Draft Provisional programme
Thematic session

As of 30/11/2021

Thematic Session
24th session of the General Assembly
2nd December, 10:00-13:15, Madrid (Spain)
Building for the Future: Innovation, Education and Rural Development

10:00 – 10:15 Remarks by H.E. Pedro Sánchez Pérez-Castejón, President of the Government of Spain

10:15 – 10:30 Opening
• Ms. Julia Simpson, CEO and President, World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC)
• H.E. Mr. Zurab Pololikashvili, Secretary- General, UNWTO

10:30 – 11:10 Ministerial Debate on Policies to Foster Tourism for Rural Development
• Moderator: Sandra Carvao, Chief, Market Intelligence and Competitiveness, UNWTO
• H.E. Mr. Ricardo Galindo Bueno, Vice Minister of Tourism, Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Tourism, Colombia
• Hon. Mr. Edmund Bartlett, Minister of Tourism, Ministry of Tourism, Jamaica
• H.E. Dato' Sri Nancy Shukri, Minister of Tourism, Arts and Culture Malaysia, Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture, Malaysia
• Hon. Ms. Sofia Montiel de Afara, Minister - Executive Secretary, National Secretariat of Tourism (SENATUR), Paraguay
• H.E. Mr. Simon Zajc, State Secretary, Ministry of Economic Development and Technology, Slovenia
• H.E. Mrs. Maria Reyes Maroto Illera, Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism, Spain
• Hon. Dr. Damas Ndumbaro, Minister of Natural Resources and Tourism, Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism, Tanzania
• H.E. Ms. Özgül Özkan Yavuz, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Turkey

Advancing the contribution of tourism to rural development requires adequate policy framework and strategies. The ministerial discussion will aim to identify opportunities for shaping new policies and effective instruments to support inclusive and sustainable tourism development in rural areas including issues such as infrastructure, connectivity, value chain development and investment

11:10 – 12:00 Ministerial and Entrepreneurial Roundtable on Innovation in Rural Tourism:
• Moderator: Natalia Bayona, Director, Innovation, Education & Investments Department, UNWTO

Participating Ministerial level speakers from Member States:
• H.E. Sofia Zacharaki, Deputy Minister of Tourism, Greece
• Mr. José Luis Uriarte Campos, Vice Minister of Tourism, Chile
• Mr. Kaneko, Vice Commissioner, Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism, Japan
• H.E. Nayef Hmeidi Al Fayez, Minister of Tourism and Antiquities, Jordan
• Hon. Mr. Lai Mohammed, Minister of Information and Culture, Nigeria
• Ms. Rita Marques, State Secretary of Tourism, Portugal
• H.E. Dr. Ahmad Belhoul Al Falasi, Minister of State for Entrepreneurship and SMEs, United Arab Emirates
• Mr. Oscar Rueda Garcia, Director of Tourism, Development Bank of Latin America (CAF)

Winners of the UNWTO Global Rural Tourism Startup Competition (by Category):
• PEOPLE
• PLANET
• PROSPERITY
• PROPULSION

This roundtable will showcase the five winners from each of the categories of the UNWTO Global Rural Startup Competition alongside four Ministers from UNWTO Member States across regions sharing their views on how entrepreneurship is making an impact in rural communities in their regions, offering insights and inspiration to future entrepreneurs and destinations. Prior to the roundtable we will also see a video compilation of the winning projects.

12:00 – 12:10  Announcement of the UNWTO Digital Futures Programme

• Natalia Bayona, Director, Innovation, Education & Investments Department, UNWTO

The UNWTO Digital Futures Programme for SMEs will be launched to accelerate economic recovery of the tourism sector by supporting Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) and Travel Tech and Mobility Startups to unleash digital technologies to create jobs and enhance future resilience in the linkages of the tourism value chain post COVID-19.

The Digital Futures Programme focuses on 5 digital to paths: Business Growth, Connectivity, E-Commerce, Big Data & Analytics, Payments & Security in collaboration with technologies corporations such as: Amadeus, Airbnb, Mastercard, Facebook, CISCO, Telefónica, Amazon Web Services. The Programme has the ambition to serve at least 1 million SMEs from 22 countries.

12:10 – 13:00   Empowering Future Tourism Leaders – The UNWTO Students’ League

Award Ceremony of the 2021 Global UNWTO Students League

Interactive Panel discussion: “Youth meets Ministers”
• Moderator: Lucy Garner, Youth and Talent Development

Participants:
• H.E. Zurab Pololikashvili, Secretary-General, UNWTO
• H.E. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Stella Baltova, Minister of Tourism, Bulgaria
• H.E. Mrs. Hala Keyrouz, Ambassador of Lebanon to the Kingdom of Spain, Lebanon
• H.E. Dr. Abdulla Mausoom, Minister of Tourism, Republic of Maldives
• H.E. Salim Mohammed Al Mahruiq, Minister of Heritage and Tourism, Oman
• Ms. Lucy Garner, Youth and Talent Development, UNWTO
• Mr. Salvatore Caravallo, Università Bocconi, Student/Team representative, Masters’ category, Tourism and Rural development Challenge, Italy
• Ms. Cathrina Geagea, Student, Collège notre Dame Du Mont Carmel school, Lebanon
• Ms. Anoeska Top, NHL Stenden University of Applied Sciences, Student/Team representative, Undergraduates category, Tourism and Rural development Challenge, The Netherlands

Through UNWTO’s youth and talent development initiative – the UNWTO Students’ League students from around the world compete to give the tourism sector their best ideas to solve the challenges of the sector on subjects strongly linked to the UN SDGs.

Through an online competition, this powerful 360° tool enables, on the one hand, public and private sector stakeholders foster talent development and obtain innovative sustainable solutions for the challenges they face. And on the other hand, this tool bridges the gap between students’ education and training and the realities of our sector and therefore not only gives students more insight on our
sector but also enables these young people to then enter the labor market as highly qualified and skilled professionals capable of adapting to any situation that may arise.

This Year's 2021 Global UNWTO Students' League Challenges, have been created for 4 age and study categories from 11 to 29 Year old students, asked the students to create innovative sustainable solutions who will give us their best solutions for Rural development and Plastics Pollution.

This event at the General Assembly, will not only showcase the Teams and their winning solutions but will as well also as give the audience the opportunity to answer some of the concerns that these young future tourism professionals have and give us an inspiring insight into their opinions about the Tourism Sector, its future and their future within it.

13:00 – 13:15 Official Announcement Ceremony of the 2021 Best Tourism Villages by UNWTO

13:15 Closing