

**FOR DECISION**

Agenda item 4(b)  
**Report on the UNWTO Academy**

CE/110/4(b)  
Madrid, 21 May 2019  
Original: English

### Executive summary

Tourism is a people-based sector that depends not only on professional skills but also interpersonal skills of the workforce for the delivery of the increasingly diverse travel experiences expected by the travellers. Meeting new demands will require concerted efforts from all stakeholders, public, private and academia members and this is where UNWTO is reinforcing its role to ensure these synergies.

UNWTO is reinforcing its leading role in bringing together the different stakeholders by naming this year 2019 the UNWTO Year of Education, Skills and Jobs and focusing its initiatives around this theme, rebranding the UNWTO Academy, building better tourism education and training options worldwide through courses, creating international centres and a Tourism Online Academy as well as fostering job creation through the development of frameworks and policies and through talent development initiatives that will strengthen the links between the private sector and academia and the talent coming out of institutions.

The Tourism Online Academy will be created as a part of the digital transformation strategy in order to give added-value services to Member States enabling them to train, and thus promote, their human capital with different types of skills needed in the tourism sector.

### Action by the Executive Council

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#### DRAFT DECISION<sup>1</sup>

*The Executive Council,*

*Having examined* the report on the Programme of Work of the UNWTO Academy,

1. *Takes note* of the activities implemented and the progress made;
2. *Encourages* the participation of the Member States in the existing education and training initiatives presented by the UNWTO Academy as well as their proactive involvement in new initiatives;
3. *Supports* the reinforcement of tourism education and training offerings through the creation of the international centres in association with the UNWTO Academy, a tourism syllabus for younger ages, and the organization of talent development initiatives such as the World Students League and the Talent Development Platform; and

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<sup>1</sup> This is a draft decision. For the final decision adopted by the Council, please refer to the Decisions document issued at the end of the session.

4. *Welcomes* the creation of an online tourism academy and requests the Secretary-General to further report on its development to the Executive Council.

## 1. Tourism Education, Skills and Jobs – a key objective towards the 2030 Agenda

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1. The main action lines of the 2018-2019 Programme of Work approved by UNWTO Members at the 22nd General Assembly fully converge with the scope of the 2030 Agenda in placing tourism at the forefront of development.
2. It has become critical to position tourism as a policy priority a) by strengthening policies and governance structures to ensure a resilient and well-defined framework for sustainable tourism development strategies and b) by building better policies and institutions.
3. Tourism can be a powerful vehicle to promote and reach the milestones of the ambitious 2030 agenda, given that it is one of the major sectors in the global economy, namely in international trade, and a major job and wealth creator for developed and developing countries, at different skills levels, for often marginalized sectors of society such as young people and women, and in areas where other opportunities are scarce.
4. For these reasons, tourism is well acknowledged as a valuable tool in alleviating poverty, as employment within the sector can provide income and experience and therefore contribute to social inclusion and individual development. It also contributes in a major way to the long-term sustainability and competitiveness of destinations, where local people are employed and trained and income flows directly to the local economy.
5. When planning the development of tourism's human capital base, it is important also to note that the human capital needs of the tourism sector today are not the same as the human capital needs that will exist in 2030. We will see the emergence of new types of tourism businesses, products, services and professions, requiring different competencies, knowledge and personality attributes.

## 2. Programmatic priorities

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6. The five priorities set in the Management Vision (document CE/108/5(b) rev.1) are as follows:
  - Priority 1: Make tourism smarter: innovation and the digital transformation
  - Priority 2: Grow our competitive edge: investments and entrepreneurship
  - Priority 3: Create more and better jobs: education and employment
  - Priority 4: Build resilience and facilitate travel: safe, secure and seamless travel
  - Priority 5: Protect our heritage: social, cultural and environmental sustainability
7. The present document focuses on Priority 3: Create more and better jobs: education and employment.

### UNWTO Year of Education, Skills and Jobs

8. The increase in tourism figures creates a unique setting for stakeholders to sit around the same table to work and advance together towards bigger benefits for people and communities.
9. We need to invest and create quality job opportunities in tourism to meet current and future market demands. This will enhance the competitiveness and sustainability of tourism destinations.
10. In this framework, the UNWTO Secretary-General has declared 2019 as the UNWTO Year of Education, Skills and Jobs. The year will translate into, and benefit from, many activities presented below.

## UNWTO Academy

### A. UNWTO Academy (face-to-face)

11. As one of the pillars under this priority, UNWTO has created the UNWTO Academy, replacing the UNWTO.Themis Foundation created 20 years ago. The activities of the UNWTO Education and Training Department include the creation of international centres and an online education and training platform to improve skills, education and specialized training programmes.
12. Over this last year, the UNWTO Academy has been very active, offering training sessions and courses on different issues (see Annex I): sustainable destination management, governance for local development, designing a promotional strategy, tourism and circular economy, digital transformation, etc.

### B. Tourism Online Academy (digital)

13. The aim of the Tourism Online Academy is to provide an online platform with easy access to high-quality education and training in the Travel and Tourism sector, Hospitality industry and Destination Management fields.
14. Our goal is to become the reference for online first class and comprehensive training in the tourism industry, highly valued on the job market and in the business world and accessible to anyone geographically.
15. During the first phase, UNWTO will join forces with the IE University (Madrid), in order to use its existing experience in the education offer. As the United Nations agency in charge of the promotion of responsible, sustainable and universally accessible tourism, UNWTO generates market knowledge, promotes competitive and sustainable tourism policies and instruments, fosters tourism education and training, and works to make tourism an effective tool for development.
16. Tourism education and training institutions play a vital role in leading the tourism industry towards competitiveness and sustainability by providing qualified and motivated tourism human resources, able to meet the tourism labour market needs.
17. Therefore, in a second phase, the platform would be open to top universities in order to foster education via a digital global platform. The partnership with the IE and any benefits generated from the online platform will strictly follow the UN Guidelines for the cooperation with the business sector.

## Tourism education

18. Strengthening Members' capacity in tourism education is one of the areas of work of the UNWTO Academy that continues to offer courses that are co-created with leading UNWTO Members (from both the private sector and academia).
  - (a) Onsite courses tailor-made to the needs of the Member States.
  - (b) Specific tourism and travel education and training courses in the International Centres – UNWTO global training hubs – that will enable UNWTO to have a permanent offer in education and training worldwide. The first International Centres will be operational in 2019 (Portugal and Georgia) and further conversations have started with Member States for the creation of others (Saudi Arabia, Costa Rica and Uzbekistan).
  - (c) Tourism Education and Training for younger age groups. UNWTO Academy has started work on the creation of a tourism syllabus to be included in the curricular content for younger age groups (high-school level).

19. Fostering Members sustainability and competitiveness through the two UNWTO quality seals – UNWTO.TedQual and UNWTO.Quest programmes – is a priority for the UNWTO Academy.

### Job creation

20. UNWTO also provides support to Members in the development of frameworks and policies that enable job creation. Working groups were created with the participation of all industry stakeholders from the public and private sector (leading companies and academia) to establish the current needs of the industry and write up, jointly with the UNWTO operational departments, policy papers and content for specialized education and training courses to be delivered by the UNWTO Academy. In addition, a series of training initiatives from UNWTO Affiliate Members is being launched in 2019 for Member States (Google, ICCA, Amadeus, etc.)
21. In line with this, UNWTO is advancing research on the impact of tourism on jobs and the future of work in the sector. As requested at the 8th Meeting of the G20 Ministers of Tourism held in Argentina in 2018, a report on the subject will be presented by UNWTO at the 9th Meeting to be held in Japan, in October 2019.
22. The General Debate at the UNWTO General Assembly will focus on Education and Job Creation: How to contribute to SDG4 and SDG8, where tourism ministers and heads of delegation are invited to discuss how the tourism sector can benefit from and contribute to the achievement of the universal 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the national and global levels.

### Talent development and image of employment in tourism

23. The work of the Organization can be illustrated by a regional seminar that took place in the Middle East (Egypt) and that discussed policies and strategies to address key issues in the region such as a) the creation of quality jobs and closing the decent work deficit, b) skills development, c) the stimulation of youth employment and women participation in the tourism labour market and d) supporting tourism MSMEs for economic growth and job creation.
24. Digitalization in tourism was also discussed at the High Level Dialogue on Digital Skills in Tourism organized within the framework of ITB 2019 in Berlin.
25. With the main aim of encouraging stronger ties among Members belonging to the public and private sectors as well as academia, and to reinforce the image of decent jobs in tourism, the UNWTO Academy has also carried out several national Tourism Education Quality Seminars in which participants have learnt more about the quality standards of the UNWTO.TedQual Certification programme for tourism education and training programmes and have learnt about others' experience in this field. This line of knowledge dissemination and promotion is continuing in 2019 with seminars in other Member States (Japan, etc.).
26. In addition, UNWTO is actively working on talent development initiatives such as:
  - (a) the World Tourism Students League, where teams of students will compete to come up with the best innovative and proactive ideas for the challenges our sector is facing. The first National League will be launched in September 2019 and a Global League for January 2020
  - (b) a Talent Development Platform where talent will be matched with the needs of UNWTO Affiliate Members.

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**Annex I: List of initiatives organized or co-organized by the UNWTO Academy****January - December 2018**

<b>February</b>			
	5 Feb –19 Mar	UNWTO/GWU University Online Course on “Tourism as a Path to International Cooperation & Sustainable Development”	Online (with GW University)
<b>March</b>			
	20	UNWTO.TedQual Networking Meeting	Principality of Andorra
<b>April</b>			
		Inscription of Agencia Córdoba Turismo to UNWTO.Quest Certification Programme	
<b>May</b>			
	1-3	UNWTO-UAE Executive Training Workshop on “Innovative Approaches to Destination Branding”	Dubai, United Arab Emirates
	5	UNWTO.TedQual Seminar	Cairo, Egypt
	8-9	44th Meeting of the UNWTO Commission for the Middle East UNWTO Regional Conference on Human Capital Development in Tourism: New Perspectives	Sharm el Sheikh, Egypt
<b>July</b>			
	9-14	2 Modules for the Master Degree “Maestría en Gestión de Destinos Turísticos Anáhuac, México “ Marketing de destinos turísticos Desarrollo turístico sustentable	Mexico, Onsite
<b>September</b>			
	5	International Seminar on “El turismo ante los retos de la Calidad y Sostenibilidad”	Cordoba, Argentina
	12	UNWTO.TedQual Seminar Brasilia	Brasilia, Brazil
	24	International Seminar on “Gobernanza Turística, un factor clave para el desarrollo de destinos”	Cordoba, Argentina
	17-21	UNWTO.QUEST: Tourism Governance for Local Development	Corrientes, Argentina
	18Sept – 30 Oct	UNWTO Training Programme on Tour Guiding	Manama, Bahrain
<b>October</b>			
	Oct. 2018 – July 2020	UNWTO-UOC Master course on “Strategy and Sustainable Management of Tourism Destinations” at the Open University of Catalonia	Online, Spain
	23-28	UNWTO Training Programme in the Kingdom of Bahrain on “WFTGA Train the Trainer”	Manama, Bahrain
<b>November</b>			
	5-9	UNWTO course - Tourism and Digital Transformation: Impact on the Development of the Tourism Model	Zacatecas, Mexico

<b>December</b>			
3	UNWTO.TedQual Seminar Japan with Wakayama University	Tokyo, Japan	
	UNWTO.QUEST for Punta del Este Convention Bureau (Uruguay) (March 17 to December 18)	Punta del Este, Uruguay	
<b>2019</b>			
<b>March</b>			
7	High-Level Dialogue on Digital Skills in Tourism	Berlin, Germany	
<b>April</b>			
9-11	UNWTO Executive Education Workshop on “Sustainability in Tourism Destinations”	Dubai, UAE	
<b>May</b>			
2-3	5 <sup>th</sup> UNWTO World Forum on Gastronomy Tourism	San Sebastian, Spain	
TBC	UNWTO Quest Seminar	Japan	
<b>June</b>			
TBC	UNWTO Course on Rural Community Tourism	Jujuy, Argentina	
<b>July</b>			
2-5	Train the trainers course for Tourism Educators within International Centre Estoril	Estoril, Portugal	
1-19	Maestría OMT – Anáhuac: Conceptualización del turismo (en línea)	Mexico	
22-27	Maestría OMT – Anáhuac: Política y Planificación turística (presencial)	Mexico	
22-27	Maestría OMT – Anáhuac: Destinos turísticos inteligentes (presencial)	Mexico	
<b>September</b>			
9-13	23rd session of the UNWTO General Assembly: Official presentation of the Tourism Online Academy.  Launch UNWTO Students’ League	Saint Petersburg, Russian Federation	
27	World Tourism Day	India	
TBC	UNWTO Regional Workshop on Tourism Marketing: Designing a Promotional Strategy”	Romania	
<b>October</b>			
Oct. 2019 – Jul. 2021	UNWTO-UOC Master course on “Strategy and Sustainable Management of Tourism Destinations” at the Open University of Catalonia	Spain	
TBC	UNWTO Regional Course (subject tbc)	Mexico	