC/4(CV)):

- **World Tourism Day 2018: Tourism and the digital transformation**
- **World Tourism Day 2019: Tourism and Jobs: a better future for all**

11. **WTD host countries:** By resolution 470(XV), the General Assembly designated Malaysia and Qatar as host countries of World Tourism Day in 2004 and 2005. By the same resolution, the General Assembly endorsed the proposal of the Executive Council and decided that the following geographic order would apply to World Tourism Day celebrations beginning in 2006: Europe; South Asia; Americas; Africa, East Asia and the Pacific and Middle East.

12. In this regard, the Executive Council, upon recommendation of the Regional Commission for Europe and the Joint Regional Commission for East Asia and the Pacific and South Asia, respectively, was requested to approve the following host countries for the official celebrations of WTD 2018 and 2019 to propose to the 22nd session of the General Assembly:

- **World Tourism Day 2018: Hungary**
- **World Tourism Day 2019: India**

III. Actions to be taken by the General Assembly

13. The General Assembly is invited:

- (a) To take note of the report submitted by the Secretary-General on the observance of World Tourism Day in 2016 and the preparations in place for the celebrations of World Tourism Day 2017;
- (b) To encourage Members States to celebrate World Tourism Day 2017 and promote the role of tourism in contributing to the three pillars of sustainability—economic, social and environmental—and the achievement of the SDGs;
- (c) To express its gratitude to the Governments of Thailand and Qatar for hosting the official celebrations of World Tourism Day 2016 and 2017;
- (d) To approve the themes for the celebrations of World Tourism Day 2018 and 2019 as follows:
 - 2018: Tourism and the digital transformation
 - 2019: Tourism and Jobs: a better future for all; and
- (e) To designate Hungary and India to host the official celebrations of World Tourism Day in 2018 and 2019, respectively.