

Statistics to Guide Restart of Tourism in the Caribbean

Madrid, Spain, 18 February 2021 - *From the need for enhanced political engagement to developing relevant expertise, the World Tourism Organization, jointly with the Caribbean Tourism Organization, have united their Members in the Caribbean to address the key challenges they face in making effective use of statistics to drive the restart of their tourism sectors.*

Over the course of two days, a regional virtual workshop analysed the importance of tourism data for supporting the sector in the present and helping tourism to restart in the Caribbean in a timely and sustainable manner. The workshop brought together around **130 participants from 23 States**, including the leaders of **National Tourism Administrations, National Statistical Offices, Central Banks** and **Migration authorities**. The high-level status of participants ensures that they will in turn spread UNWTO's technical expertise within their own countries, empowering more tourism professionals with knowledge of how best to analyse and use data to guide decisions.

Through the sessions, the Caribbean tourism community got a better understanding of the fundamentals of tourism statistics. They were also given an overview of **UNWTO's Tourism Satellite Account (TSA)** data, as well as guidance on how this can be used to guide decision-making.

Welcoming UNWTO's technical assistance, Neil Walters, Acting Secretary General of the Caribbean Tourism Organization said: "We recognize the importance of data and statistics in the development of COVID-19 recovery programs and comprehensive sustainable tourism strategies. We thank the UNWTO for supporting our efforts at capacity building in tourism statistics analysis and reporting in the Caribbean."

The workshop also emphasized the relevance of tourism statistics, both for informing the sector's response to the COVID-19 pandemic but also, looking ahead, for its role in **guiding sustainable development** across the Caribbean region. As with every other global region, the crisis has hit the Caribbean hard. According to the latest UNWTO data, **Caribbean destinations experienced a 67% fall in international tourist arrivals** in 2020 compared to the previous year. Given the reliance of many destinations on the sector, this has placed large numbers of livelihoods and businesses at risk and makes the timely restart of tourism vital.

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