UNWTO and Saudi Arabia Partner to Boost Education and Training in Tourism

Berlin, Germany, 8 March 2023 – UNWTO and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia will work together to promote education and professional development in tourism.

Education and Training: A Priority for Tourism

As the United Nations specialized agency for tourism, UNWTO has identified education as one of its key priorities for the sector. While tourism is already a leading employer and a top provider of opportunity, most notably for women and youth, UNWTO is working to expand access to education, training, and jobs and to support those already working in the sector to develop professionally.

UNWTO’s Secretary General Zurab Pololikashvili notes: “Our vision is to provide anyone interested in the tourism sector access to the many and varied opportunities it offers, no matter where they are in the world. We are working to break down barriers between jobs, skills and training and so deliver on tourism’s massive potential as an employer.”

Saudi Minister of Tourism, H.E. Ahmed Al Khateeb, says “Investing in human capital development is an investment in all our futures. This is a landmark agreement that prioritizes people with a focus on the power of e-learning. Collaborating with UNWTO, we can ensure that development opportunities are accessible worldwide, building the workforce necessary to support a thriving and sustainable future for the sector.”

UNWTO and Kingdom of Saudi Arabia’s Agreement

Against the backdrop of the ITB Berlin, UNWTO signed an agreement with the Ministry of Tourism of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The first of its kind, the agreement is focused on the creation of training and quality certification programs in the Kingdom. The training will have a global reach and be built around collaboration in the following areas:

1. Online Courses: The creation of massive online open courses targeting the global tourism sector workforce, which reaches up to 300 million people. The courses will be managerial as well as vocational and available in Arabic, Chinese, English, French and Spanish. Topics will include entrepreneurship, innovation, event management, destination management, sustainability, gastronomy, hotel and restaurant operations.
2. Jobs Factory and Tourism Labor Market Observatory: To promote the creation of added value jobs through capacity building and analysis of the workforce skills in the Kingdom. The initiative will benefit up to 100,000 job seekers and involve at least 50 tourism businesses.

3. TedQual Quality Certification Programs: Up to 50 tourism education and training programs will be assessed as part of the UNWTO TedQual process. Up to 35 programs in tourism education and training institutions in the Kingdom will participate in this certification program.

4. Innovation & Digital Transformation: To create programs with the aim of promoting innovation and digital transformation to empower youth and small and medium enterprises in tourism field.

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