Dear Affiliate Members,

I am pleased to introduce you to a new edition of the Affiliate Members Newsletter. This monthly publication will inform you about the latest news, events, and initiatives related to your membership and our Affiliate Members network. Also included is the updated calendar of events for 2023, featuring the main UNWTO events and those carried out by our Affiliate Members, with the participation of the Affiliate Members Department or the UNWTO.

This month, UNWTO will be celebrating World Tourism Day on September 27 under the theme “Tourism & Green Investments.” This annual observance is the perfect occasion for tourism leaders and stakeholders from the public and private sectors to meet and reflect on the importance of the sustainable development of the tourism industry and to rethink a new tourism investment strategy.

Regarding the upcoming UNWTO statutory/high-level meetings, I am pleased to remind you about the following:

- **25th UNWTO General Assembly**, 16-20 October, Samarkand, Uzbekistan, scheduled every two years, the General Assembly aims to discuss the UNWTO programme of work and to debate topics of vital importance to the tourism sector.

- **44th Plenary Session of the Affiliate Members**, 16 October, Samarkand, Uzbekistan (in the framework of the 25th GA). This is the most important statutory meeting for the UNWTO Affiliate Membership and will bring together Affiliate Members from all around the world to meet, discuss, share, and interact around a variety of topics and set the roadmap for the Affiliate Membership’s priorities for the next years.

Lastly, I am pleased to remind you that the **Call for Proposals for UNWTO’s General PoW 2024-2025** is still open. Affiliate Members can submit projects and initiatives to be implemented with the support of UNWTO. I strongly encourage Affiliate Members to send their proposals and take advantage of this opportunity to support our Organization’s mission to build a more sustainable tourism industry, while also finding win-win synergies that can help affiliates gain notoriety and showcase their expertise. All the related information is available on the AMConnected Platform.

The Affiliate Members Department will continue to collaborate and support the Affiliate Members’ initiatives to the best of its capabilities. As usual, I am at your disposal and look forward to hearing any comments you might have.

Yours sincerely,

Ion Vilcu
AMD
the Affiliate Members Department

The UNWTO Affiliate Members Department (AMD) fosters public-private cooperation in tourism and the synergies among Affiliate Members and Member States. Bringing together around 500 private companies, associations, educational institutions, and DMOs, the UNWTO Affiliate Membership provides an unparalleled space for members to engage in dialogue, exchange knowledge, support new measures and create synergies that promote the development of the sector, and contribute to the promotion of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

**OUR MISSION**
Helping private entities to forge alliances, fostering dialogue and collaboration, as well as strengthen synergies between Member States and Affiliate Members to face the challenges of the tourism sector

**OUR PURPOSE**
Supporting the development of the tourism sector by contributing to the achievement Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations

**OUR VALUE PROPOSITION**
Assisting our members in the development of a more inclusive, responsible, sustainable and accessible tourism industry

Main Objectives of the Membership

1. **VISIBILITY**
Enhance the work of our Affiliate Members through the new communication channels

2. **NETWORKING**
Promote the creation of alliances among like-minded Affiliate Members and Member States around the world

3. **PARTICIPATION**
Facilitate the participation of our Affiliate Members in major events and international initiatives that will provide them with value and visibility

4. **KNOWLEDGE**
Collect and share information, data, and research relevant to the Tourism Industry

5. **COOPERATION**
Foster collaboration in joint projects with the UNWTO and in business projects among Affiliate Members

6. **SUPPORT**
Offer institutional support and endorsement to promote new projects developed by the Affiliate Members

7. **DEVELOPMENT**
Create opportunities for new innovative business projects for Affiliate Members that will contribute to the sustainable development of the Tourism sector
## AGENDA OF THE AFFILIATE MEMBERS - EVENTS 2023

### UNWTO STATUTORY AND HIGH-LEVEL MEETINGS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16-20 Oct.</td>
<td><strong>25th UNWTO General Assembly</strong></td>
<td>Samarkand, Uzbekistan</td>
<td>In Person</td>
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<tr>
<td>16 Oct.</td>
<td><strong>44th AMs Plenary Session</strong></td>
<td>Samarkand, Uzbekistan</td>
<td>In Person</td>
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<tr>
<td>17 Oct.</td>
<td><strong>119th Session of the UNWTO Executive Council</strong></td>
<td>Samarkand, Uzbekistan</td>
<td>In Person</td>
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<tr>
<td>20 Oct.</td>
<td><strong>120th Session of the UNWTO Executive Council</strong></td>
<td>Samarkand, Uzbekistan</td>
<td>In Person</td>
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<tr>
<td>31 May-2 June</td>
<td><strong>68th Regional Commission for Europe</strong></td>
<td>Sofia, Bulgaria</td>
<td>In Person</td>
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<tr>
<td>7-8 June</td>
<td><strong>49th Regional Commission for the Middle East</strong></td>
<td>Dead Sea, Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan,</td>
<td>In Person</td>
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<tr>
<td>15-17 June</td>
<td><strong>35th CAP-CSA, 55th CAP, 59th CSA</strong></td>
<td>Phnom Penh, Cambodia</td>
<td>In Person</td>
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<tr>
<td>27-28 June</td>
<td><strong>68th Regional Commission for the Americas</strong></td>
<td>Quito, Ecuador</td>
<td>In Person</td>
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<tr>
<td>26-28 July</td>
<td><strong>66th Regional Commission for Africa</strong></td>
<td>Mauritius</td>
<td>In Person</td>
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### COMMITTEE ON MATTERS RELATED TO AFFILIATE MEMBERSHIP (CMAM)

<table>
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<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>10 Oct.</td>
<td><strong>4th Meeting of the Committee on Matters Related to Affiliate Membership (CMAM)</strong></td>
<td>Samarkand, Uzbekistan</td>
<td>Online</td>
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<tr>
<td>17 Oct.</td>
<td><strong>5th Meeting of the Committee on Matters Related to Affiliate Membership (CMAM)</strong></td>
<td>Samarkand, Uzbekistan</td>
<td>In Person</td>
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### BOARD OF THE AFFILIATE MEMBERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8 Nov.</td>
<td><strong>59th Meeting of the Board of the Affiliate Members</strong></td>
<td>WTM, London</td>
<td>In Person</td>
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UNWTO/AMD THEMATIC EVENTS WITH THE PARTICIPATION
OF AFFILIATE MEMBERS

26-27 April 2nd World Sports Tourism Congress Zadar, Croatia In Person/ Hybrid
27 Sept. World Tourism Day Riyadh, Saudi Arabia In Person/ Hybrid
5-7 Oct. 8th UNWTO World Forum on Gastronomy Tourism San Sebastian, Spain In Person/ Hybrid
22-24 Nov. 7th UNWTO Global Conference on Wine Tourism La Rioja, Spain In Person/ Hybrid

UNWTO AFFILIATE MEMBERS DEPARTMENT EVENTS

15 June UNWTO Affiliate Members Roundtable: Public-Private Cooperation at the Core of Tourism Sustainable Development Phnom Penh, Cambodia In Person
Oct. (TBC) Session dedicated to Affiliate Members FIT Latin America Buenos Aires, Argentina In Person
17 Oct. Session dedicated to Affiliate Members Within the framework of the UNWTO General Assembly In Person
28 Oct. (TBC) Session dedicated to Affiliate Members Tourism Expo Japan Osaka, Japan In Person
Nov. (TBC) Session dedicated to Affiliate Members WTM, London In Person
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<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Event Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CETT</td>
<td>13 Sept.</td>
<td>Terres CHECK-IN International Hospitality Film Awards</td>
<td>Lloret de Mar, Spain</td>
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<td>UdelC</td>
<td>20-23 Sept.</td>
<td>21st SATys: Horizon 2023 advances and challenges of tourism</td>
<td>Cancun, Mexico</td>
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<tr>
<td>FS</td>
<td>18-20 Oct.</td>
<td>VI Starlight International Meeting and IV Starlight Guides and Monitors Meeting</td>
<td>Cuenca, Spain</td>
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<tr>
<td>Skal I</td>
<td>1-5 Nov.</td>
<td>Skal International Sustainable Tourism Awards</td>
<td>Malaga, Spain</td>
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<tr>
<td>ETHTA</td>
<td>9-10 Nov.</td>
<td>International Congress on Thermal Tourism 2023</td>
<td>Nancy, France</td>
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<tr>
<td>STO</td>
<td>16-17 Nov.</td>
<td>Seoul Sustainable Tourism Conference 2023</td>
<td>Seoul, Republic of Korea</td>
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<tr>
<td>FENALCO</td>
<td>15-18 Nov.</td>
<td>Congreso Internacional de Turismo de Experiencias y Expo-Experiencias</td>
<td>Santa Marta, Colombia</td>
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<tr>
<td>TIAC</td>
<td>21-22 Nov.</td>
<td>TIAC Canadian Tourism Congress</td>
<td>Ottawa, Canada</td>
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<tr>
<td>WLO</td>
<td>11-15 Dec.</td>
<td>17th World Leisure Congress</td>
<td>Dunedin, New Zealand</td>
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**OTHERS AFFILIATE MEMBERS' EVENTS**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Event Title</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>City Destination Alliance</td>
<td>26-30 Aug.</td>
<td>37th CityDNA Summer School</td>
<td>Gdansk, Poland</td>
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<tr>
<td>City Destination Alliance</td>
<td>7-8 Sept.</td>
<td>18th TourMIS Users' Workshop &amp; International Seminar</td>
<td>Vienna, Austria</td>
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<tr>
<td>City Destination Alliance</td>
<td>3-7 Oct.</td>
<td>City DNA Autumns Conference &amp; GDS-Forum</td>
<td>Valencia, Spain</td>
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<tr>
<td>City Destination Alliance</td>
<td>23-24 Nov.</td>
<td>10th TIC Expert Meeting</td>
<td>Bologna, Italy</td>
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WORLD TOURISM DAY 2023: GREEN INVESTMENTS

On 27 September UNWTO will celebrate another edition of World Tourism Day, in Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

To be held under the theme "Tourism & Green Investments," for this year UNWTO has identified investments as a key priority for the sector, serving as the bridge between its Member States, destinations, businesses and investors, culminating in World Tourism Day 2023, which will be a call to action to the international community, governments, multilateral financial institutions, development partners and private sector investors to unite around a new tourism investment strategy.

The international observance day for tourism will highlight the vital need to deliver investment for projects that work for People (by investing in education and skills), Planet (by investing in sustainable infrastructure and accelerating green transformation) and Prosperity (by investing in innovation, technology and entrepreneurship).

Also for this year, the UNWTO invites Affiliate Members to join the celebration and raise awareness about World Tourism Day.

- **Post on social media:** Celebrate World Tourism Day by sharing social media messages, graphics and animations.

- **Use the main hashtags:** #WorldTourismDay #WTD2023. See here for other official UNWTO languages.

- **Frame your WTD:** Tell the world how you celebrate #WTD by joining the photo filter campaign

- **Share your event** and reflect on how this Day is celebrated around the world.

World Tourism Day has been held on 27 September each year since 1980. The date marks the anniversary of the adoption of the Statutes of the Organization in 1970, paving the way for the establishment of UNWTO five years later.

You can find more information [HERE](#).
HAPPENING SOON: 44TH AFFILIATE MEMBERS PLENARY SESSION

Affiliate Members, top representatives of the UNWTO Member States, as well as world tourism leaders from public and private sectors, local authorities, academia, and media, will gather to discuss the future of the tourism industry.

The 44th UNWTO Affiliate Members Plenary Session will occur on 16 October, within the framework of the 25th UNWTO General Assembly, in Samarkand, Uzbekistan.

This is the most important statutory meeting for the UNWTO Affiliate Membership and will bring together once again Affiliate Members from all around the world to meet, discuss, share, and interact around a variety of topics and set the roadmap for the Affiliate Membership's priorities for the upcoming years.

This year, the Plenary Session will focus on UNWTO Programme of Work for the period 2024-2025 marked by the transformation of the tourism sector by fostering public-private collaboration and promoting good practices in the industry.

On this occasion, the Affiliate Members Department will organize a thematic session with the participation of Affiliate Members, who will discuss the role played by the tourism industry in terms of job creation, contribution to reducing poverty, and increasing prosperity in the global economy. This discussion will highlight the collaborative efforts between governments and the tourism private sector to shape a more inclusive, responsible, and prosperous future for the global tourism sector.

You can find more information HERE
NOW OPEN: CALL FOR PROPOSALS FOR UNWTO’S GENERAL POW 2024-2025

Affiliate Members have the opportunity to submit projects and initiatives to be implemented, with the support of UNWTO, for the period 2024-2025, in support of our Organization’s mission to build a more responsible, sustainable and universally accessible tourism, while also finding win-win synergies that can help the Affiliate Member gain notoriety and showcase their expertise in the tourism sector.

In December 2022, UNWTO launched a survey on Members' Priorities to prepare the Organization's General Programme of Work and Budget for the period 2024-2025, which is the strategic document guiding UNWTO's action for the next biennium. For the first time in the history of the Organization, the survey launched by UNWTO to collect inputs from Member States for the elaboration of such document has also been shared among Affiliate Members, providing the opportunity to incorporate feedback and perspectives from the private sector, academia, and local tourism administrations.

One of the most important objectives of the UNWTO Affiliate Membership is to continuously improve the effective integration of the Affiliate Members in the work of the Organization and the collaboration with the governments of the Member States. The Call for Proposals for the UNWTO's General PoW 2024-2025 represents the perfect opportunity to implement this.

Affiliate Members are encouraged to send their proposals, before 15 September. The selected proposals will have the chance to be presented during the 44th Plenary Session of the Affiliate Members, to be hosted on 16 October in Samarkand, Uzbekistan in the framework of the 25th UNWTO General Assembly.

You can find more information HERE
AFFILIATE MEMBERS ARE ENCOURAGED TO JOIN THE UNWTO TOURISM VIDEO COMPETITION

Affiliate Members are invited to participate in the 6th edition of the UNWTO Tourism Video Competition.

The competition aims to highlight the most successful videos representing an opportunity to reposition tourism as a key sector for people, planet, and prosperity.

Affiliate Members are encouraged to submit videos for the "Exceptional Stories of Sustainable Tourism" category. This category looks for notable examples that showcase the human face of tourism and clearly illustrate the positive social impact the sector can have by generating optimism and opportunities for all. The winners will be announced during the 25th session of the UNWTO General Assembly (16-20 October 2023), and reflected in official communications.

Following the hiatus in international travel, the sector has recognized the need to put sustainability, peace, innovation, quality jobs, and the empowerment of women and youth at the forefront.

In the post-pandemic recovery phase, digital and audiovisual communication is now more relevant than ever for framing these priorities and reaching tourists themselves, as well as public and private stakeholders.

Video submission will be open until 15 September, and must follow the following:
- Full HD (1920x1080)
- Codec: H264 (MP4)
- File size minimum 128 MB
- Extension: Min. 1 minute to maximum 5 minutes

You can find all the information regarding the guidelines and submissions for the competition [HERE](#).
UNWTO HIGHLIGHTS

FINALISTS NAMED IN UNWTO MOROCCAN TOURISM STARTUP COMPETITION

UNWTO has recognized the most influential innovators reshaping tourism in the Kingdom of Morocco. The finalists of the first Moroccan Tourism Startup Competition showcase the power of the sector for driving post-pandemic recovery, protecting cultural and natural heritage and providing opportunities for both rural and urban communities.

The competition focused on identifying solutions to advance the development of the Moroccan tourism, reaching out to startups with a focus on five pillars:

- Innovation in blue and green economies (life under water)
- Innovation in natural heritage: Nature, trekking & hiking
- Innovation in natural heritage: Desert & Oasis Adventure
- Innovation in cultural heritage: Preservation through cultural innovation
- Sustainable Urban Futures: Innovation in urban tourism

Among the 135 applications from across the Kingdom, the ten finalists reflect the diverse talent of the Moroccan national tourism sector.

- For innovation in blue and green economies, the winning startups are MOUJA, The Surf and Watersports Guide for Morocco and NAMA SOCIAL HUB, an event agency specializing in the organization of events for surfing enthusiasts in Imssouane.
- In the trekking and hiking category, the two finalists are ANEGMA, a reservation platform for atypical and unusual accommodation in Morocco, INTO THE WILD, a concept for novel accommodation in national parks.
- For innovation in deserts and oasis adventures, the finalists are UMNYA Morocco Experiences, an innovative eco-accommodation, and TERRE DES ETOILES, an atypical and original eco-accommodation.
- The finalists in the preservation through cultural innovation category are ATAR, a mobile application to discover cultural heritage and MACHI MOUCHKIL, a Moroccan street food concept.
- Finally, MAROCULTOUR, an online booking service for cultural tours on an electric tricycle driven by Moroccan women, and PIKALA BIKES, an ecological transport concept that offers an authentic experience for tourists to explore the city of Marrakech by bike, are the finalists for innovation in urban tourism.

You can find more information HERE
UNWTO HIGHLIGHTS

UNWTO STRENGTHENS RELATIONSHIP WITH ISRAEL DURING OFFICIAL VISIT

Innovation, tourism for rural development and high-level cooperation were the focus of this week’s official visit of the UNWTO Secretary-General to Israel.

As a founding Member State, joining in 1975, Israel has played an active role in UNWTO’s work and continues to serve on several important Committees and bodies. Following on from the official visit of Israel’s Ministry of Tourism, to the UNWTO headquarters in Madrid in July, the UNWTO Secretary-General Zurab Pololikashvili led a delegation to Israel for a series of high-level discussions around shared priorities.

In Jerusalem, Secretary-General Pololikashvili held a bilateral meeting with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Israel Eli Cohen. Mr. Pololikashvili commended Israel’s active role in tourism governance and its commitment to several UNWTO priorities for the sector.

- Israel is an elected member of the Task Force on Redesigning Tourism for Future. Alongside Spain, Israel was chosen to represent the region of Europe in this UNWTO subsidiary body.

- Israel also serves as member of the UNWTO Committee on Tourism and Competitiveness for the period 2019-2023.

- Discussions explored possibilities of deepening relations with Israel around shared priorities for tourism. The focus here was on topics including tourism innovation and entrepreneurship and also investments in tourism.

Also in Jerusalem, Secretary-General Pololikashvili and the UNWTO delegation received a warm welcome at the Ministry of Tourism, to discuss the deepening of cooperation between UNWTO and Israel. Discussions focused on shared priorities for tourism both in the country and across the wider region, most notably education, innovations, sustainability, data collection, accessibility, legal instruments.

Recognizing Israel’s focus on innovation and digital transformation, the UNWTO delegation met with leading representatives of the country’s start-up community. To conclude the official visit, the UNWTO delegation visited Kfar Kama, named as one of the Best Tourism Villages by UNWTO in 2022.

You can find more information HERE
UNWTO HIGHLIGHTS

UNWTO TO HELP THASSOS REBUILD TOURISM WITH RESIDENTS AT THE FOREFRONT

UNWTO will work with the Municipality of Thassos in Greece to help the island rebuild its tourism sector in an inclusive way. The new joint project will focus on two core issues, namely tourism marketing and community involvement in tourism on Thassos. The work is part of a wider focus to place local communities at the centre of tourism policies as the sector's recovery continues to gather pace.

Marketing Action Plan
As part of the collaboration, UNWTO will work with the Municipality to boost the diversity and resilience of tourism on the island.

- The marketing initiatives for Thassos tourism carried out over recent years will be thoroughly analysed, with key takeaways used to inform future work.
- Both parties will then collaborate on a new Marketing Action Plan. The marketing activity will aim to provide Thassos with a targeted action plan to improve the marketing efforts and initiatives through contemporary and effective marketing tools.

Delivering Benefits for All
“We are delighted to be working with the Municipality of Thassos, Greece, on this important project,” said UNWTO Secretary-General Zurab Pololikashvili. “This project is a great example of how UNWTO is working with communities to ensure that tourism is developed in a way that is beneficial to all.”

“With the present cooperation, the island of Thassos acquires international and up-to-date technical assistance “tools” related to tourism development” said Mayor of Thassos Eleftherios Kyriakidis.

“We are generating knowledge to consult our policy of extroversion that is needed for a more sustainable tourism development in Thassos, taking always into account the natural environment, history, culture and local society.”

You can find more information HERE
EXPERIENTIAL TRAVEL REPLACES CONVENTIONAL TRAVEL MOTIVATIONS

Mabrian Technologies, the leading company in Travel Intelligence and sentiment analysis, has analysed the spontaneous behaviour and preferences of travellers globally using Social Listening. This methodology is based on Big Data and Artificial Intelligence (Natural Language Processing) techniques to analyse over 400 million tourism-related interactions on Social Media during the observed period (first semester of 2019 to first semester of 2023).

How tourists travel now

The major conclusion to take from the study is that experiential activities or motivations are taking over conventional travel motivations. By experiential, the activities considered are related to Wellness, Active and Lifestyle, Nature and Food and Cuisine. On the other hand, conventional travel motivations have been defined as Arts and Culture, Sunbathing, Family, Shopping and Nightlife activities.

When dividing these motivations in two different blocks, the data shows how experiential activities have increased by 10 percentual points in the last 4 years ahead of conventional activities. By June 2023 the share of experiential motivations is already almost 50 / 50, which is highly significant, considering that in June 2019 only Arts & Culture and Sunbathing represented 41% of the travel motivations.

The activities that have picked up the most during these years reaching unprecedented levels of interest are Active & Lifestyle, Nature and Wellness. Regarding the two first ones, the data shows a clear inflection point from 2021, corroborating the effects of the pandemic in this type of motivations to travel. Wellbeing has also seen stable growth since 2019.

On the other hand, conventional activities that have lost most of their importance are Arts & Culture and Sunbathing, which now represent only 34% of travel motivations, losing 7 percentual points since 2019.

Click HERE to see how it will look.
EQUATORIAL GUINEA HAS RECENTLY LAUNCHED AN ONLINE VISA SERVICE, MARKING A SIGNIFICANT MILESTONE IN PROMOTING TOURISM IN THE COUNTRY.

Equatorial Guinea has partnered with VFS Global to create and maintain an electronic visa application service that has been successfully implemented in countries like the United Arab Emirates. The government enlisted the private company’s help to make the process of obtaining a visa more accessible to travelers.

On July 15, 2023, Prime Minister Roka Botey announced the official launch of the online visa at an event in the City of Sipopo. Government officials and representatives from Equatorial Guinea's tourism industry, including Guineatur, the leading Destination Management Company in the country, were present at the occasion. The Prime Minister used the popular phrase "Adiós a la carta de llamada" to welcome a new era of accessible tourism in Equatorial Guinea. She also mentioned that during the transition period, both the online visa application and traditional embassy application method will be available.

Mrs. Catalina Martinez Asumu, Secretary of State for Culture, Tourism, and Artisan Promotion, emphasized the significance of this milestone and its potential to boost tourism and the country's economic growth.

The President of the Republic, Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo, has been instrumental in this progress, as he sees the development of the tourism industry as a means of economic diversification. The launch event demonstrated the readiness of the government and private tourism sector to embrace tourism as the economic future of Equatorial Guinea.

As of July 1st, 2023, the new online visa service is available for both travelers and business professionals. The process is straightforward and efficient, with a single-entry visa for 90 days costing $75 USD or 44,887.5 CFA with delivery times ranging from 24 to 72 hours.

Swiss Hotel Management School (SHMS) once again stands at the forefront of innovation in the world of hospitality. On September 15th, 2023, a live demonstration of Marconnet Technology's state-of-the-art hospitality robot, Lucki, will be held in SHMS Leysin. As a collaboration between SHMS lecturer Xavier de Leymarie and Marconnet Robotics manager Benjamin Marconnet, this event hopes to showcase the synergy between traditional Swiss hospitality values and cutting-edge advancements in hospitality and tourism.

Designed to seamlessly integrate with various service-oriented environments, Lucki epitomizes the junction between human-centric values and the latest in robotics. Students and faculty alike will have the unique opportunity to witness Lucki in action, as well as engage with its creators to gain insights into its development and application within the hospitality sector.

For a renowned institution like SHMS, embracing technological innovation while preserving Switzerland's historic hospitality traditions is a delicate balance. SHMS has a history of innovation and leadership regarding hospitality technology; in 2017, SHMS became the first hotel management school in the world recognized as an Apple Distinguished School, a designation reserved only for esteemed, technology-forward academic institutions.

"It makes perfect sense to integrate such an advanced robot in our students’ academic curriculum,” remarks Leymarie. "More and more hotels and restaurants are embracing this new technology. We naturally want our students to know how to use it wisely to create value and return on investment. Understanding the latest technological tools will give them the required skills to be future leaders in the hospitality industry.”

In an era where technological fluency is increasingly crucial, the upcoming robot demonstration is an immersive learning experience which represents an exciting glimpse into the technological marvels of tomorrow and a powerful affirmation of SHMS’s dedication to excellence, innovation, and the enduring values of Swiss hospitality.
GET TO KNOW QUITO CYCLING!

The Capital of the middle of the world has cycling routes that will take you to discover charming places and live unforgettable experiences.

Quito has more than 140 kilometers of bike lanes, 39% are recreational and are located in metropolitan parks and ecological routes that provide the opportunity to connect with nature.

We invite you to enjoy tours between rivers, waterfalls and forests.

The El Chaquiñán Route crosses the parishes of Cumbayá, Tumbaco and Puembo and travels a section of the old railway. A simple route that does not present very pronounced elevations or technical unevenness; however, due to its length, it is recommended that the person have previous experience on routes of at least two hours by bicycle.

The Lloa – Palmira route presents short elevations and slightly steep descents, there are natural viewpoints with incredible views of the Guagua Pichincha and Atacazo volcanoes and the landscapes of the place.

In addition, during the route you can visit farms, which offer dairy products to the visitor such as cheese, milk, yogurt, among others.

The Pululahua route descends to the heart of one of the few inhabited craters in the world. The area allows several routes with different difficulties and modalities such as the return to Pondoña from Moraspungo; the route between Tanlahua and Puluhua; or those that enter from the parish of Calacalí or the Community of Yunquilla.

The Nono–Alaspungo route has little traveled dirt roads that offer beautiful and unique landscapes. A short and easy route with some long ascents that deserve the reward of a spectacular view of the Rucu and Guagua Pichincha volcanoes, to the east; or a kind of cloud mattress that covers the lower lands to the west.

Tour Quito on your ‘steel horse’, enjoy beautiful landscapes, delight yourself with the gastronomy and discover why your story begins here.
LUNFARDA TRAVEL WINS IGLTA FOUNDATION'S 2023 IMPACT AWARD

Lunfarda Travel, a Buenos Aires-based travel company, has been granted the esteemed 2023 Impact Award by the IGLTA Foundation. This award applauds the company’s dedication to responsible tourism development and underscores its pioneering efforts in fostering inclusivity within the travel industry.

Mariana Radisic Koliren, the visionary founder of Lunfarda, has cultivated an exemplary approach to responsible tourism. Mariana's commitment to diversity and inclusion shines through Lunfarda Travel's distinctive offerings, including immersive Black History and Queer History tours. These experiences not only forge meaningful connections with travelers but also shed light on often overlooked aspects of Argentina's rich cultural heritage.

Lunfarda Travel's impact extends beyond tourism, exemplified by their partnership with Mocha Celis—an NGO running a school for trans and non-binary students. Moreover, the company actively contributes to environmental preservation through a partnership with an NGO in Cordoba, Argentina, aimed at transforming land into protected natural areas using native plants.

The 2023 Impact Award showcases Lunfarda Travel's dedication to responsible travel practices, making them an example for other small businesses seeking to make a positive impact. This prestigious recognition will be formally presented at the IGLTA's 40th Anniversary Global Convention in San Juan, Puerto Rico, from 4-7 October.

Mariana Radisic Koliren expressed her gratitude, stating, "It's an honor to receive the Impact Award and be acknowledged for our ongoing work spearheading an intersectional framework in travel. Our case shows that having a core framework of diversity is not just an ethical necessity but a fruitful business approach."

This award reflects IGLTA's commitment to sustainable tourism and recognizes initiatives that promote responsible practices. By honoring Lunfarda Travel, IGLTA highlights the transformative power of forward-thinking travel companies that lead by example.

Read more
The 16th ECTN conference with main theme ‘Smart Tourism - Smart Destinations: Cultural Heritage & Creativity, Digitalisation, Sustainability’ will discuss the latest trends in the field of culture, heritage, smart and sustainable tourism, including innovation, creativity and cultural tourism product development. The emphasis will be on the important role of cultural heritage and digitalisation in smart tourism and smart destinations.

The ECTN 2023 Conference is organised in the framework of Pafos 2023 European Capital of Smart Tourism, the European Year of Skills 2023, the ReInHerit Horizon 2020 Coordination and Support Action (CSA) and the ‘Transition Pathway for Tourism’ co-implementation (European Commission DG GROW). The conference aims to explore major challenges, risks and opportunities for smart, sustainable and responsible tourism development related to culture and heritage assets, as well as suggest practical steps for the development and promotion of cultural tourism products.

The theme encompasses all forms of culture, including contemporary cultural expressions, all forms of cultural heritage and smart solutions. The Conference will be opened by the Cyprus Deputy Minister of Tourism with speakers from the European Parliament, European Commission, Committee of the Regions, Europa Nostra, European Travel Commission and Europeana. There will be some 40 presentations on Digitalisation, History and Heritage, Transnational Thematic Tourism Products and UNESCO World Heritage Sites for Sustainable Tourism. There will be also special sessions on results from Horizon 2020 Cultural Tourism projects and European data space for cultural heritage and tourism.

The ceremony for the 10th ECTN Awards ‘Destination of Sustainable Cultural Tourism 2023’ will be held. The conference will be concluded with study visits at the Pafos Archaeological Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Registration will open in early September 2023.

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NEW PROJECTS AT EUROPAMUNDO

In accordance with the demands of the market, and due to the growth in the number of passengers, we want to keep up with and ensure the quality of the service provided. For this reason, we have launched some new projects that will allow us to continue to grow and at the same time ensure and improve the quality of the service:

- We have reached an agreement with Politours, through which we will market river cruises in Latin America. Europamundo will incorporate Politours' programme of river cruises in its catalogue in different destinations, allowing us to maintain the quality of our service without increasing the number of buses in circulation.

- Through an agreement with Soltour, we want to increase our presence in the Spanish market. This alliance will allow us to offer a product that is increasingly in demand by Spanish travel agencies, such as experiential trips in circuit format.

This type of travel is especially in demand by a more female sector of the population, between 50 and 75 years of age, with great cultural interest, medium and medium-high purchasing power and an interest in enriching experiences.

- New tools have been developed and launched to facilitate the daily work of our guides and office staff and also to improve direct communication with passengers.

- Creation of a study team for the contracting of long-term services.

- Launch of a new, more interactive app with numerous functionalities, through which users can explore the entire travel catalogue, obtain quotes and manage bookings with their agents. It also incorporates "On-Tour" technology to receive information and advice through a travel assistant.
LISTENING FOR REGENERATION - LEADING A CROSS-BORDER REGENERATIVE TOURISM INITIATIVE IN IRELAND

The scenic rural border region of North West Ireland boasts abundant natural assets like lakes, rivers, valleys, and forests, intertwined with a rich shared cultural and historical heritage between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. It draws nature enthusiasts and outdoor explorers eager for authentic, unique experiences that delve into local culture and history, making it an ideal setting for fostering regenerative tourism.

This cross-border region has dealt with decades of conflict but it is now a great story of reconciliation and regeneration through cooperation. Donegal County Council (Republic of Ireland) and Fermanagh & Omagh District Council (Northern Ireland) came together to commission a feasibility study for a regenerative tourism project for a more prosperous and connected place. Guided by TOPOSOPHY, a place making and marketing agency with a track record of genuine stakeholder engagement and responsible destination development, along with local partners, the study prioritizes authentic stakeholder engagement for regeneration.

Listening to the local people's place-specific aspirations and ambitions has been fundamental to this study. The consultation workshops delivered by TOPOSOPHY and project partner, The Tourism Space, were primarily designed as a listening exercise, creating space for stakeholders to think about what regenerative tourism might mean to them and how tourism can serve their vision for their place and its people, with the focus on the 'shared' elements of the place. This truly grassroots, regenerative approach garnered the full support of the Councils.

Prioritising active listening meant receiving invaluable insights on the significance of nature, leveraging collaboration, and opportunity to tell a new and shared story of the place. Consequently, the project team developed options for a regenerative tourism project that will act as a key catalyst for positive change and a more connected and thriving place to live and visit.
AZORES LAUNCHES ITS TOURISM STRATEGIC AND MARKETING PLAN 2030

The development of tourism in the Azores has brought clear improvements to the residents' quality of life.

The strong commitment to sustainability shows a destination on the right path to deal with issues such as the decrease in seasonality, distribution of tourist flows across the 9 islands, profitability of tourist businesses and the qualification of human resources.

To respond to these challenges the Azores Government proceeded with the revision of the Strategic and Marketing Plan for Tourism, looking at the 2030 horizon. This work, developed by IPDT – Institute of Tourism, presented innovative solutions to enhance the competitiveness of the destination.

The process took place between December 2022 and March 2023, and was supported by a vast collection of information from trade, stakeholders, residents and tour operators. The path to 2030 is based on a positioning that explores the differentiating elements of the destination: “Azores: 9 islands, the experience of a lifetime”, showing that visiting the islands of the archipelago is a unique experience.

The vision and mission of Azores tourism reinforce the commitment to sustainable development, with 4 strategic objectives defined to respond to the challenges:
1. consolidate the Azores as a sustainable tourist destination;
2. reduce seasonality and distribute tourist flows;
3. raise quality standards and generate more value;
4. leverage notoriety with the final consumer.

The strategy highlights 8 strategic products, prioritized on 3 levels:
- Priority: Nature – Land and Sea
- Complementary: Culture; Gastronomy and Wines; Wellbeing
- Secondary: Meeting Industry; Cruises; Golf; Sun and sea

As for the markets, 4 levels are defined:
- level 1 (reinforce bet) – Portugal, Germany, USA, France and Canada;
- level 2 (consolidate the offer) – Spain, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Italy and Belgium;
- levels 3 and 4 - markets where the Azores will explore opportunities.

For the Azores, in the 2030 horizon, the success of tourism should be measured by the quality of the tourist experience and the benefits that tourism adds to the destination and its residents.
The UNWTO Affiliate Members Department is responsible for the management of the partnership between UNWTO and the private sector.

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