

UNWTO and Telefónica Partner To Help Destinations Use Data and AI to Drive Tourism's Sustainable Recovery

Madrid, Spain, 2 July 2020 – *The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) has strengthened its partnership with Telefónica, the Spanish multinational telecommunications company. As tourism restarts around the world, Telefonica deepens its collaboration with the United Nations specialized agency to advance market intelligence in order to accelerate the sector's recovery from the impact of COVID-19.*

As it guides the sector through the challenge posed by the pandemic, UNWTO has **prioritized innovation** as a key means of growing tourism back stronger and better. Additionally, with the global community now left with less than 10 years to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals ("The Decade of Action"), UNWTO is also driving tourism's movement towards **sustainability**. This collaboration with Telefónica, which builds on an existing partnership, is designed to use **digital transformation** to support sustainable recovery and future growth.

Data to help destinations

UNWTO and Telefónica will work together to promote the effective use of **Big Data** and **Artificial Intelligence** across the tourism sector. This will help destinations better understand tourist behaviour, allowing them to market their products more effectively. Management of data will also help destinations better manage tourist flows within the context of the new health and safety protocols being rolled out in response to COVID-19.

UNWTO Secretary-General Zurab Pololikashvili said: "The digital transformation of tourism will allow the sector to grow back stronger from the standstill caused by COVID-19. As UNWTO leads tourism's restart, our partnership with Telefónica will allow us to provide Member States and the sector as a whole the tools they need to accelerate recovery, build trust by guaranteeing safety and promote sustainability."

Digital-led transformation

Miguel Llopis, Industry Lead of Public Sector in IoT and Big Data at Telefónica, added: "Tourism will return with force but the sector will have to face a structural transformation where new digital technologies, such as IoT and Big Data, will be a differential factor of competitive advantage."

Telefónica and UNWTO have worked together to launch a series of visualization tools within the UNWTO Global Data Dashboard that allows for a better understanding of key performance indicators in tourism.

Also to mark the start of this new phases of collaboration, UNWTO joined Telefónica, Turismo de Portugal, the Tourism Authority of Buenos Aires and the Secretary of Tourism of Chile (SERNATUR) for a special virtual training session for destinations in the Americas. This focused on exploring how the use of Big Data can add value to the tourism sector and lead recovery.

Related Links

[UNWTO Tourism Data Dashboard](#)

[UNWTO Partners with Telefonica to Promote Tourism Sector Digitalization](#)

[EBRD and UNWTO Partner to Boost Tourism Recovery](#)