

WORLD TOURISM DAY 2021 “TOURISM FOR INCLUSIVE GROWTH”

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a massive social and economic impact. Both developed and developing economies have been hit. And marginalized groups and the most vulnerable have been hit hardest of all. The restart of tourism will help kickstart recovery and growth. It is essential that the benefits this will bring are enjoyed widely and fairly.

UNWTO has therefore designated World Tourism Day 2021 as a day to focus on Tourism for Inclusive Growth. This is an opportunity to look beyond tourism statistics and acknowledge that, behind every number, there is a person. UNWTO invites its Member States, as well as non-members, sister UN agencies, businesses and individuals to celebrate tourism's unique ability to ensure that nobody is left behind as the world begins to open up again and look to the future.

World Tourism Day, celebrated each year on 27 September, is the global observance day fostering awareness of tourism's social, cultural, political and economic value and the contribution that the sector can make towards reaching the Sustainable Development Goals.

A Global Challenge

An additional **32 million people were pushed into extreme poverty** in 2020¹. In least-developed countries especially, women have been hit hardest by the global crisis caused by the pandemic. One reason for this is that they mainly work in the sectors most-affected by the pandemic – including tourism.

The most vulnerable members of societies have been less able to cope with the social and economic affects of the pandemic. Furthermore, low-paid workers, youth, the elderly, indigenous communities, and differently abled people, are in many cases also less **likely to have the resources or opportunities to bounce back** from adversity.

The Second Principle of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is to **“Leave No One Behind”**.² This pledge,

1 United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)

2 UN Sustainable Development Goals

made by all UN Member States and its various Agencies, including UNWTO, is more relevant than ever. There is a duty to ensure that as growth returns, it actually improves lives.³

UNWTO is fully committed to the [UN Decade of Action](#) to deliver the Global Goals, and has also contributed to the guiding principles of [“The Future We Want, the UN We Need”](#), the broad call contributing to transforming our world.

Tourism’s Role in Inclusive Recovery

Tourism has a unique ability to make sure nobody is left behind, as recognized in the Year of Tourism for Inclusive Development and World Tourism Day 2021.

The sector is a recognized pillar of most – if not all – the **Sustainable Development Goals**, particularly Goals 1 (no poverty), 5 (gender equality), 8 (decent work and economic growth) and 10 (reduce inequalities).

UNWTO as the United Nations specialized agency for responsible and sustainable tourism, is guiding the global sector towards inclusive recovery and growth. UNWTO ensures every part of the sector has a say in its future – including communities, minorities, youth and those who would otherwise be at risk of being left behind.

For tourism’s restart and growth to be as inclusive as possible, UNWTO focuses on:

- **Partnerships:** Tourism’s relevance has never been more relevant. Now is the time to grow the sector’s role in other parts of the development agenda. Embracing the UN Reform to strengthen UN support at country level, partnerships with sister UN agencies, including the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), International Labor Organization, the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and UN Women, as well as with international organizations, are key to ensuring the benefits that will come with tourism’s growth are felt outside of the sector itself and help advance wider progress.
- **Advocacy:** Tourism’s importance is increasingly recognized at the highest political level. UNWTO works with governments to ensure domestic and international tourism is inclusive, taking into account the needs and goals of a diverse range of stakeholders, including those who may be left behind. World Tourism Day 2021 provides an opportunity for governments worldwide to promote tourism’s role in inclusive growth and identify how further progress can be made.
- **Looking to the Future:** Unlocking the potential of the tourism ecosystem and broad value chain, and investments facilitation in tourism can deliver more inclusive and sustainable growth in new areas, including for traditionally-marginalized communities. Alongside this, expanding access to tourism education and delivering sector-specific training will give everybody the chance to benefit from tourism’s future growth.

3 OECD.

Tourism for Inclusive Growth

World Tourism Day 2021 is a unique occasion to amplify the conversation about sector's role in recovery and growth. UNWTO invites its Member States and Affiliate Members, and also sister UN agencies, international organizations, destinations businesses and individual travellers to be an active part of the day:

- **UNWTO Members:** Inclusive tourism growth is central to UNWTO's mission. World Tourism Day is an opportunity for Member States and Affiliate Members to reaffirm their commitment to this mission through sharing best practices, showcasing successes and ensuring the principle of inclusive growth informs decision making at the highest political and business level.
- **UN Agencies and International Organizations:** UNWTO calls on its sister UN agencies to use the occasion of World Tourism Day to recognize the role tourism plays in their respective fields, from fair trade and climate action to gender equality, indigenous rights and opportunities for youth.
- **Destinations and Businesses:** Ideas and commitments are nothing if they are not put into action. World Tourism Day is a chance for a diverse range of tourism stakeholders, including destinations and businesses of all sizes, to explore how they can be more inclusive as tourism restarts, to share best practices and to celebrate achievements.
- **Individual Tourists:** Tourism is all about people and experiences. World Tourism Day will reflect this. Individual tourists are called on to be part of the conversation, sharing their thoughts on how the sector's growth can be more inclusive.

