

International Tourism and its Impact on World Politics and World Economy

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Abstract

International tourism is one of the most dynamically developing forms of international trade. In the economy of a particular country, it performs a number of important functions: it is a source of foreign exchange earnings and a means of providing employment for the population; contributes to the balance of payments; contributes to the diversification of the economy, providing stimulating effects on industries serving the tourism sector; increases the attractiveness of the country as a sphere of international entrepreneurship and business cooperation; creates incentives for the inflow of foreign capital into the national economy.

The main feature of international tourism is the crossing of state borders. The greater the differences between states, the greater the obstacles to the free movement of people. The simplification (tightening) of formalities has an impact on international tourist flows, providing (or, conversely, hindering) the movement of people. The complex and confusing procedure for issuing travel documents, violation of the deadlines for their consideration or arbitrary deviation, the introduction of severe restrictions on imports and currency exchanges, which determine the level of consumption of goods and services by tourists, do not contribute to the development of international tourism. From this point of view, customs declarations and inspections act as a deterrent and lead to a reduction in tourist trips.

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Another feature of international tourism is economic in nature and is revealed through the impact it has on the country's balance of payments. Foreign tourists, paying for goods and services, ensure the flow of currency into the budget of the host country, thereby activating its balance of payments, which is why the reception of foreign tourists is called active tourism. On the other hand, the departure of tourists abroad is associated with an outflow of currency from their country of permanent residence. International payments for tourism operations of this kind are reflected in the liability of the balance of payments of the country supplying tourists, and tourism itself is characterized as passive. The division into active and passive, based on the characteristics of the reflection of the financial results of tourism activities in the balance of payments, is inherent only in international tourism and does not apply to domestic tourism.

Keywords: Tourism, World Tourism Organization, Recreation, Visitor, Statistics, World Politics, World Economy

Introduction

Tourism - means leisure or business travel. The World Tourism Organization defines tourists as: "People who leave their usual environment and travel to another place for less than one consecutive year for leisure or other purposes (Davitashvili, Elizbarashvili, 2012)."

At the same time, the person, who is making such a journey is called a "tourist", "traveler", or "visitor". Economic sectors that cover the commercial activities of organizations primarily related to tourism are classified as tourism industries, such as travel agencies and other booking services (UNWTO, 2017).

According to another version, a tourist is a person visiting a country (place) of temporary stay for health-improving, recreational, educational, physical culture, sports, professional, business, religious, and other purposes without engaging in activities related to generating income from sources in the country (place) of temporary stay, for a period of 24 hours to 6 months in a row or spend at least one overnight stay in the country (place) of temporary stay.

Modern tourism is impossible without activities for the production of a tourist product: special clothing, equipment, hotels, tour agencies, transport, etc. However, this activity is not reflected in the definitions currently proposed.

In General, It is rather difficult to give a brief and at the same time a complete definition of the concept of "tourism" due to the variety of functions it performs and a large number of forms of manifestation. In the process of development, various interpretations of this term were given, and each of them reflects certain aspects of tourism. The basic criteria for defining "tourism" are:

1. Change of place: moving to a place that is outside the daily habitat.
2. Stay in another place: the place of stay should not be a place of permanent or long-term residence (12 months or more).
3. Payment for activities in the visited place: the purpose of the trip should not be the implementation of activities paid from a source in the visited place or work (remuneration).

History of tourism

Travel for relaxation and fun first became popular among the ancient Romans, who traveled mainly to visit the pyramids. Further forms and geography of travel have been expanded. The goals of the trip have also become more diverse: spectacular, educational, religious, and more. Temporary stopping houses for travelers, hotels, caravans, guest houses, summer cottages, and residences for the elite were being built.

Representatives of the affluent strata of the population who traveled abroad for curiosity have been called tourists since the end of the 17th century. After the Industrial Revolution, steam locomotives and trains were invented in the 18th and 19th centuries, which had a significant impact on the intensification of travel. Fashion lovers travel to Paris, music lovers to Italy, and travel to various European cities to study has become a big tour. It was during this period, in 1841, that the English clergyman Thomas Cook first rendered the group a commercial service. It was an organized group tour, which included a 20-minute train ride, accompanied by tea, cookies, and a wind orchestra (Hargett, 1985).

Cook himself took the role of tour guide. 450 people took part in this trip and it was priced at 1 shilling for each. This action of Cook served more for social purposes than commercial ones. He sought to show that he could use his free time wisely. Nevertheless, this fact is considered to be the first step of organized, commercial tourism. It is noteworthy that in Britain there is still this travel firm called Thomas Cook and Son (Chitadze, 2017).

The invention of the automobile can be considered an important event in the early twentieth century, although before the First World War the main flow of tourists was still by rail and boat. In the 20s and 30s, another effective means of transport appeared - airplanes, which enhances tourist activity.

The second half of the twentieth century marks the beginning of the era of mass international tourism development. In 1950, the number of international tourists reached 25 million, in 1970 - 170 million, in 1990 - 400 million. Currently, almost all people are more or less involved in tourism. At the end of

the twentieth century, 4.5 billion tourists traveled around the world, including 10% of international tourists (about 450 million), spending \$ 100-150 billion annually (UNWTO, 2001). As of 2019 (before COVID-19 spread), International tourist arrivals (overnight visitors) worldwide grew by 4% and reached 1.5 billion (UNWTO, 2022).

The geography of tourist travel is characterized by certain peculiarities. 2/3 of international tourists travel to European countries. Then the most popular region is America, which accounts for 20% of tourists, East Asia and the Pacific 10%, and Africa 3% (UNWTO, 2022).

Tourism industry

The industrial era, in which material well-being was the main value, is being replaced by the post-industrial era, where the main goal is impressions and sensations. Important factors influencing the development of tourism were the development of transport, communications, growing mobility, urbanization, reduction of working hours, and the growth of social wealth.

Under these conditions, the socio-economic position of tourism is rapidly strengthening, and its share in world trade in services is more than 30%. Tourism has become one of the most profitable businesses and today uses up to 7% of global capital. As early as 1995, the annual income from international tourism was estimated at 373 billion US dollars; while 567 million international trips were made. Tourism employs 137 million people.

In the tourism industry in 2008 accounted for about 6% of global GNP, and in 2018 - 10%; that is, in the world market, the tourist product is in the lead along with oil); 6% of jobs; 11% of global consumer spending. The annual growth in investment in the tourism industry is about 35% (UNWTO, 2022).

The implementation of the tourism business in market conditions can be carried out in the presence of four main components: capital, technology, personnel, and recreational resources. This means that it is not enough, to have capital, acquire personnel, and technology and engage in tourism. To do this, you need to choose a place where there are recreational resources, and if there is no such place, then create it. This is one of the specific features of the tourism business in the market. Since the fourth component - recreational resources - is the cheapest, in general, this determines the high profitability of the tourism business; if tourism is associated with the creation of a tourist resource, then the cost of the tourist product increases dramatically.

Recreational resources

Since recreational resources are extremely unevenly distributed on the planet, an increasing number of people go on a journey with recreational goals and motives. These recreational trips (medical, health-improving, educational, sports) became the basis for the development of recreational tourism;

recreational aspects are always present in business tourism (business tourism, congress tourism, shopping tourism).

Recreational resources are understood as a set of natural and artificially created objects suitable for creating a tourist product. As a rule, recreational resources determine the formation of the tourism business in a particular region. These resources have the following main properties: attractiveness (attractiveness), climatic conditions, accessibility, degree of study, excursion significance, socio-demographic characteristics, potential reserve, method of use, etc., these resources are used for health, tourism, sports, and educational purposes.

Recreational resources can be conditionally divided into natural and socio-economic (socio-cultural).

Natural tourism resources are classified:

- by belonging to certain components of the natural environment (climatic, water, forest, etc.).
- by functional purpose (improving, educational).
- by exhaustibility (exhaustible: objects of amateur hunting, recreational fishing and inexhaustible: sun, seawater).
- by renewability (renewable: plants, fish, animals and non-renewable: therapeutic mud, cultural monuments).

Socio-economic resources include:

- cultural and historical objects (monuments and memorable places, museums, architectural ensembles).
- cultural and historical phenomena (ethnographic, religious).
- economic (financial, infrastructural, labor).

Despite its social and humane role, tourism modifies the environment. Reducing the damage to the tourism industry to the environment is regulated at the state and international levels through environmental education, tax regulation, limiting the tourist and recreational load on natural resources, etc.

Thus, recreational resources are considered one of the factors in the development of tourism and the basis for planning the production of a tourism product (Chanturia, 2001).

Economic forces

The rapid strengthening of the financial and economic position of the tourism industry has led to the fact that in many countries of the world tourism has become a significant factor in regional development. Territorial authorities of various hierarchical levels, from counties and districts to federal

authorities, take care of the development of tourism and areas with valuable recreational resources. Tourism is considered a catalyst for the regional economy, allowing not only to use of the entire range of recreational resources but also to use of the total production and socio-cultural potential of the territory in the most efficient way while protecting ecological and cultural diversity.

Based on this, the authorities are initiating the development of a strategy for tourism activity, together with business - the development of tourism infrastructure, the creation of national parks and recreational areas, attracting investment, and increasing the number of visits to the region.

The tourist product finally turned into an economic category only in the conditions of mass tourism. The intensity of tourism is an indicator that gives an idea of what part of the population of the country (as a percentage) annually makes at least one trip. When the intensity of tourism is above 50%, we can say that tourism in a given country has a mass character. The tourist balance of a country is the ratio between the value of goods and services sold to foreigners in a given country and the value of goods and services sold to citizens of that country abroad. If the balance of the tourist balance is positive, then they say that tourism is active for the economy of this country (Thailand, Switzerland), if it is negative, it is passive (Germany, Russia).

From an economic point of view, the attractiveness of tourism as an integral part of services lies in a faster return on investment and income in hard currency. The tourism business stimulates the development of other sectors of the economy: construction, trade, agriculture, production of consumer goods, communications, etc.

This business attracts entrepreneurs for many reasons: low initial investment, growing demand for tourism services, high profitability, and a short payback period. In the tourism industry, the dynamics of growth in the volume of services provided leads to an increase in the number of jobs much faster than in other industries. The time interval between the growth in demand for tourism services and the emergence of new jobs in the tourism business is minimal.

Tourism, in addition to its great economic importance, plays a big role in expanding the boundaries of mutual understanding and trust between people of different religions and cultures. Its activities are not limited to trade in goods and services and the search for new trading partners. It is also aimed at establishing relationships between citizens of different countries for the preservation and prosperity of the world.

The task of tourism development requires the solution of many related tasks, for example, the development of the transport system, the development of the public catering system, the improvement of the image, and the development of information infrastructure (Davitashvili, Elizbarashvili, 2012).

World's top tourism destinations

In 2019, there were 1.460 billion international tourist arrivals worldwide, with a growth of 3.7% as compared to 2018. The World Tourism Organization reports the following ten destinations as the most visited in terms of the number of international travelers in 2019.

Rank	Destination	International tourist arrivals (2019)	International tourist arrivals (2018)	Change (2018 to 2019) (%)	Change (2017 to 2018) (%)
1	 France	89 million	89.4 million	▲ N/A	▲ 2.9
2	 Spain	83.5 million	82.8 million	▲ 0.8	▲ 1.1
3	 United States	79.3 million	79.7 million	▼ 0.6	▲ 3.3
4	 China	65.7 million	62.9 million	▲ 4.5	▲ 3.6
5	 Italy	64.5 million	61.6 million	▲ 4.8	▲ 5.7
6	 Turkey	51.2 million	45.8 million	▲ 11.9	▲ 21.7
7	 Mexico	45.0 million	41.3 million	▲ 9.0	▲ 5.1
8	 Thailand	39.8 million	38.2 million	▲ 4.3	▲ 7.3
9	 Germany	39.6 million	38.9 million	▲ 1.8	▲ 3.8

Rank	Destination	International tourist arrivals (2019)	International tourist arrivals (2018)	Change (2018 to 2019) (%)	Change (2017 to 2018) (%)
10	 United Kingdom	39.4 million	38.7 million	▲ 1.9	▼ 2.2

Source: <https://www.e-unwto.org/doi/abs/10.18111/wtobarometereng.2020.18.1.7>

International tourism receipts

Revenues from international tourism

Concerning the revenues from international tourism, in 2010 there were 979 billion USD, in 2017 they reached 1 trillion 347 Billion USD, in 2018 1 Trillion 457 Billion and 1 Trillion 478 Billion in 2019 (Statista, 2019).

The top ten tourism earners in 2018 were:

Rank	Country/Area	International tourism receipts (2018)
1	 United States	\$214.00 billion
2	 Spain	\$74.00 billion
3	 France	\$67.00 billion
4	 Thailand	\$63.00 billion
5	 United Kingdom	\$52.00 billion
6	 Italy	\$49.00 billion
7	 Egypt	\$45.00 billion
8	 Germany	\$43.00 billion
9	 Japan	\$41.00 billion
10	 China	\$40.00 billion

Source: <https://www.unwto.org/global/press-release/2019-06-06/exports-international-tourism-hit-usd-17-trillion>

Tourism is vital for many countries, such as France, Egypt, Greece, Lebanon, Israel, the United Kingdom, the United States, Spain, Italy, Thailand, Georgia, and many island nations, such as the Bahamas, Fiji, Maldives, and the Philippines. This is primarily due to the large investments in various activities, especially in the service sector, as a result of which employment opportunities in the service industry are largely linked to tourism. This service industry includes transportation services such as aviation, cruise ships, taxis, hospitality services such as accommodation (hotels and various shelters). The industry also includes amusement parks, casinos, shopping malls, music establishments, and theaters.

International tourism expenditure

The World Tourism Organization reports the following countries as the ten biggest spenders on international tourism for the year 2018.

Rank	Country	International tourism expenditure (2018)
1	 China	\$277 billion
2	 United States	\$144 billion
3	 Germany	\$94 billion
4	 United Kingdom	\$76 billion
5	 France	\$48 billion
6	 Australia	\$37 billion
7	 Russia	\$35 billion
8	 Canada	\$33 billion
9	 South Korea	\$32 billion
10	 Italy	\$30 billion

Source: <https://www.e-unwto.org/doi/book/10.18111/9789284422456>

Euromonitor International Top City Destinations Ranking

Euromonitor International rated these the world's most visited cities by international tourists in 2017:

Rank	City	Country	International tourist arrivals
1	Hong Kong	 China	27.88 million
2	Bangkok	 Thailand	22.45 million
3	London	 United Kingdom	19.82 million
4	Singapore	 Singapore	17.61 million
5	Cairo	 Egypt	17.33 million
6	Paris	 France	15.83 million
7	Dubai	 United Arab Emirates	15.79 million
8	New York City	 United States	13.10 million
9	Macau	 Macau	12.84 million
10	Kuala Lumpur	 Malaysia	12.47 million

Source: <https://www.euromonitor.com/article/top-100-city-destination-ranking-2017>

World Tourism Statistics and Estimates

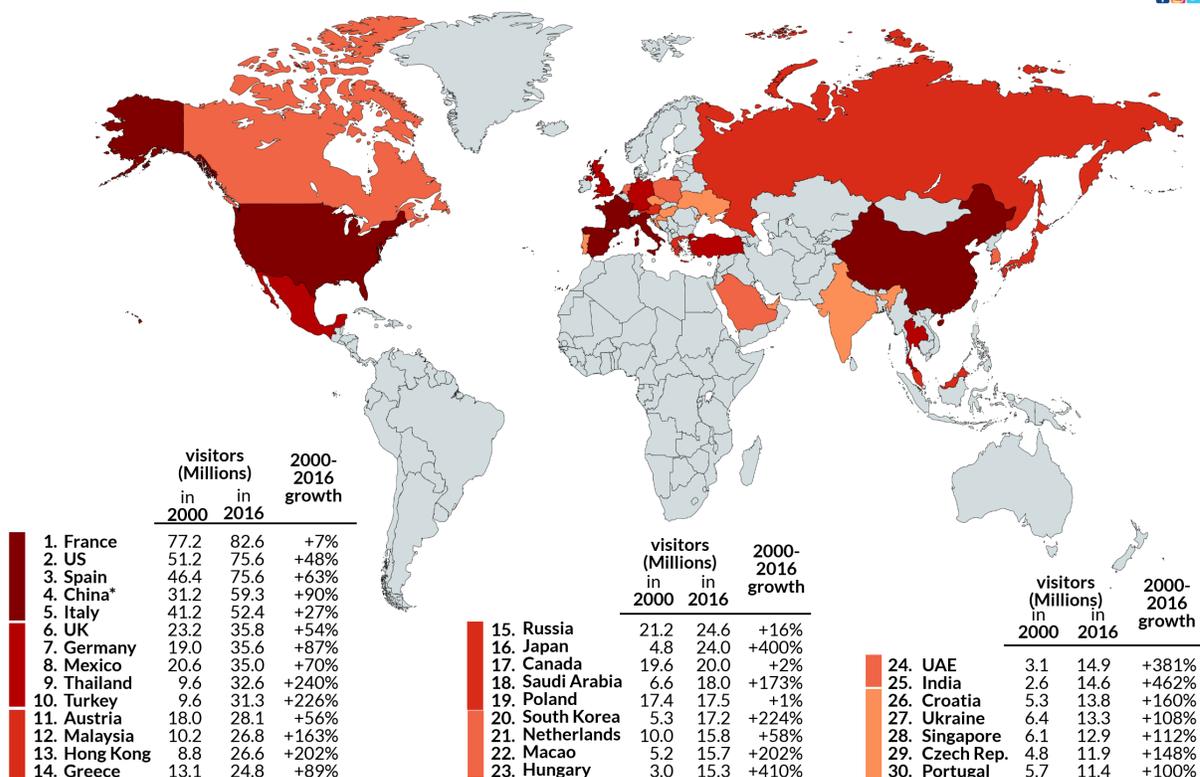
During the discussion about the most visited countries in the world within the first half of the XXI century, let`s consider the statistical data (number of tourists) of the top 30 most visited countries by international tourist arrivals within the period 2000-2016.

Map 1. Top 30 most visited countries in 2000-2016

Top 30 Most Visited Countries by International Tourist Arrivals

Source: World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO), 2016

*China: not included Hong Kong and Macao



Source: <https://factsmaps.com/top-30-most-visited-countries-by-international-tourist-arrivals/>

Geography of tourism

Europe

European countries receive the largest number of foreign tourists. From 1989-2019, the number of tourists who arrived in Europe increased to 400 million people, and cash receipts from international tourism doubled. However, the share of Europe in world tourism is gradually falling. Studies of the nationality of tourists traveling around the continent show that 90% of European tourists are residents of European countries themselves: Germans make up 19% of the total number of travelers, British 10%, French 7%, and Danes 6% (UNWTO, 2020).

The relative loss of European dominance in tourism is due to:

- aging of the tourism product of the southern European countries (Greece and Italy);
- high prices for tourism products in the Nordic countries (Great Britain, Sweden)
- socio-economic and ethnic problems in Eastern European countries;
- growing popularity of Southeast Asian countries.

Tourist flows are mainly directed to the recreation centers of Western and Southern Europe (France, Spain, Italy), this concentration is the result of the habit of summer beach holidays. The UK is known for educational tourism, while Northern Europe (Scandinavia and Ireland) specializes in eco-tourism.

America

America is third after Europe and Asia and the Pacific region in terms of the number of foreign tourists. These are South, Central, and North America, the islands of the Caribbean. Half of the international arrivals in the region are from the USA and Canada, and Europeans take the 1st place here - 15%.

The USA and Canada are huge domestic tourist markets and highly developed infrastructures with an extensive hotel network and transport industry. The second place is occupied by the Caribbean Islands, which receive 12 million tourists a year. In South America, tourist flows are relatively weak due to political instability and economic development. The main types of tourism are beaches, sports, sightseeing, and business tourism.

Incomes from international tourism reach 10-20% of the total export earnings. This high level is a consequence of the competitiveness of the region and the specialization of some areas in tourism (UNWTO, 2019).

East Asia and the Pacific

BAT is in second place in the world in terms of tourism development, and mass visits by tourists to this region began in the 80s of the XX century. These are mainly industrial countries - active exporters of goods: Malaysia, Singapore, South Korea, Thailand, Indonesia, India, Pakistan, and Taiwan.

Since 1985, these countries have increased their share of tourist arrivals to 18% and their financial income from tourism to 20%. The main tourist flow is generated by the countries of the region themselves (78%). For example, Japan provides financial incentives for Japanese vacationers abroad. The second and third places are shared by Europe and the USA.

BAT attracts tourists with its unique nature and new industrial countries with business tours. Leisure tourism is developed in Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan. The Japanese industry ranks second in the world after the United States. Singapore offers shopping tourism. Thailand is developing new beaches

on the southern coast of the country and organizing educational trips to the northern part. There is a highly demanded sex tourism industry in the largest cities.

Tourism is well developed in Australia and New Zealand, in Melanesia and Micronesia. Holidays in the Pacific Islands benefit from the relative proximity of the Australian market and have a good image in Europe.

In the BAT region, the average spending per tourist exceeds the global average of \$659 to \$764. Although in some countries, such as China or Mongolia, spending by vacationers is extremely small - up to \$ 200 (UNWTO, 2019).

Africa

The number of foreign tourists visiting Africa and the cash receipts from them is relatively small and amounts to about 2-3% of the world. The growth of international tourism in Africa was constrained by the high prices of African products in the tourist markets. However, in recent years, the region has switched to low-cost mass, mainly beach tourism, especially in the north of the continent near the Mediterranean coast.

The largest generating market for the countries of the region is the African countries themselves, providing up to 50% of all tourists. Other tourist-generating countries are France, Germany, and Great Britain. This is explained by the fact that not so long ago these countries were the metropolises of African colonies.

The most popular tourist destinations are located: in the north - Tunisia, Egypt, and Morocco; in the east - Kenya, Tanzania, Seychelles, Mauritius, and Zimbabwe. Some of them specialize in elite beach tourism and develop a high-class hotel industry, receiving up to \$ 900 from each vacationer. Southern Africa, is a popular tourist destination in South Africa, which leads the list of the first countries on the continent in terms of arrivals and receipts. South Africa has a developed transport and hotel infrastructure and is also becoming a fashionable country in international tourism.

However, Africa as a whole lags in international tourism, because many countries in the region are not economically developed and do not have political stability, and military conflicts and epidemics continue in many parts of the continent (UNWTO, 2019).

Risks and dangers of tourism

- Environmental hazards. First of all, tourism affects the environment by excessive concentration of production and people in tourist centers, develops previously unused natural complexes, and enhances the impact of other industries (agriculture, construction, logging, hunting, fishing).

- Loss of cultural values. The commercialization of life and the development of tourism in certain regions leads to the vulgarization of traditions and the decline in the prestige of national cultures. Of particular concern to the world, the community is sex tourism and the export of works of art by tourists.
- Negative environmental impact. The natural environment constantly threatens man with various natural disasters. The social environment has such problems as epidemics, HIV infections, crime, drug trafficking, violence, terrorism, piracy, and military complications. Every year, about 30 states are classified as unfavorable for tourism.
- Technogenic hazards. Transport accidents, accidents, and disasters remain one of the most serious risks in tourism. Accidents and fires at the facilities of the tourism industry annually lead to injuries and deaths among tourists.
- Cultural conflicts are quite widespread in tourism, the difference in cultures and customs of peoples and countries often leads to mutual misunderstanding[29], sometimes tragic.
- Personal factor. Sometimes, having arrived at the resort, and plunged headlong into all the delights of a carefree life, tourists forget about the necessary quality of any vacationer - vigilance.

This is used not only by representatives of the "lower social strata of society", but often also by official representatives of travel services, whether they are: travel agencies, insurance companies, carrier agents, or employees of hotels, hotels, boarding houses, etc. And what is most frustrating is that there is no downward trend in such cases.

Tourism promotion

Tourism promotion is a variety of promotional activities aimed at attracting people to engage in tourism. The promotion of tourism is carried out through the media (television, radio, Internet), as well as in personal communication between people in interest clubs and tourist events. The popularization of tourism is also promoted by art, in particular cinema, as well as the genre of the author's song, in which a large place is given to the topic of tourism.

Traditional forms of tourism promotion:

- Television programs and films dedicated to the promotion of tourism. Among the television programs, one can single out the Travelers Club - one of the most famous programs of Soviet and Russian television, which promotes travel and tourism; also With Your Eyes, Eagle and Tails, and many others. etc.
- Weekend hike - an organized outing into nature for the weekend. As a rule, everyone is invited.
- Tourist club (tourist association) is the main form of organization of sports tourism tourists.

United Nations World Tourism Organization, UNWTO and its role in the World Tourism Development

United Nations World Tourism Organization; UNWTO (French Organization Mondiale du Tourisme; OMT; Spanish: Organización Mundial del Turismo; OMT) is a specialized intergovernmental agency of the UN system, uniting 160 participating countries, 6 associated territories, two territories in an observer status and more than 500 affiliated organizations (2022). UNWTO operates based on the Charter and the Financial Rules attached to it, which entered into force on January 2, 1975, and is engaged in the development of sustainable and accessible tourism. Leading international tourism organization (UNWTO, 2022).

The headquarters is located in Madrid. Secretary General - Zurab Pololikashvili (Georgia).

The supreme governing body of the UNWTO is the General Assembly, which is convened every two years. The Executive Council is the governing body of the UNWTO and consists of the Full Members elected by the Assembly on a principle of one for every 5 Full Members. The term of office of Council members is four years. Half of the members of the Council are re-elected every two years. Spain, as the host country of the UNWTO, has one permanent seat on the Executive Council.

History

Established in The Hague in 1925 as the International Congress of Official Tourist Associations (ICOTT). After the Second World War, it was renamed the International Union of Official Tourism Organizations (IUOTO; IUOTO) (headquartered in Geneva), which included 109 national tourism organizations and 88 associate members. The goals and objectives of IUOTO were not only to promote the development of tourism in general but also to use the best that tourism could give as an international component of trade and an economic development strategy for developing countries.

In 1967 IUOTO was transformed into an intergovernmental body cooperating with other organizations - WHO, UNESCO, and others. In 1969, the UN General Assembly passed a resolution recognizing the role that the re-formed International Union of Official Tourism Organizations should play in tourism. In 1974 IUOTO was transformed into the World Tourism Organization. The first WTO General Assembly was held in Madrid in May 1975. The WTO Secretariat is also located there.

The organization received the status of intergovernmental (the highest body is the assembly) and united the ministries of tourism, general commissariats, general directorates or ministerial services, and official national tourism organizations of more than a hundred countries. The headquarters was originally located in Geneva. English, French, Spanish, and Russian were adopted as official languages. In 2003, the WTO received the status of a specialized agency of the United Nations and subsequently became known as the UNWTO (UNWTO/WTO) (Karumidze, 2004).

In 2006, the UNWTO included 150 countries, 7 territories, and about 300 associate members representing private sector enterprises, educational institutions, tourism associations, and local tourism administrations.

As of 2022, UNWTO has 160 Member States, 6 Associate Members, 2 Observers, and over 500 Affiliate Members (UNWTO, 2022).

Members of the organization

Several developed countries, in which tourism is also developed (USA, Great Britain, Belgium, New Zealand, Nordic countries, etc.), are not members of the World Tourism Organization.

Countries that have not previously been members of the UNWTO: Antigua and Barbuda, Belize, Great Britain, Denmark, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Ireland, Iceland, Kiribati, Comoros, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, New Zealand, Palau, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saint Lucia, Singapore, United States of America, Solomon Islands, Somalia, Suriname, Tonga, Tuvalu, Finland, Sweden, Estonia, South Sudan.

Countries that were previously members of the WTO, but left the organization for one reason or another: Belgium (until 1997), Canada (until 2012), Grenada (until 1997), and Latvia (2005-2012).

Furthermore, on April 26, 2022, the organization decided to vote on the exclusion of Russia due to the war against Ukraine, and after that, Russia applied to withdraw from the organization. On April 27, 2022, they voted and excluded Russia, far exceeding the required two-thirds majority. (According to the statute, a decision on expulsion takes effect immediately, while a voluntary withdrawal can only be taken one year after the request for it.)

There are also 6 associate members (Flemish Community, Puerto Rico, Aruba, Hong Kong, Macau, Madeira) and 2 observers (Holy See and Palestine Liberation Organization).

WTO structure:

- General Assembly
- Executive Board
- Regional commissions
- Committees
- Secretariat

The UNWTO has six regional commissions that meet at least once a year and consist of all Full and Associate Members from the respective region:

- Africa - 48 countries
- Americas - 23 countries
- East Asia and the Pacific - 18 countries
- South Asia - 9 countries
- Europe - 44 countries, of which 20 are members of the European Union
- Middle East - 12 countries

UNWTO also has ad hoc committees formed by members of the World Tourism Organization to develop recommendations for the management and content of the program of work.

Tasks

The main tasks of the World Tourism Organization are:

- Assistance to international tourism to develop the tourism industry of the economy of the member countries and strengthen friendly and cultural ties
- Fight against any obstacles to the free international movement of people
- Collection and subsequent dissemination of technical information on all types of tourism
- Research work in the field of tourism
- Coordination of tourism activities on a regional and interregional scale
- Cooperation with the UN and other international organizations interested in tourism development.

Cooperation

The World Tourism Organization finances and implements development projects in the field of tourism and transfers the experience of tourism activities to developing countries for sustainable development. The UNWTO is the executing agency of the United Nations Development Programme.

In 2002, the WTO and UNCTAD program "Sustainable Tourism - the Key to Poverty Eradication" was approved, aimed at solving the following problems: sustainable tourism development and poverty eradication.

Major WTO projects:

- Pakistan Tourism Master Plan (2001)
- China Provincial Tourism Development Master Plan (2000-2002)
- Development of National Parks in Rwanda (1999)
- Strategy for Tourism Development in Moldova (1999)

World tourism day

World Tourism Day is an international holiday established by the General Assembly of the World Tourism Organization in 1979 in the Spanish city of Torremolinos. Celebrated on September 27th. The purpose of the holiday is to promote tourism, highlight its contribution to the economy of the world community, and develop ties between the peoples of different countries.

The holiday is celebrated in most countries of the world, there are gatherings of tourists, festive events, and festivals. The motto of 2006 is intended to emphasize the importance of tourism as an economic factor that enriches people, and in some countries, tourism is the main source of income for the state budget.

Holiday motto

The World Tourism Organization proclaims the motto of the holiday every year:

- 1980 - The contribution of tourism to the preservation of cultural heritage, global peace, and mutual understanding
- 1981 — Tourism and quality of life
- 1982 - The best of travel: good guests and good hosts
- 1983 - Travel and vacations - not only a universal right but also a responsibility
- 1984 - Tourism for international understanding, peace, and cooperation
- 1985 - Youth tourism: a cultural and historical heritage for the sake of peace and friendship
- 1986 - Tourism is the lifeblood of world peace
- 1987 - Tourism for development
- 1988 - Tourism: education for all
- 1989 - Free movement of tourists creates a new world
- 1990 - Tourism - an unrecognized industry, a service to be realized ("The Hague Declaration of Tourism")
- 1991 - Communication, information, and education: determining directions for the development of tourism
- 1992 - Tourism: a factor in the growth of social and economic solidarity and acquaintance between people
- 1993 — Development of tourism and protection of the environment: towards lasting harmony
- 1994 - High-quality staff, quality tourism
- 1995 - WTO: in the service of world tourism for 20 years
- 1996 - Tourism - a factor of tolerance and peace
- 1997 - Tourism: Leading Twenty-First Century Jobs and Environment
- 1998 - Public-Private Partnership: Key to Development and Promotion of Tourism
- 1999 Tourism: Preserving World Heritage for the New Millennium
- 2000 - Technology and nature: two challenges for tourism at the dawn of the twenty-first century

- 2001 - Tourism: a call for peace and dialogue among civilizations
- 2002 - Ecotourism - the key to sustainable development
- 2003 - Tourism as a Powerful Factor in Combating Poverty, Creating Jobs, and Ensuring Social Harmony
- 2004 - Sports and tourism: two living forces for mutual understanding, culture and the development of societies
- 2005 - Travel and transport: from the imagination of Jules Verne to the reality of the 21st century
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- 2008 - Tourism takes on the challenge of climate change
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- 2012 — Tourism and sustainable energy
- 2013 - Tourism and water resources: protecting our common future
- 2014 – Tourism and community development
- 2015 - One billion tourists - one billion opportunities
- 2016 - Tourism for all - Promoting universal access to tourism
- 2017 - Sustainable tourism - a tool for development
- 2018 — Tourism and digital transformation
- 2019 - Tourism and jobs: a better future for all
- 2020 – Rural and ecological tourism
- 2021— Tourism for Inclusive Growth

Conclusion

According to the World Tourism Organization, a tourism product is:

"a combination of tangible and intangible elements, such as natural, cultural, and man-made resources, attractions, facilities, services, and activities around a specific center of interest which represents the core of the destination marketing mix and creates an overall visitor experience including emotional aspects for the potential customers. A tourism product is priced and sold through distribution channels and it has a life-cycle".

Tourism product covers a wide variety of services including:

- Accommodation services from low-cost homestays to five-star hotels
- Hospitality services including food and beverage serving centers
- Health care services like massage
- All modes of transport, it is booking, and rental
- Travel agencies, guided tours, and tourist guides

- Cultural services such as religious monuments, museums, and historical places
- Shopping

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