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for Europe**
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Report of the Secretary-General

UNWTO initiatives and activities in response to the COVID-19 Outbreak

Introduction

- The world is facing an unprecedented global health, social and economic emergency due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Travel and tourism are without any doubt among the most affected sectors. In an unprecedented shock, the COVID-19 pandemic has cut international tourist arrivals sharply down.
- Available data points to a double-digit decrease of 44% in the first four months of 2020, with arrivals in April down by 97%. This translates into a loss of 180 million international arrivals and about USD 195 billion in export revenues from international tourism in just four months. Arrivals to Europe in the first quarter are estimated to be down 19%. This means 22 million less arrivals in Q1 as compared to last year.
- Current scenarios¹ for the year point to declines of 58% to 78% in international tourist arrivals in 2020, depending on the speed of the containment, the duration of travel restrictions and the re-opening of national borders, although the outlook remains highly uncertain.
- This would translate into:
 - a drop of 850 million to 1.1 billion international arrivals
 - a loss of US\$ 910 billion to US\$ 1.2 trillion in export revenues
 - 100 to 120 million direct tourism jobs at risk.

UNWTO Response

1. Monitoring the impact

Assessing the Impact of COVID-19 on International Tourism

¹ UNWTO World Tourism Barometer, Issue 18, May 2020

- In order to provide comprehensive, reliable and update information on the impact of COVID-19 on international tourism, UNWTO released a first assessment report in early March with subsequent updates the latest of which – the UNWTO World Tourism Barometer, Updated June 2020 – provides an evaluation of the first four months of 2020 and forward looking scenarios for 2020.
- UNWTO has also created an interactive online system to provide regularly updated data and insight to all Members – the [UNWTO Global Tourism Dashboard on Tourism and COVID-19](#).

Monitoring COVID-19 Related Travel Restrictions – A Global Review for Tourism

- The UNWTO is regularly monitoring travel restrictions caused by the pandemic. [COVID-19 Related Travel Restrictions - A Global Review For Tourism](#) provides an overview and analysis on the implementation of travel restrictions by governments as one of the means to address the global health crisis of COVID-19.
- The reports are updated on a regular basis to support mitigation and recovery efforts of the tourism sector, providing a global overview of the measures in place and analysing them from a tourism perspective. With a view to supporting the responsible and successful implementation of exit strategies through which countries are planning the gradual recovery of their tourism sector, the reports also aim at identifying critical issues and best practices of COVID-19 related travel measures and their implications on tourism.
- The monitoring of travel restrictions is carried out from the standpoint of travel facilitation for tourism purposes (i.e., focusing on temporary visitors/tourists) and does not take into account measures that are directed to residents, diplomats and other categories of travellers. In addition, these reports do not consider travel advisories issued by governments for their respective citizens/residents.

2. Policy Guidance and Coordination

The Global Tourism Crisis Committee

- In order to ensure a coordinated and effective response, the Secretary-General established the Global Tourism Crisis Committee with the international public and private sector stakeholders, which held its first meeting on 19 March.
- The Committee is comprised of UNWTO, representatives of its Member States (Chairs of the UNWTO Executive Council and six Regional Commissions as well as some States nominated by the Commission Chairs), the World Health Organization (WHO), the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), the International Maritime Organization (IMO), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the World Bank (WB), and the private sector – the UNWTO Affiliate Members, Airports Council International (ACI), Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA), the International Air Transport Association (IATA), and the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC).
- To date, the Committee has held five meetings allowing for exchange of information and alignment of messages and policy action.
- The Committee adopted two strategic guidance documents: 1) **UNWTO Recommendations for Actions – Supporting Jobs & Economies through Travel and Tourism**; and 2) **UNWTO Global Guidelines to Restart Tourism**.

UNWTO Recommendations for Action

Aiming to support governments in devising policies to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on tourism and accelerate recovery, the [UNWTO Recommendations for Action](#) provide more than 100 practical actions in 23 areas for the three key crisis phases: **mitigation, recovery and building for the future.**

I. MANAGING THE CRISIS & MITIGATING THE IMPACT	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Incentivize job retention, sustain the self-employed and protect the most vulnerable groups 2. Support companies' liquidity 3. Review taxes, charges, levies and regulations impacting transport and tourism 4. Ensure consumer protection and confidence 5. Promote skills development, especially digital skills 6. Include tourism in national, regional and global economic emergency packages 7. Create crisis management mechanisms and strategies
II. PROVIDING STIMULUS & ACCELERATING RECOVERY	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide financial stimulus for tourism investment and operations 2. Review taxes, charges and regulations impacting travel and tourism 3. Advance travel facilitation 4. Promote new jobs and skills development, particularly digital ones 5. Mainstream environmental sustainability in stimulus and recovery packages 6. Understand the market and act quickly to restore confidence and stimulate demand 7. Boost marketing, events and meetings 8. Invest in partnerships 9. Mainstream tourism in national, regional and international recovery programmes and in Development Assistance
III. PREPARING FOR TOMORROW	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Diversify markets, products and services 2. Invest in market intelligence systems and digital transformation 3. Reinforce tourism governance at all levels 4. Prepare for crisis, build resilience and ensure tourism is part of national emergency mechanism and systems 5. Invest in human capital and talent development 6. Place sustainable tourism firmly on the national agenda 7. Transition to the circular economy and embrace the SDGs

UNWTO Global Guidelines to Restart Tourism

Recalling the **Priorities for tourism recovery**

1. Provide liquidity and protect jobs
2. Recover confidence through safety & security

3. Public-private collaboration for an efficient reopening
4. Open borders with responsibility
5. Harmonize and coordinate protocols & procedures
6. Added value jobs through new technologies
7. Innovation and Sustainability as the new normal

The UNWTO Global Guidelines to Restart Tourism provide high-level guidance for reopening tourism operations in the following areas.

1. Safe and Seamless Border Management (air, sea and ground travel)
2. Private Sector – Crosscutting Measures
3. Safe Air Travel
4. Hospitality
5. Tour Operators & Travel Agencies
6. Meetings & Events
7. Attraction & Thematic Parks
8. Destination Planning & Management

UNWTO online monitoring system on country and international policy response to mitigate the effects of COVID-19

- The [online dashboard on country and international policy response to mitigate the effects of COVID-19](#) provides unique global and weekly updated information on the policies in place in over 160 countries, as well as support by international and regional organizations that are relevant for tourism.
- Information shows that governments have responded quickly and strongly with the level and coverage of measures stepping up over time, and that most countries have adopted economy-wide stimulus packages (fiscal and monetary measures) along with job protection measures.
- Out of the 166 countries reporting measures, more than 139 countries have adopted fiscal and monetary policies, followed by policies supporting jobs and training which have been implemented by 93 countries. Fiscal and monetary policies are also the most widely implemented in all regions ([see UNWTO Briefing Note – Tourism and COVID-19, Issue 1. How are countries supporting tourism recovery?](#))
- The most recent measures for restarting tourism are primarily being adopted in Europe and Asia and the Pacific.

Position tourism as a global policy priority in the response to the crisis

- The Secretariat continues its active role in the UN Chief Executive Board (CEB) and its Executive Bodies and related networks, by strengthening the importance and recognition of tourism governance at the global level and the providing the Organization with opportunities to scale up its delivery capacity as well as to lead by example in the UN work for COVID-19.
- We are at the beginning of the United Nations “Decade of Action”. With just 10 years remaining to fulfil the 2030 Agenda and its Global Goals. UNWTO is making sure tourism is at the heart of the conversation through its global advocacy efforts in the development and trade agendas. In

practice, UNWTO has organized discussions with the World Trade Organization (WTO) on Tourism Financing for the 2030 Agenda aiming at scaling up International Aid flows for Tourism Financing for the 2030 Agenda and has partnered with the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) in an initiative that builds on both G20 Declaration of T20 Ministers in Japan, as well as UNWTO leadership in the 2030 Agenda to strengthen Tourism Governance.

Tourism and SDGs – contributing to the 2030 Development Agenda

- In order to accelerate and scale up the achievement of the SDGs through tourism, UNWTO is engaged in several work streams in the public domain and with its tourism stakeholders, including the Affiliate Members. In order to widely share with and inspire policy makers and businesses, the Tourism4SDGs.org platform has been tweaked and enhanced to include a focus area for COVID-19 related actions in order to allow users to not only access a wide range of resources, add their own initiatives, findings and projects, motivate discussion and collaboration, and share content related to tourism and sustainable development, but to share and incorporate initiatives that address the COVID-19 response. The space also provides a roadmap for the tourism sector towards 2030, to build a smarter, competitive, inclusive and sustainable sector for the people and planet. The work aims at mainstreaming tourism to contribute to SDG 17 of the 2030 Agenda. Other functionalities in the platform for measuring tourism impact on the ground for tourism projects are currently ongoing.
- In addition, the Secretariat is coordinating with the United Nations (UN) system on the integration of a forthcoming Report on the UNWTO Tourism Ethics Convention, the approval of the MST with the UN Statistical Commission and the Resolutions on Sustainable Tourism with the UN General Assembly in 2020. UNWTO is also contributing to the 2020 HLPF to be held in July.

Increase resources and strengthen UNWTO's capacity through partnerships - UNWTO and International Financial Institutions and International Organizations

- UNWTO is currently undertaking a major step in assessing the required endogenous changes required in order to strengthen UNWTO's institutional framework to be aligned with the development multilateral and bilateral partners' requirements. Close monitoring and planning were introduced for extrabudgetary flows, indicating that International Finance Institutions (IFIs) are providing currently the biggest percentage of extrabudgetary resources to support projects on the ground for Members.
- With the aim of supporting Members States (MS) to recover quicker from the COVID-19 pandemic and have access to current resources, regular, comprehensive, and ongoing research on regional or global actions by International Organizations and International Financial Institutions (IFIs), has been undertaken and been shared with MS.
- UNWTO is currently strengthening and expanding its relations with IFIs through the negotiation of global framework agreements which will scale up and facilitate further joint delivery. Among the main results have been the signature of a MoU (October, 2019) and of a framework agreement (May 2020) with the European Bank of Reconstruction and Development, leading to already securing funding for recovery efforts for several Member States, and nearly finalized negotiations for the signature of a framework agreement with the World Bank Group.
- UNWTO has been successfully including tourism within the UN system response for socio-economic recovery, forging a strong partnership with the United Nations Development system at large.

3. Technical Assistance

COVID-19 Tourism Recovery Technical Assistance Package

- In the COVID-19 aftermath, countries have to face a new reality of the tourism and travel industry and make every possible effort to shape the sector accordingly. It is advisable that countries try to make optimum utilization of available resources, knowledge and experience to put the sector back on the rails. In order to assist Member States to address the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the tourism sector and develop an approach to recovery, UNWTO has developed a “COVID-19 Tourism Recovery Technical Assistance Package”. The Package is structured around three main pillars: 1) Economic Recovery; 2) Marketing and Promotion; and 3) Institutional Strengthening and Building Resilience.
- The Tourism Recovery Package includes a comprehensive list of technical assistance activities, including both activities of a longer duration and with a wide scope, such as the development of new strategies, and activities of a relatively short duration with a specific focus, such as advice and training on selected topics. Depending on the situation in a country, Member States may need different technical assistance activities at various stages of the COVID-19 mitigation and recovery process. In consultation with individual Member States, tailor-made packages can be prepared with one or more technical assistance activities for the short and medium term.
- In mid-May, UNWTO sent the Technical Assistance Package to all Member States, and within one week responses were received from over 10 countries from all regions of the world, expressing interest in the Package. The budget for implementing technical assistance activities would have to be provided either directly by Member States or through external donors. UNWTO is actively liaising with development agencies to mobilize resources, and first commitments have been made by agencies to provide funding. (<https://www.unwto.org/news/unwto-releases-a-covid-19-technical-assistance-package-for-tourism-recovery>)

4. Innovation, Investments and Digital Transformation

- **UNWTO Healing Solutions for Tourism Challenge:** In response to the COVID-19 impact on tourism, the UNWTO launched the Healing Solutions for Tourism Challenge on 25 March this year. It has identified the top 9 initiatives to address the crisis from the health, economy and destination management perspectives and has presented them to the world tourism innovation ecosystem on 7 May. Throughout the 4-week call, 1183 projects from 110 countries were received. Colombia with 147 applications, Spain with 129 and USA with 60 applications were the top participating countries. Solutions mostly use technologies such as Virtual and Augmented Reality, Internet of Things, Artificial Intelligence, Big Data and Blockchain to deliver their impact. ([healing-solutions-tourism-challenge](#))
- **UNWTO SDGs Global Startup Competition:** Seeking the long-term recovery of tourism, our flagship annual startup competition has become the world’s largest call to reach the most disruptive entrepreneurs from all economic sectors whose projects directly contribute to accelerate the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and can be adapted to corporations and destinations for complying with the UN Decade of Action. This project will be launched in the second half of the year.
- **UNWTO Tourism Online Academy:** With more than 4000 students, the platform has experienced remarkable growth after the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. During this year, and immersed in Phase 2 of the project, the Tourism Online Academy will involve 3 to 5 top universities from different countries all over the world and develop the courses in languages other than English.

UNWTO is working closely with Cornell University, Externado de Colombia University, PolyU University, Northwestern University and Les Roches. A marketing plan to exponentially extend the international reach of the platform will be also implemented. In addition, different packages of scholarships will be allocated to our Member States.

- **2nd UNWTO Acceleration Programme:** Following its first edition in January, this programme will continue to deliver benefits to our Member States regarding training and capacity building for governments and entrepreneurs.
- **Investments promotion:** Reaching out to multilateral cooperation to develop potential economic recovery projects based on ongoing initiatives - **International Finance Corporation (IFC)**, **Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)** and the **African Development Bank (AfDB)**.
- **Partnering with the International Finance Corporation (IFC), a member of the World Bank Group:** This partnership aims to ensure the tourism sector's long-term recovery by providing insights and experience in resourcing sustainable buildings and green finance. This initiative starting in June 4 consists of technical training programmes focused on **skills for sustainable investments** through resource efficiency and accreditations tools including platforms and certifications, **identification of potential aggregators** across the hotel value chain (investors, owners, operators, franchisees) in order to collaborate in the implementation of sustainability measures, and **facilitation of sustainable investment mechanisms** by enabling strong environmental, social and governance (ESG) standards and brand reputation to access to green finance opportunities and innovate sources of financing including green bonds, green securitizations and green credit facilities.

5. Education and Training – the UNWTO Academy

- **Dedicated Online resources website:** Considering the COVID-19 situation, the UNWTO Academy has created a dedicated website 'Courses, Webinars and Digital Resources' that compiles different online Education and Training units on different topics, created and offered by UNWTO or Partner Institutions and Experts. Under the slogan "By studying from home today, we can acquire skills for tomorrow", this catalogue of online training initiatives is constantly updated with the contribution of UNWTO TedQual Certified institutions, UNWTO Affiliate Members, and other collaborating institutions and organizations. This new website also includes access to the UNWTO Online Academy, the e-library and articles & publications written and offered by partners on a broad range of subject areas. (<https://www.unwto.org/academy/courses-webinars-resources>)_
- **Webinars:** In this digital, online new normal, the UNWTO Academy has been organizing a series of webinars offered to the Member States and tourism professionals on a number of subjects regarding the impact of COVID-19 and on other relevant subjects offered by globally recognized experts. (<https://www.unwto.org/academy/unwto-live-webinars>)_

The UNWTO Academy is currently creating a series of new specific webinars that will be available to the Member States on demand.



- **UNWTO Students' League:** The UNWTO World Tourism Students League constitutes an innovative online environment to empower and motivate travel & tourism students to get involved within the sector. Students get real professional experience by creating and presenting innovative solutions for the challenges that tourism is facing today. Challenges are aligned with the SDGs, placing an emphasis on Goals 8,12 and 14. A total of 62 Teams from different universities around the world are participating in the 1st Global Edition and work is being carried out to set up national Leagues with UNWTO Member States

(<https://www.unwto.org/students-league> & <https://www.unwto.org/students-league-platform/>)

6. UNWTO Affiliate Members

In line with the pillars of the UNWTO Affiliate Members Programme of Work for 2020 in the current context, the activities set out below have been carried out to: **(a)** provide the Organization with the most relevant initiatives of the private sector affiliated to the UNWTO and **(b)** support the Affiliate Members (AMs) in their efforts to deal with the unprecedented impacts imposed by the COVID-19 Outbreak:

Strengthen UNWTO's capacity to deliver through the partnership with the affiliated private sector

a. Providing the UNWTO with relevant inputs from the AMs, as contribution to the elaboration of the guidelines, procedures and recovery packages issued by the Organization. To this end:

- a broad **campaign to collect AMs most relevant initiatives** has been carried out and the information collected has been regularly shared with the UNWTO structures in charge of developing guidelines and reports;
- Affiliate Members are participating in the **Global Tourism Crisis Committee**, through the institutional representation of the Chair of the Board, bringing solid proposals and action plans.

b. Attending the UN Private Sector Emergency Focal Points Meetings, updating them regarding the latest activities of UNWTO and collaborating on the ongoing initiatives UN – private sector

c. Supporting relevant initiatives launched by UNWTO Affiliate Members (example: IATA's Call to support the African travel and tourism sector, addressed to international financial institutions, country development partners and international donors).

Build better value for Members

Sharing UNWTO activities and resources with the Affiliate Members. UNWTO has kept the AMs permanently informed and updated, through the modern dedicated Platform [AMConnected](#), sharing with them the latest information, documents and online activities organized by the UNWTO including: UNWTO Calls on Tourism to be part of the Recovery Plans, UNWTO evaluation of COVID-19 impact on tourism, COVID-19 Recovery Package - technical assistance, online Webinars, etc.

d. Holding regularly bilateral and multilateral meetings with the AMs, in different thematic and regional formats (including meetings of the Board, Working Groups etc.), aiming at encouraging and providing support to **AMs to bring their initiatives and projects to the attention of the Organization** and of the other Members ([set of updated reports](#) on the relevant COVID-19 initiatives received from the AMs available [here](#)).

7. Communications & outreach

The Communications Department is **UNWTO's first responder during the COVID-19 pandemic**, giving a voice to UNWTO's leadership via UNWTO.org, social media, copy and design content production and external engagement (see below, *data up until 22 June*).

The increased **publication frequency and the creation of a dedicated COVID-19 landing page**, have contributed to reaching **unprecedented results** in terms of public visibility, and positive response, including becoming part of the wider UN response to the pandemic and a landmark message by the **UN Secretary-General**, Antonio Guterres, in support of tourism as a pillar for recovery and commending UNWTO for its leadership.

These results are consolidating the success of the transition to the new **communications strategy** initiated over the past 24 months and rolled out over the past 12 months:

- **64.1 k media mentions of UNWTO**
- **853 million users** reached and **63k mentions on social media**
- **+EUR331 million advertisement value equivalency** have been generated (what the achieved media presence would have cost).

The **public messaging** on COVID-19 response builds on the following **pillars**:

- promoting **concrete outputs** across the Organization
- clarity in **tone and political intention of messages** of the Secretary-General
- **human angle** stories
- strong emphasis on **visual elements**
- **#TravelTomorrow** campaign

1. **UNWTO website**: All over the world, the pandemic has put **digital response** to the test, and consequently the return on investment of a solid digital infrastructure as now provided through UNWTO.org. The complete overhaul (design, technology, multilanguage contents) has allowed **traffic to grow +220% and attract +185% growth in new users**, alongside other positive key performance indicators such as duration of sessions and returning users. The dedicated **COVID-19 landing page** had to be completely updated to accommodate growing output and content diversification. **Production volume** is running at full capacity, having generated over **+100 new internal pages** during this period, an **[interactive map](#)** on policy and response measures across the world and a **[webinar calendar](#)** to structure the steep growth of this service for UNWTO users.
2. **Social Media and external engagement**: The first coherent **social media strategy & production** policy has paid off. With **+730 posts** across platforms, UNWTO social **followership grew by +40,000**, impressions, and likes and organic reach experienced unmatched growth levels across platforms. Social outreach and mass mailings have built on the same **narrative** and have been **mutually reinforcing** and also driving web traffic, on the back of **+90 mass mailings** in 3 languages, reaching **+105 million recipients** (news [releases](#), SG [statements](#), 4 issues of [UN Tourism News](#)).
3. **#TravelTomorrow**: Promoted through all platforms, it was part of key messaging for the Secretary-General as well as media engagements. The campaign was **embraced and actively promoted** by Members States, individual destinations, the private sector, and key influencers, reaching on average **+14,100 daily mentions** on social and legacy media, generating **479 million Twitter impressions** and over **46,000 Instagram post mentions**. These figures do not yet include the **[landmark agreement with CNN International](#)** to promote #TravelTomorrow, an agreement which proves that UNWTO has been able to identify and position a unique tone and messaging.
4. **Content production**: **+140 copywriting pieces** have been produced (news releases, SG statements, interviews, talking points and copy edits), many of them framed in **design pieces which totalled +200** (reports, newsletters, GIFS and videos, logos or infographics).

5. **Media impact: +63K media mentions** reaching a potential **audience of almost 853 million** is a record success. It is the first time ever that **top-tier media regularly cover UNWTO and request** information (Forbes, Time, The Guardian, The Atlantic, Bloomberg), amounting to an advertising value **of +331million euros**.

Regional Focus

The outbreak of the COVID-19 brought the European travel and tourism sectors to a standstill and the sector has been halted, forcing the European community to face up to an unprecedented social and economic challenge, with a prospect of a recession never seen before. Tourism is a significant part of the European Members' national economies and the immediate and immense shock to the tourism sector resulting from the coronavirus pandemic has affected the wider economy and ultimately our lives at large.

The Regional Department for Europe, with the objective of providing the Members with the best and most immediate services during this time of crisis, has concentrated its efforts on the following pillars:

Political outreach, mainstreaming tourism

The Regional Department for Europe supported the Secretary-General's efforts to provide the crucial political support to the European Members in the form of mainstreaming tourism at the highest political level, by highlighting the importance of tourism for the socio-economic development of the countries to Presidents and Prime Ministers, with the objective of ensuring that, during this unprecedented COVID-19 outbreak, tourism receives the necessary attention and much needed governmental support and measures to mitigate the impact of the crisis. In this context, the Regional Department also enhanced its efforts in calling for financial and political support for recovery measures aimed at tourism, and to include support for the sector in the wider recovery plans and actions of affected economies.

Enhanced cooperation with the international community

We are enhancing our strong partnerships with the European Union, as well as with international financial institutions such as the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), etc., and working together with the objective of addressing the specific needs of individual countries within the context of COVID-19. The Department has continued its efforts to enhance its cooperation with the institutions of the European Union. In this context, high-level missions took place in Brussels to carry out discussions with various European Commissioners (*Mr. Thierry Breton (Internal Market), Ms. Adina Valean (Transport), Ms. Elisa Ferreira (Cohesion and Reforms)*) and key decisions makers of the European Parliament and of the Committee of the Regions, emphasizing the importance and the key strategic role that tourism represents for the Member States and for the European Region as the number one tourism destination in the world.

Strengthened relations for better services

A. Member States survey

With the aim to help us better understand and to better respond to the needs and the changing priorities of our Members, the Department carried out an online survey in 2020, where 39 Member States, 2 Associate Members and 1 Permanent Observer shared their comments. The results provided an excellent overview of the various subjects and themes regarding which our Members were seeking UNWTO expertise and assistance, while highlighting key areas such as sustainability (INSTO), education and human workforce development (Academy), statistics (MST), digitalization and innovation, product development (gastronomy) among others.



B. Member States Infographics

With the objective of providing better and personalized information to each and every Member State, the Department embarked on the preparation of individual diptychs which provide information in a very visual way about various tourism data and numbers available. Moreover, they provide matching priorities between the Member States and the Organization based on the extensive research carried out by the Department and on the continuous discussions with the high-level representatives of the tourism administrations.

C. EuropeConnect online platform

Sharing UNWTO activities and resources with the European Members has always been an integral part of the work of the Department. However, with the objective of enhancing cooperation and offering better value for our Members, the Department has engaged in the development of a dedicated European online platform, called “**EuropeConnect**”, which was launched successfully in April 2020. This new digital online tool, which is at the full service of the Members, enables them to instantly share content, events and documents with each other, while allowing the Department to create better and stronger linkages and keep them always updated with the latest UNWTO information, including: UNWTO Calls on Tourism to be part of the Recovery Plans, UNWTO evaluation of COVID-19 impact on tourism, Reports on Travel Restrictions, COVID-19 Recovery Package - technical assistance, online Webinars, etc.

Road to Recovery virtual conference

Following the initiative and request of the State Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan for Tourism Development, a joint virtual conference with the participation of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, was successfully organized by the Department on 1 June 2020. The conference aimed to offer a platform to the Heads of the Tourism Administrations of the countries to discuss the best possible ways to tackle and contain the virus and work together to restart tourism operations in the safest and most efficient manner, ensuring maximum cooperation and coordination among all relevant stakeholders at the national and regional levels. The event enabled the countries to exchange views and share the best practices and measures they implemented, with the objective of providing the participants with valuable feedback and inputs for effective policy and decision making to cope with the crisis.

Global Tourism Crisis Committee – The European Chapter

In order to hear the voice of Europe and accommodate and integrate the expertise and knowledge of our Members into the deliberations of the Committee, the region was represented by Greece, Croatia and Spain during the various meetings. In addition, within the Committee, a **special European Task Force** led by the Minister of Tourism of Greece also contributed into the outcomes in the form of a **White Paper** by giving inputs and valuable feedback on the following 6 areas:

1. *Evaluate the different measures adopted by the UNWTO Member States and select best practices;*
2. *Evaluate and assess the pressures received by the enterprises of the tourism industry;*

3. *Evaluate proposals to keep the tourism sector operational during the crisis period;*
4. *Collect, evaluate and propose “destination level” measures;*
5. *Set criteria to determine the restart of travel, tourism and leisure activities and events;*
6. *Determine policies and practices for the period of transition from restart to full operations.*

Human workforce and skills development in the times of COVID-19

Tourism is uniquely placed to lead future recovery. Our sector will provide the jobs people need to bounce back and will drive economic growth that will help whole communities and countries to recover. To be ready for the future, it is indeed essential to make sure education plays its role in achieving the skillset required to confront present and future challenges and to ensure tourism remains a driving force for the employment of many in the world.

A. Webinars

During these unprecedented times UNWTO has endeavoured to remain engaged and connected with its partners and Members and this has been possible with the use of various social media platforms whereby several informative global or regional webinars offered and developed by the Department (**Quo Vadis Tourism Webinar Series**) have been conducted on different current issues. The following webinars have been conducted, targeted at the Europe Members’ audience and private sector partners, reaching almost 20K views on Youtube with a multiplier effect over unwto’s YT channels traffic:

April:

- *Quo Vadis Tourism Webinar Series: Communicating Crisis: pre, during and post COVID-19, 17 April 2020*
- *Quo Vadis Tourism Webinar Series: The impact of the COVID-19 on tourism - Trying to make sense of so much or so little data, 27 April 2020*

May:

- *Quo Vadis Tourism Webinar Series: Exhibitions and Events: what future after COVID-19?, 5 May 2020*
- *Quo Vadis Tourism Webinar Series: Agenda 2030 and SDGs in times of Covid-19: the chance to true recovery, 27 May 2020;*

June:

- *Quo Vadis Tourism Webinar Series: The future of consumer rights protection in tourism post COVID-19: the road to international standards, 9 June 2020*
- *Quo Vadis Tourism Webinar Series: Tourism sustainability and statistics in the time of COVID-19, 12 June 2020.*

At the invitation of our partners, we have also contributed the initiatives of UNWTO and joined the discussions in the following events and webinars:

- Participation in the European Travel Commission’s Informal Network on COVID-19 (continuous);
- Hearing on Tourism in the Committee on Transport and Tourism/Tourism Task Force of the European Parliament, 19 February 2020;
- Hearing on Tourism in the context of the COVID-19 with the Committee for Economic Affairs of the French Senate, 18 May 2020;

- BSEC Working Group on Cooperation in Tourism, 11 June 2020;
- Online Delphi Economic Forum V, 11 June 2020;
- NECSTOUR Webinar on “Green, Digital and SDGs: Building the European Tourism Agenda 2050 for Sustainable Recovery”, 15 June 2020;
- BSEC Workshop on Blue Economy in the Black Sea Region, 16 June 2020;
- ETOA Webinar on “Europe's travel and tourism recovery - the political and practical response”, 19 June 2020.

B. UNWTO Online Academy Platform and the UNWTO Academy section

UNWTO has committed to identify the most relevant online Education and Training courses available in European countries and approach them to be part of UNWTO's “offer” of free tourism education services, on both the UNWTO Online Academy Platform and the UNWTO Academy section. The Regional Department has approached **168** universities from **38** Member States, and negotiations on further cooperation are ongoing. Universities were asked to identify, select and share links of open and free-of-charge courses they can offer, MOOCs, webinars and other educational/training material they may have in tourism and already on their Learning Management System (LMS) or their Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). The objectives of this outreach were:

- To spread the message of solidarity;
- To promote tourism education and its essential role in recovery;
- To promote the UNWTO Academy / Affiliate membership / the UNWTO Online Academy;
- To enlarge the academic community/environment of UNWTO;
- To promote future collaboration with universities and institutions for various projects.