

# THE TOURISM SECTOR AND THE **SUSTAINABLE** **DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

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**Responsible tourism,**  
a global commitment



**Global Compact**  
Network Spain

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**The tourism sector and the Sustainable Development Goals – Responsible tourism, a global commitment**

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## FOREWORD

**Taleb Rifai,**

Secretary-General of the World  
Tourism Organization (UNWTO)

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In 2015 tourism set a new record with 1.2 billion international tourists travelling throughout the world in one year.

This figure reflects the strength of the tourism sector, which currently accounts for 1 in 11 jobs worldwide, 7% of global exports and 10% of GDP, thereby contributing to economic growth and development in many societies.

Spain is a clear example of this. For more than twenty years it has been among the top five destinations worldwide according to data compiled by the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO). Tourism is the number one export sector in Spain and generates 13 out of every 100 jobs in the country.

In order for the sector to be able to continue to grow sustainably and provide greater benefits to society, it is essential to operate in a responsible manner.

We need to promote an inclusive tourism sector that provides decent working conditions for all, promotes culture and local

products, and protects our natural resources, thus preserving the unique attractions of each destination.

As the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Ban Ki-moon said: “Everyone has a role in sustainable tourism. Every action counts. This year, one billion international tourists will travel to foreign destinations. Imagine what one act multiplied by one billion can do.”<sup>1</sup>

At the World Tourism Organization and UN Global Compact Spain we are aware that companies play a key role and we want to support them in establishing a more sustainable and responsible business model that contributes to the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals that mark our common agenda for the next 15 years.

To this end, we want to highlight how Spanish tourism companies are making a commitment to responsible tourism by implementing the principles of the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism of the UNWTO and those of the Global Compact and thus making a difference in society and in the sector.

There is great diversity of initiatives that can contribute their part towards our common goals. We want to work together in order to make corporate social responsibility (CSR) in tourism an example to follow and thus contribute to building a more sustainable, and at the same time, a more competitive sector.

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*In order for the sector to continue to grow sustainably and provide greater benefits to society it is essential to operate in a responsible manner and in the context of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).*

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<sup>1</sup> Message from the Secretary General of the UN, Ban Ki-moon on World Tourism Day 2012, 27 September 2012 <http://wtd.unwto.org/es/content/mensaje-del-secretario-general-de-la-onu-ban-ki-moon>



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## FOREWORD

**Ángel Pes,**

President  
United Nations Global Compact  
Network Spain

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This publication represents the culmination of virtually a year of work between the UN Global Compact Network Spain, the World Tourism Organization and thirteen entities of the sector. We analysed the opportunity that the SDGs represent for tourism and featured specific cases that are occurring, using a dynamic, multimedia format.

Those living examples come from very different entities in terms of their nature, size and area of activity: transport, hotel chains, travel agencies, consultancy firms, educational institutions, tourism technology and innovation enterprises and amusement parks. This is a clear example of what the Global Compact is: entities of highly diverse nature, which, in line with the United Nations, commit to a compact for sustainable development.

The text explains the results of the work in multistakeholder partnerships, an aspect which we are particularly proud of. This new way of working, recommended by the United Nations, has allowed us to experience how combining the efforts of the public and private sector offers a better result.

The choice of tourism is not accidental. It is one of the most important sectors for the economy of our country. Its example is essential to convey to companies that sustainable development is a business driver. It is a case where the principle of “prosperous businesses in prosperous environments” is vividly demonstrated.

The UN Global Compact Network Spain, in 2015, identified the priorities of the Spanish private sector to contribute effectively

to the SDGs. And the tourism sector appears in two important areas. First, as a source of prosperity: “Promoting sustainable tourism, changing the focus of the sector, with the focus on responsible citizens”. And second, as an important activity for the planet: “Protecting biodiversity as a key element to ensure the sustainability of resources and priority economic sectors in Spain, for example, through responsible tourism”. These are inputs to guide current and future work.

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*Tourism is a great example for conveying to enterprises that sustainable development is a business driver.*

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Since the Spanish Network is an example within the Global Compact and taking into account the importance of the tourism sector in Spain, the alliance of the UNWTO and the Global Compact has proven to be very advantageous. It is an example—using the sectoral approach that we are called upon to adopt—for other sectors, showing that we can advance from “no negative impact” to positive impact.



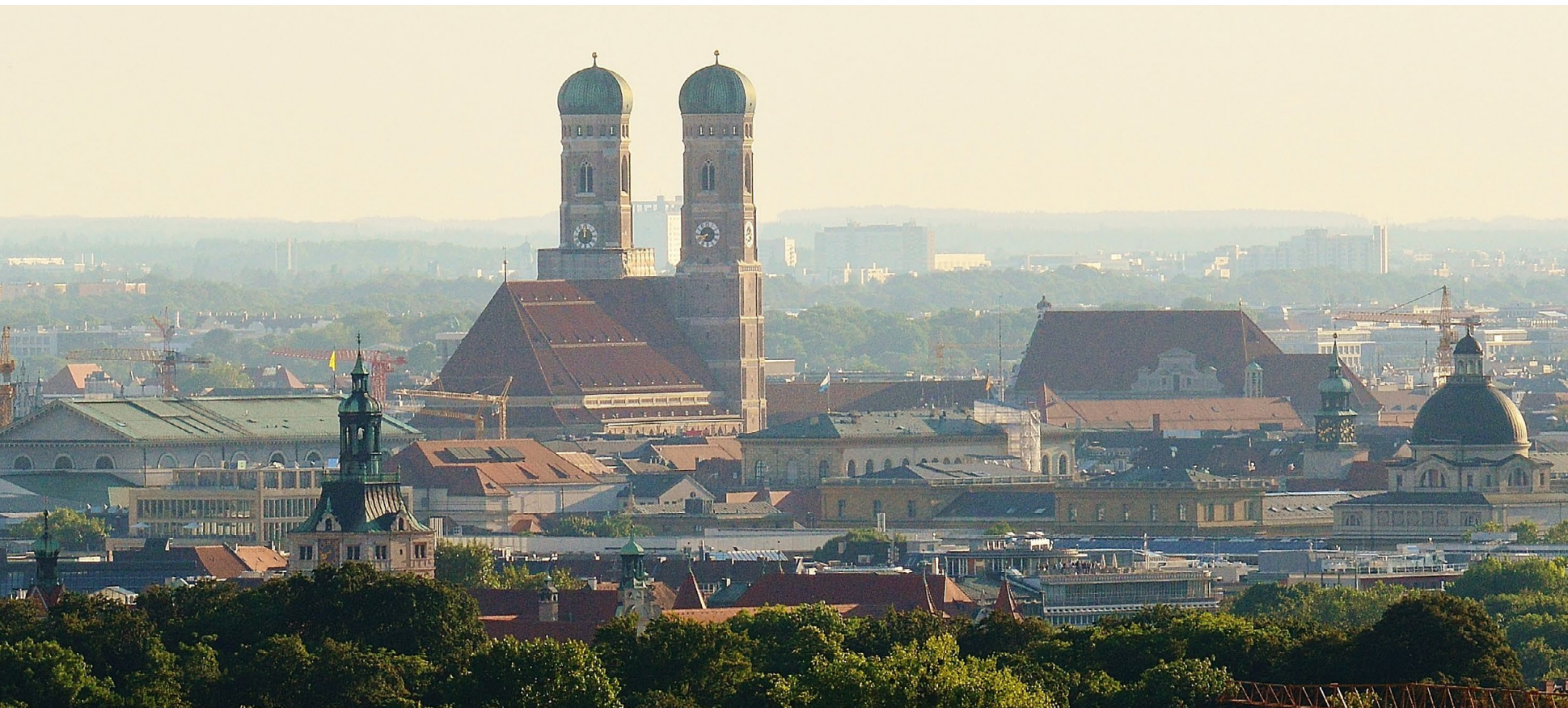
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# TOURISM

A factor for growth and development







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# TOURISM

## A key sector in the world

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Over the past six decades, tourism has experienced continued expansion and diversification, becoming one of the biggest and fastest-growing economic sectors in the world.

International tourist arrivals worldwide have grown from 25 million in 1950 to nearly 1.2 billion in 2015. Similarly, international tourism revenues earned by destinations around the world have grown from 2 billion US dollars in 1950 to 1.260 trillion in 2015 (1.136 trillion euros).<sup>2</sup>

Currently, tourism motivates billions of people to travel every year, and it is estimated that the figure will continue to grow at an average of 3.3% annually until 2030. According to the long-term forecasts of the UNWTO, international tourist arrivals worldwide will grow to 1.8 billion.<sup>3</sup>

Noteworthy is the resilience shown by the sector in recent years, which despite challenges such as the global economic crisis, natural disasters and pandemics, has experienced almost uninterrupted growth.

This growth over the second half of the 20th century and the 21st is due to the fact that access to tourism has progressively expanded thanks to the

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<sup>2</sup> UNWTO Tourism Highlights (Madrid: UNWTO, 2016 Edition).

<sup>3</sup> UNWTO Tourism Towards 2030 Global Overview, (Madrid: UNWTO, October 2011)

recognition of the right to holidays in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights<sup>4</sup>, the improved adoption of labour rights in many countries and the growing middle class worldwide. Furthermore, in recent decades the emergence of new technologies applied to tourism and the decline in the price of transport, especially air transport, have led to an increase in international travel.

It is estimated that tourism today accounts for 10% of global GDP (direct, indirect and induced impacts) and 7% of exports. This economic activity results in substantial benefits for local communities, with the sector accounting for 1 in 11 jobs worldwide.

These figures represent immense opportunities for economic growth and development, but at the same time present great challenges and responsibilities.

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<sup>4</sup> Article 24, Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Paris: United Nations, December 1948)

Like any activity, tourism has powerful effects on the economy, society and environment in generating countries and especially in the receiving countries. In addition to the socioeconomic impact of tourism, the sector, if managed sustainably, can be a factor for environmental preservation, promotion and cultural appreciation and understanding among peoples.

It is therefore essential for all actors, including companies operating in the sector, to be aware of opportunities and responsibilities alike, and to act accordingly so that their actions leave a positive mark on the society in which they operate and ensure the sustainability of the destination and their businesses.



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# INTERNATIONAL TOURISM

## Growth and diversification

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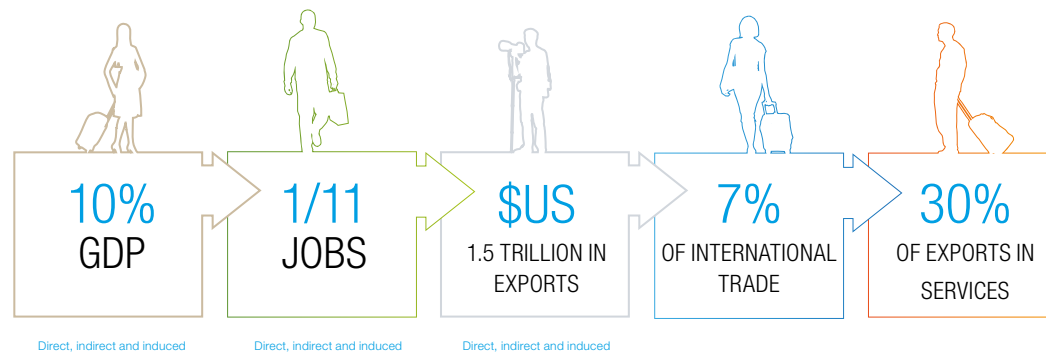
The total number of international tourist arrivals (overnight visitors) increased again in 2015 by 5%, for the sixth consecutive year, which is equivalent to about 52 million more arrivals than in the previous year. This amounts to almost 1.2 billion international tourists travelling throughout the world in one year. This exponential growth is particularly visible in Asia and the Pacific, Europe and the Americas.

Since 1995, the increase in international tourist arrivals has meant growth for all regions.

While Europe continues to maintain the biggest market share, with the Mediterranean and southern Europe being the world's most visited area, this share has gradually decreased (from 58% in 1995 to the current 51%) in favour of growth that has been taking place in other regions. The same applies to the region of the Americas, which in 1995 enjoyed a 21% market share and now stands at 16%. Particularly notable is the increase in the market share of Asia and the Pacific (16% to 24%), followed by Africa (from 4% to 5%) and Middle East (from 2% to 4%).

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### TOURISM'S IMPORTANCE:



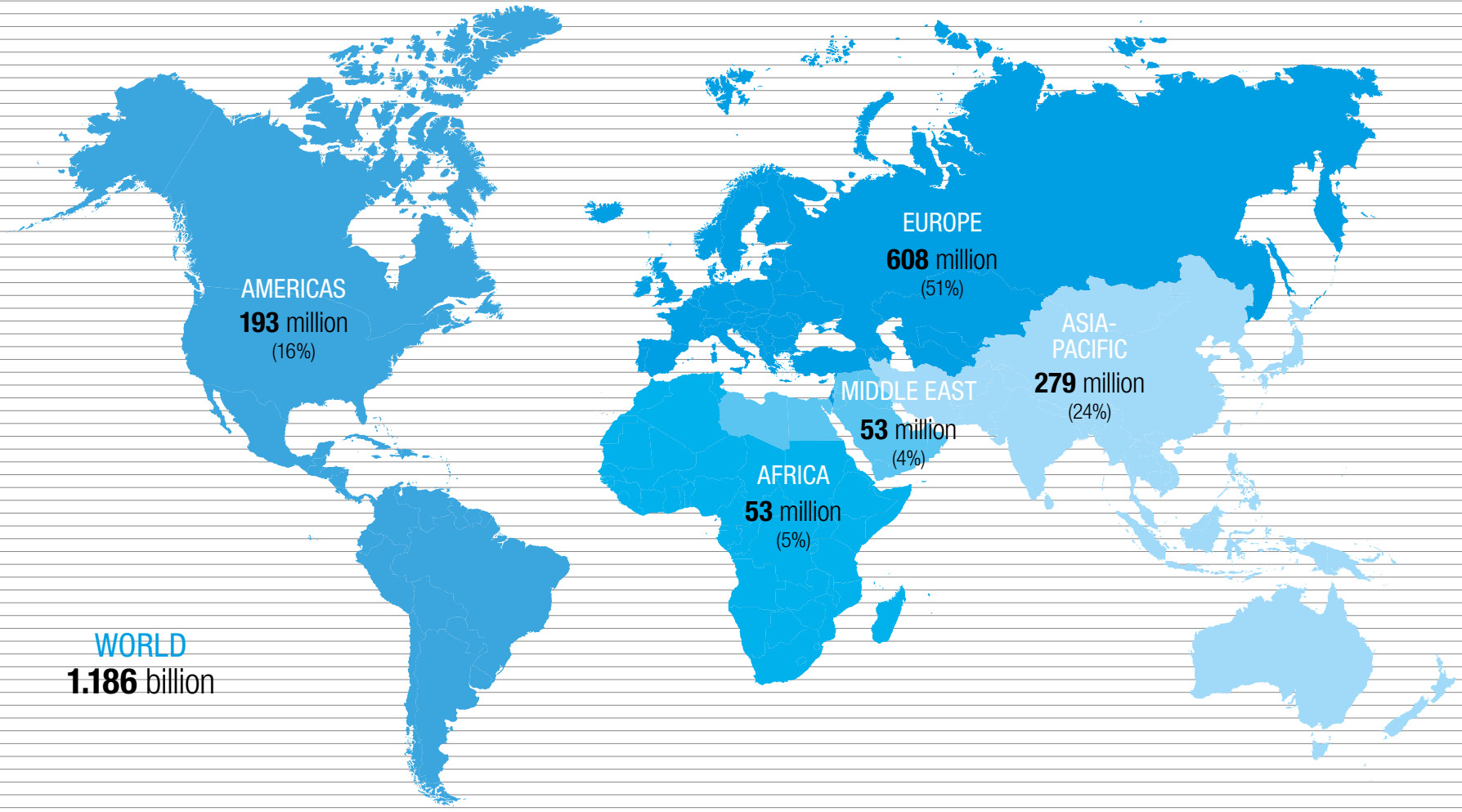
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INTERNATIONAL TOURIST  
ARRIVALS 2015

Market share (%)



UNWTO Tourism Highlights (Madrid, UNWTO, 2016 edition)



# INTERNATIONAL TOURISM

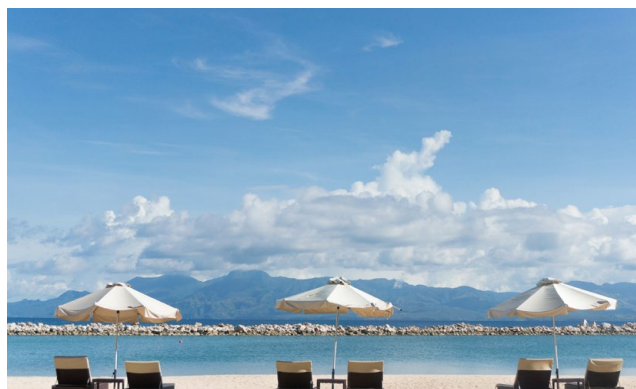
## A booming export sector

Revenue generated by international tourism contributed 1.136 trillion euros to the global economy in 2015 (1.260 trillion US dollars), an increase of 4.2% over the previous year. These receipts, which are recorded as exports of the destination country, come from the expenditure of visitors during their stay and are a valuable source of foreign exchange that translates to employment and the local development of the destination.

Furthermore, if to these international tourism receipts (the “travel” item of the balance of payments), we add the expenditure on international transport services for non-resident passengers, the total value of tourism exports reaches the figure of 1.3 trillion euros (1.5 trillion US dollars).

International tourism accounts for 7% of total world exports and 30% of exports in services. The share of tourism in total exports of goods and services rose from 6% to 7% in 2015, with international tourism outpacing the growth of world trade in goods for the fourth consecutive year, increasing by 2.8% in 2015.

As a worldwide export category, tourism ranks third, behind only fuel and chemicals, and ahead of food products and automotive industry. In many developing countries, tourism is the top export sector.



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# TOURISM IN SPAIN

## A key factor for economic and social development

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Spain is one of the main tourist destinations in the world. It ranks third worldwide in terms of revenue generated by tourism, and is number one in Europe, with 51 billion euros (57 billion US dollars) in 2015.

It is also the number three destination in the world in terms of the number of tourist arrivals with 68 million overnight visitors in the country in 2015.

For decades Spain has managed to remain in the ranking of the top five global destinations in terms of both receipts and arrivals.

The main source market of tourists to Spain is Europe (predominantly tourists from Britain, France and Germany), followed by the Latin American and Asian markets.<sup>5</sup>

The contribution of the tourism sector to Spanish GDP is 10.9% according to the latest official data of 2014, representing 113.690 billion euros.<sup>6</sup> In addition, tourism is a source of employment for

13% of the population in Spain,<sup>7</sup> which exceeds the average rate of employment in the sector worldwide.

To give an idea of the numbers, the annual average of the number of workers in the tourism sector in 2015 was 2.3 million people, up 5.4% over the previous year. The tourism branches with the highest volume of workers employed are food and beverage service (50% of the total employed in tourism), other tourism activities (23.8%), accommodation services (14.8%) and passenger transport (11.4%).

Jobs in the tourism sector are very diverse and sometimes serve as a gateway to the labour market, in particular for young people, who can then develop their career in this field. We know for example that in Spain, 8.4% of those employed in the sector have primary education, 63.1% have secondary education and 28.5% university education.

In the tourism sector, women traditionally constitute a large

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<sup>5</sup> UNWTO World Tourism Barometer, Volume 14, (Madrid: UNWTO, May 2016).

<sup>6</sup> Cuenta Satélite del Turismo (CSTE) (Madrid: Instituto Nacional de Estadística, 2016).

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<sup>7</sup> Encuesta de Población Activa (EPA) (Madrid: Instituto Nacional Estadística, 2015)



percentage of the workforce,<sup>8</sup> and in Spain women account for 44.3% of employment in the sector. In branches such as accommodation services this percentage reaches 55.5% in contrast to 17.2% female employment in the area of transport.

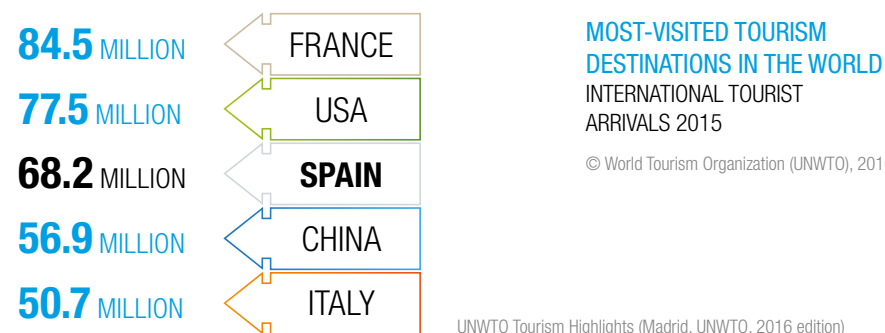
According to the Spanish National Statistics Institute (INE), in 2015, 21.5% of those employed in tourism were self-employed, while 78.5% were salaried workers. Of the latter, 74.9% had permanent contracts and the rest (25.1%) were temporary workers.

One trend that has characterized tourism in Spain for many years has been its seasonality, as it has been a sun-and-sand destination in summer for tourists from northern Europe. This seasonality inevitably impacts the rate of temporary employment and the income for local workers. Over recent years steps have been taken to diversify the tourism supply in order to attract travellers during the low season, by promoting cultural, city, and business tourism.

According to the 2015 data in the UNWTO Barometer, it seems that this strategy is beginning to bear fruit given the growth of tourism in the months of October (10%) and November (11%). Particularly in recent months, growth in the demand by tourists from the United Kingdom was recorded.

On the other hand, low-cost airlines and cruises continue to expand in the Spanish market, and thus it appears that tourism in Spain, as in the rest of Europe, will continue to grow at a somewhat slower but stable pace in the coming years.

<sup>8</sup> Global Report on Women in Tourism 2010 (Madrid: UNWTO and UN Women, 2011)



# WHAT ARE THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS?









## FROM THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS (MDGS) TO THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGS)

In September 2000, the 189 member countries of the United Nations signed a global alliance that materialized in the establishment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Among the goals set were to eradicate extreme poverty and world hunger, achieve universal primary education, ensure environmental sustainability and develop a global partnership for development. This alliance came to an end in 2015 and despite the efforts and advances, the achievement of the goals was uneven.

The 15 years of work on the MDGs revealed major difficulties for their achievement, such as: the importance of identifying sources of funding, the establishment of appropriate indicators to measure progress, and the lack of clarity about the role of certain actors in achieving the agenda, such as civil society and the private sector.

With these lessons learned, in January 2012, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Ban Ki-moon, established a task force to support the preparation of the Post-2015 Agenda. This team brought together more than 60 institutions and agencies of the United Nations family and other international organizations. The conclusions of this work were presented in June 2012 at the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio + 20), one of the most important global meetings on sustainable development of our time, under the theme "The future we want". From then on, the



report became the roadmap for defining a set of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGS) 2015-2030

Finally, on 25 September 2015, the United Nations General Assembly approved the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and with it, the Sustainable Development Goals,<sup>9</sup> a framework comprising 17 goals and 169 targets, through which States, civil society and the private sector can guide and measure their contributions to sustainable development out to 2030.

The new development agenda is the most ambitious to date and its 17 Goals are intended to eradicate poverty, protect the planet and ensure equality and prosperity for all.

<sup>9</sup> UN Resolution A/RES/70/1  
[http://www.un.org/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/70/1&referer=](http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/70/1&referer=)



This agenda considers all contributions to sustainable development regardless of the actor making them, enabling for the first time companies to play a leading role in the realization of the new development agenda.



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## THE SDGS AND THE COMPANIES OF THE TOURISM SECTOR

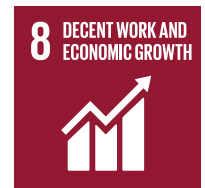
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2015 has become a landmark year for sustainability, being the year in which governments agreed to adopt the post-2015 development agenda. The new agenda is transformative, as it focuses on people and contains bold and ambitious goals. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that build on and expand the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), whose implementation ended in 2015, comprise 17 goals and 169 targets and will serve as the framework for the new global development agenda for the next fifteen years.

Tourism can contribute directly or indirectly to all these Goals. Specifically, tourism appears in the targets of Goals 8, 12 and 14, which relate, respectively, to inclusive and sustainable economic development, sustainable consumption and production, and sustainable use of oceans and marine resources.

Sustainable tourism is firmly positioned in the post-2015 development agenda. To accomplish this agenda, however, a clear implementation framework is needed, with adequate

funding and investment in technology, infrastructure and human resources.<sup>10</sup>



Goal 8, promotes “sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all” and includes target 8.9:

«by 2030, devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products».

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<sup>10</sup> Tourism and the SDGs (Madrid: UNWTO, 2015)

What are the sustainable  
development goals?



Goal 12, aims at “ensuring sustainable Consumption and Production patterns”. It comprises target 12.b:

«Develop and implement tools to monitor sustainable development impacts for sustainable tourism which creates jobs, promotes local culture and products».



The focus of Goal 14 is to “conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development”. The target 14.7 reads:

«by 2030 increase the economic benefits of SIDS and LCDs from the sustainable use of marine resources, including through sustainable management of fisheries, aquaculture and tourism».



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The mandate of the United Nations for the implementation of the SDGs in the business sector corresponds to the International Labour Organization and the United Nations Global Compact, through local networks and national offices of these organizations, respectively.

At the local level, the UN Global Compact Network Spain conducted a Post-2015 mapping exercise, which materialized in the publication “*Spain as a driving force of the development agenda agent*”,<sup>11</sup> in which the priorities of the Spanish private sector were identified in order to contribute effectively to the SDGs.

Through this exercise many priorities were identified in relation with the five areas of the new agenda. Among them, two were related to the tourism sector in the Planet and Prosperity areas:

“Promoting sustainable tourism, changing the focus of the sector, with the focus on responsible citizens.”

“Protecting biodiversity as a key element to ensure the sustainability of resources and priority economic sectors in Spain, for example through responsible tourism.”

The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), a specialized agency of the United Nations and the leading international organization in the tourism sector, has the mission of promoting the contribution of the tourism sector to the SDGs. The UNWTO is devoting efforts to contribute through technical assistance and training to the achievement of the SDGs, especially with regard to the goals in which tourism is explicitly mentioned such as Goals 8, 12 and 14.

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<sup>11</sup> España, como agente motor de la agenda de desarrollo 2030, (Madrid: Red Española del Pacto Mundial, 2015)



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# CHALLENGES OF THE TOURISM SECTOR

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In September 2015 the UN Global Compact Network Spain and the World Tourism Organization signed a partnership agreement to engage the companies of the Spanish tourism sector in corporate social responsibility initiatives, with the SDGs as the primary framework.

The two organizations conducted a joint survey with the participation of 13 companies, with the aim of identifying potential challenges in the tourism sector in relation to the new 2030 Development Agenda.

The survey identified the following challenges, which can be classified into 6 priority areas:

Employment  
Environment  
Sustainable Production and  
Consumption  
Partnerships  
Transparency  
Sustainable Cities  
Supply Chain

One of the main challenges of the sector has to do with **employment**, especially in terms of ensuring that the companies of the sector offer decent and stable jobs to workers, particularly women and persons with disabilities.

Another challenge is relative to the field of the **environment**. Tourism activities can cause impacts on ecosystems, so it is necessary to promote the efficient management of resources and to support measures against climate change.

**Responsible production and consumption** are also considered key challenges, with regard to both the supply chain of the companies of the sector and the promotion of sustainable consumption patterns among tourists.

Creating **partnerships** and opportunities for dialogue between different actors, such as companies, governments, civil society and the education sector, is essential in order to promote knowledge-sharing and to multiply the impact.

An additional challenge is related to the need for **transparency** processes in the organizations of the sector, promoting the preparation of sustainability reports.

Furthermore, it is important to preserve destinations and to promote **sustainable and smart cities** that benefit local people and tourists.

Lastly, the sustainable management of **supply chains** is a key issue for ensuring the sustainability of the sector, particularly in relation with the assessment, training and contracting of suppliers.

The 13 companies participating in this project have highlighted

five Sustainable Development Goals they consider priorities for the tourism sector in Spain: Goals 5, 8, 11, 13 and 17.



«Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls»

Promote measures to guarantee the same labor rights and opportunities for women.



«Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all»

The tourism industry can give access to decent work opportunities, particularly in developing countries.



«Make cities and human settlements inclusive,  
safe, resilient and sustainable»

Promoting smarter and greener cities can attract tourists and also benefit residents.



«Strengthen the means of implementation and  
revitalize the global partnership for sustainable  
development»

Public/public cooperation and multi stakeholder partnerships are necessary for delivery on the post-2015 Development Agenda. A global commitment is necessary.



«Take urgent action to combat climate change and  
its impacts»

Reducing greenhouse gas emissions to guarantee the sustainability of the tourism sector and preserve destinations benefiting both tourists and local communities.





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## OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE TOURISM SECTOR

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As is clear from the previous section, tourism is one of the largest and fastest-growing economic sectors of the world, accounting for 10% of world GDP and 7% of total international exports in 2015. These numbers reflect the great potential of the sector and its capacity to influence global challenges, particularly in relation with sustainable economic growth, inclusive development and environmental preservation.

The sector has huge potential for creating decent jobs and promoting entrepreneurship, helping to empower disadvantaged groups, particularly young people and women.

Tourism also promotes exchanges between people from different parts of the world, strengthening understanding between cultures and fostering peace between communities and nations.

Tourism is therefore one of the most dynamic and far-reaching economic sectors, and can make a decisive contribution to the achievement of the SDGs.



The companies of the tourism sector play an important role in transforming the sector's approach and introducing sustainability criteria into their operations. These companies can align their strategies with the SDGs by promoting responsible tourism that respects the natural, cultural and social environment and fosters the sustainable development of tourism destinations.



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# HOW CAN COMPANIES OF THE TOURISM SECTOR CONTRIBUTE TO THE SDGS?



## End poverty in all its forms everywhere

Tourism represents more than 10% of world GDP<sup>12</sup> and has a direct impact on international poverty levels. The sector should promote the creation of decent jobs that have a direct impact on the well-being of the local population and help them to obtain a fair income, security and social protection and better prospects for their personal development and social integration.

Companies in the tourism sector have the potential to generate decent jobs, especially for women, youth and disadvantaged groups, by boosting the economy and local development through their activities and to act so as to avoid environmental and economic crises that impact the population.



## End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

Most of the world's poverty is located in rural areas, where the highest levels of malnutrition are found. Tourism can stimulate agricultural productivity through the production, use and sale of local products, and at the same time, provide an avenue for additional income for people living in tourism destinations.

Businesses in the sector can promote sustainable tourism, stimulate agricultural production through local consumption, offer alternative business models such as agrotourism and be respectful of the environment and local customs.

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<sup>12</sup> UNWTO Annual Report 2015, (Madrid: OMT, 2016)



## Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

The tourism sector can operate in a sustainable, healthy and safe manner for local communities, tourists and employees, contributing to the well-being of all of them.

Implementing appropriate health and safety plans and carrying out suitable measures to prevent accidents or health problems among tourists and employees are measures that companies can contribute.



## Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

Effective sustainable development can only be achieved by ensuring that ethical values and responsibility in environmental, economic and social matters are transmitted to the entire population. Tourism has a direct impact on a large number of people, whose education will be key to achieving effective sustainable tourism.

The companies of the sector have several ways of contributing to this Goal—by carrying out training programmes for visitors and employees, through community development projects and by raising society's awareness of a way to practice tourism in a responsible manner. Companies should pay particular attention to benefiting young people, women, older people, indigenous people and persons with special needs.



*New solutions to urgent problems related to the environment, cultural heritage, economy and society are necessary, and the education of future actors must be in accordance with these current requirements.*



**Gilda Hernandez-Maskivker**  
Master Director, Master in Sustainable Tourism Destinations and Regional Tourism Planning

The Ostelea School of Tourism & Hospitality

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## Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

A large number of employees and entrepreneurs in the tourism sector worldwide are women. However, they often occupy low-paid positions, perpetuating inequality at the economic and social levels.<sup>13</sup> The tourism sector can act as a vehicle for the empowerment of women, by providing decent employment at the local level, enabling them to improve their living conditions and enjoy greater autonomy.



*Achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls is one of the sustainable development goals (SDGs) to which we in the tourism sector are committed to actively contribute*

Businesses in the sector can therefore promote tourism that improves the quality of women's employment and that enables them to gain access to qualified jobs by creating programmes for job training, integration and equality for women and girls in the local communities where they operate.



## Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all

The tourism activity requires substantial energy input and it can be very sensitive to water and sanitation restrictions in destinations. The tourism industries can carry out an efficient management of water resources and limit the negative impacts for the local ecosystem while at the same time provide access to water for tourism and the local population.

Companies in the tourism sector should integrate sustainable management of water and sanitation in their business strategies, taking into account pollution control, efficiency and safeguarding of resources.

**Jose Ángel Preciados**

General Director

Ilunion Hotels

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<sup>13</sup> Global Report on Women in Tourism 2010 (Madrid: UNWTO and UN Women, 2011)

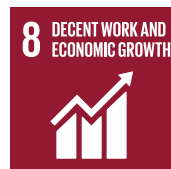




## Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all

In order to achieve sustainable tourism, it is necessary to promote access to affordable, clean and modern energy in destinations.

Companies in the tourism sector can commit to developing energy-efficiency measures as well as to increasing the use of renewable energy in their operations, while decreasing their reliance of fossil fuels, in order to achieve a sustainable and beneficial economy for all.



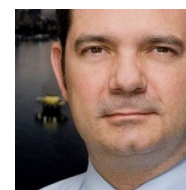
## Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

Tourism is one of the fastest-growing economic sectors in the world, currently accounting for the creation of 1 in every 11 jobs<sup>14</sup> and is one of the main sources of revenue for many countries. It is therefore a key instrument for achieving inclusive and sustainable economic growth and providing decent working conditions for a large number of people, particularly young people and women.

The companies of the sector provide jobs that should be decent throughout their value chain. They should also encourage the hiring and entrepreneurship of local people, especially among vulnerable groups.



*At Viajes El Corte Inglés we have programmes that focus on quality training, through our own training plans for our employees*



**Pedro Hita**  
Human Resources Director  
Viajes El Corte Inglés

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14 UNWTO Tourism Highlights (Madrid: UNWTO, 2015 edition)

“  
*Rail is the mode of passenger and freight transport that consumes the least energy per unit transported, has the lowest levels of CO2 emissions, contributes the least to local pollution in urban areas, and generates the smallest acoustic impact*



## Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation

Infrastructure, industrialization processes and innovation are important issues in the development of tourism activity.

The companies in the sector have the capacity to invest in sustainable facilities and infrastructures that allow universal access and use, especially by persons with disabilities and other disadvantaged groups. They can also improve the technological capability of tourism destinations, especially that of rural communities, in terms of access to information and communication technologies.<sup>15</sup>



**Berta Barrero**  
General Director of Operations  
RENFE

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<sup>15</sup> TIC y Turismo, Gobierno de España, 2015



## Reduce inequality within and among countries

Tourism accounts for 10% of world GDP. Tourism that benefits society, the economy and protects the environment is a powerful tool for community progress and for reducing inequality. It is important for local communities and all key actors to be involved in its development.

Companies of the sector can contribute to urban renewal and rural development by helping to reduce regional imbalances and giving local communities the opportunity to prosper within their place of origin.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Tourism and the Sustainable Development Goals (Madrid: UNWTO, 2015)



## Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

By 2050, seven out of every ten people will be living in urban areas.<sup>17</sup> Tourism requires accessible urban infrastructures for all, with well-preserved heritage and it can help promote the regeneration of marginal areas. To respond to this demand, companies in the sector are interested in promoting sustainable cities as well as green and resilient infrastructure (more efficient, safe and accessible transport for all, green areas and safe public spaces, among others).

Tourism in cities contributes to transforming the urban landscape through the renewal of public spaces, public infrastructure and connectivity, the development of local services and recreational facilities. It stimulates innovation, the use of technologies and advances the concept of smart cities that not only creates a quality experience for visitors, but also improves the quality of life of the local population.



*We have launched an online and offline e-learning movement with minube School, a collaborative learning initiative to co-create a responsible and sustainable tourism industry. 2017 will be the International Year of Sustainable Tourism and our work should be aimed at achieving each of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially Goal 11: Sustainable cities and communities*

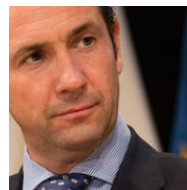


**Raúl Jimenez**  
CEO and Founder  
Minube

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*We have before us the new model for tourism destinations of the 21st century: the Smart Tourism Destination*



**Antonio López**  
President  
SEGITTUR

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<sup>17</sup> International Guidelines on Urban and Territorial Planning (Nairobi: UN-Habitat, 2015)



## Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

In order to achieve a truly sustainable society, it is essential to introduce responsible consumption and production patterns into the tourism sector. The sector should promote sustainable consumption and production practices by its employees, local people and tourists, through measures such as the efficient use of natural resources, the sustainable management of food and waste, and careful selection of products and suppliers.



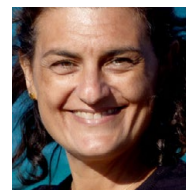
*Managing with a triple bottom line -economic, social and environmental- transforms the company into a true factor of social change, generating unquestionable added value*

Companies in the sector have the opportunity to implement resource reuse and recycling measures, adopt sustainable practices in relation to their supply chain, incorporate sustainability information into their corporate reports and promote local culture and products.

**Felisa Palacio**  
CEO

Taranná

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## Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

The tourism sector is a key actor in the fight against climate change, since it generates around 5% of the total CO2 released to the atmosphere. In addition, tourism involves the transformation of environments and natural resources and excessive use of fossil fuels. It is imperative to ensure the sustainability of the sector by securing its commitment to environmental protection in order to mitigate negative effects on people and tourism destinations.

Companies of the sector can participate in the fight against climate change by reducing energy consumption, promoting the use of renewable energy and creating alliances to combat climate change. These measures are especially relevant for the transport and hotel industries.



*Our management model has always been based on the practice of Responsible Tourism*



**José Luque**  
CEO

Fuerte Hoteles

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## Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development

Tourism plays an important role in safeguarding oceans, seas and marine resources, especially in coastal or insular areas, where the sector is the foundation of the economy, as well as in relation to maritime tourism. The sector should promote the integrated management of coastal zones in order to help conserve and preserve marine ecosystems and serve as a vehicle for promoting the blue economy.

Companies operating in the coastal and maritime tourism sector can help prevent and reduce marine pollution and use marine resources sustainably in their activities. In addition, responsible operations can result in economic benefits for destination sites, especially in underdeveloped coastal or island areas.



Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt the reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss



*When companies have a consolidated CSR policy that also includes an environmental policy monitored by an Environmental Management System that requires the publication of an annual Environmental Statement and continuous improvement of their behaviour towards their environment, it is time to take the leap into the supply chain and extend these sustainability practices to suppliers*

Sustainable tourism contributes to generating long-term benefits by investing in measures to combat deforestation and desertification in order to maintain tourist destinations in optimum conditions and to generate a greater flow of visitors and benefits for the environment and local communities.

Companies that are committed to sustainable tourism can create programmes for tourists focused on how to preserve and care for the environment in order to help local communities manage their visits and obtain the greatest possible benefit with a minimum of risks to their ecosystems, their biodiversity and their wildlife.

**Choni Fernández**

Director of Corporate Social Responsibility

PortAventura World



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What are the sustainable development goals?



### Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

Tourism can contribute to promote peaceful and inclusive societies, to promote the protection of the fundamental rights of local communities and to fight against corruption. Tourism fosters tolerance and understanding between different cultures and serves as a livelihood for local communities, while preventing violence and consolidating peace in societies that have experienced recent conflicts.

Companies of the sector should involve local people in their activities, provide them with decent work and make joint decisions regarding the use of local resources, introduce transparency measures in the organization to fight against corruption, and guarantee and protect the human rights of locals, tourists and their employees.



### Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development

The creation of alliances between the different actors of the planet is essential in order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and thus ensure the well-being of the population in the short and long term. Owing to its inter-sectoral nature, tourism has the capacity to strengthen public-private partnerships and involve multiple stakeholders—international, national, regional and local—to work together to achieve the SDGs. Cooperation between sector companies, civil society, governments and educational institutions is essential to achieve effective sustainable tourism.

Companies in the tourism sector should encourage multi-stakeholder initiatives to contribute to sustainable development and to expand good practices in the sector in relation with the new 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.



*As a cross-cutting goal, SDG 17 is essential for Iberia in order to achieve the other objectives to which the company is committed*



**Graciela Ramallo**  
Head of Internal Communications & CSR  
Iberia

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*Public-private partnership between the different actors involved in tourism development is essential in order to achieve tourism that is more eco-conscious, responsible and inclusive*



*Thanks to tourism, traditions have been recovered, different communities have been made known, and the value and richness of diversity have been enhanced*



**Luis García**  
CEO  
Europa Mundo Vacaciones

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**Jorge Vallina**  
Director for Sustainability and Tourism  
Formagrup

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## EXAMPLES OF ACTIONS TO GUIDE THE TOURISM SECTOR

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The following is a series of examples of actions to guide the contribution of tourism sector companies to the SDGs, each linked to several of the Goals. These actions can give companies an idea of how to start working on the new framework and understand in a practical way the link between the private sector and the SDGs:





**SDG 1, 2, 8, 10 and 16**

Provide decent working conditions for employees and through the value chain, especially to suppliers operating in countries with weak legislation, to ensure that these people live in decent conditions.



**SDG 1, 3, 5 and 8**

Promote development in the places where the company operates, by supporting the local economy and local products and by hiring people at destination sites, especially those belonging to vulnerable groups.



**SDG 4, 8 and 12**

Develop a training plan in the company on sustainability, including topics such as human rights, environmental education, respect for local culture, responsible consumption, etc., aimed at the entire value chain (employees, suppliers, tourists, different departments and positions in the company).



**SDG 3, 12, 13, 14 and 15**

Promote awareness among travellers and tourists to make sustainability an attribute of value in the choice of destinations, products and tourism services and raise awareness of the importance of their responsible behaviour in the destination.



**SDG 1, 2, 5 and 8**

Put in place equality policies in the company, giving women the opportunity for professional development in an egalitarian manner, for example, by training providers in gender equality and training local women to acquire new skills related to tourism.



**SDG 3 and 8**

Establish adequate safety and hygiene measures in the activities, products and services of the company, so as not to compromise the health of workers, tourists or local communities.



**SDG 1, 4, 8 and 10**

Encourage the recruitment and training of young people in the local communities where the company has operations, to provide new generations with equal opportunities



**SDG 6, 14 and 15**

Carry out sustainable water management in the activities of the company, with a strict policy on the consumption and reuse of water and avoid polluting the ecosystems of destination sites.



**SDG 7 and 13**

Establish energy-saving and energy-efficiency measures in the activities of the company, to reduce the energy cost of services.



**SDG 3, 5, 9 and 11**

Integrate persons with disabilities in destination sites by eliminating physical and attitude barriers.



**SDG 8, 9 and 11**

Invest in facilities, technology and transportation with equitable and affordable access for all, which benefit both tourists and local communities.



**SDG 4, 9, 11 and 13**

Include the use of new technologies in the optimization of processes, the communication of tourist sustainability and the construction of smarter destinations.



**SDG 1, 8 and 10**

Involve and respect the local community in corporate strategy: Use local labour and suppliers, value and promote local culture, protect the environment and invest some of the profits in boosting local development and infrastructure.



**SDG 8, 9 and 11**

Promote sustainable cities, preserve the cultural and natural heritage of destination cities, by encouraging green and resilient infrastructure using local materials and labour.



**SDG 4 and 12**

Raise awareness regarding responsible production and consumption patterns among all interest groups and develop common sustainability standards and methodologies in relation to the life cycle of tourism services and products.



**SDG 6, 7, 13, 14 and 15**

Continuously determine, evaluate and prevent environmental risks in the company's activities, in order to become low-carbon companies that make efficient use of natural resources.

What are the sustainable development goals?



**SDG 4, 7 and 13**

Implement management systems that are certified in accordance with international standards.



**SDG 6, 13 and 14**

Sustainably manage and protect marine and coastal habitats at destination sites to prevent and reduce marine pollution and take measures to restore them.



**SDG 4, 13, 14 and 15**

Put in place measures to raise awareness among tourists and local communities regarding safeguarding the environment, so as to prevent impacts on the landscapes, forests and other natural resources of destination sites.



**SDG 8 and 16**

Develop a code of ethics in the company, in order to ensure responsible and transparent management and ethical behaviour of the members of the company in the performance of their activities.



**SDG 8 and 12**

Promote social responsibility and sustainability in the supply chain by training and evaluating suppliers and by including the relevant clauses in contracts.



**SDG 4, 8, 12 and 17**

Disseminate the management models and good practices of companies of the sector in the areas of social responsibility and sustainability through conferences, workshops, forums, debates, etc.



**SDG 1, 2, 3, 4, 8 and 10**

Carry out cooperation projects focused on the development of local economies that make it possible to improve the living conditions of the greater number of people possible.



**SDG 17**

Create public-private partnerships with civil society, universities, the public sector and other companies in the tourism sector or others, to carry out projects that contribute to the development of sustainable tourism.

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# TOOLS FOR WORKING ON THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

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The following are the tools that the United Nations makes available to companies to work on the Sustainable Development Goals.

**SDG Compass:** This provides tools and information for companies on how they can align their strategies as well as measure and manage their contribution to the realization of the SDGs.

**Guide on Implementing the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights:** This tool contributes knowledge and training, evaluates the current situation in the field of Human Rights and identifies the main risks and impacts. The Sustainable Development Goals are directly related to Human Rights.

**Integrity and Transparency Management System:** This tool provides a practical and simple solution to help the private sector to prevent, detect and respond to possible corruption practices.

**Business Call to Action:** This initiative promoted by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) seeks to encourage the private sector to implement innovative business models that combine profit with impact on development.

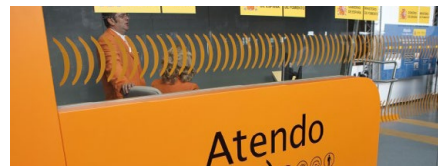
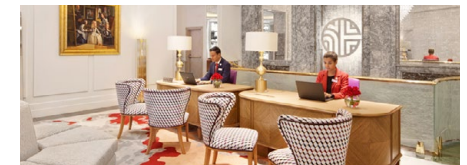
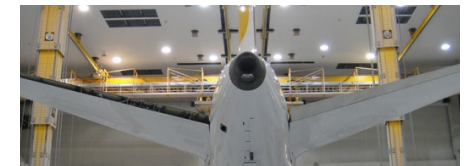
**Sustainable Energy for All:** A United Nations initiative that brings together leaders from all sectors of society (governments, companies and civil society) to work together to transform current energy systems.

**Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform:** A United Nations platform to share knowledge and tools among all the actors of the planet, in relation to the SDGs.



# BEST PRACTICES

We invite you to become familiar with the good practices that companies in the sector are already working on to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.



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# ABOUT

World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)  
United Nations Global Compact







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## WORLD TOURISM ORGANIZATION (UNWTO)

The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), a United Nations specialized agency, is the leading international organization with the decisive and central role in promoting the development of responsible, sustainable and universally accessible tourism. It serves as a global forum for tourism policy issues and a practical source of tourism know-how. Its membership currently includes 157 countries, 6 territories, 2 permanent observers and over 500 Affiliate Members representing the private sector, educational institutions, tourism associations and local tourism authorities.

## UNITED NATIONS GLOBAL COMPACT

The United Nations Global Compact is the world's largest public-private alliance for development, in which 13,000 signatories from 145 different countries unite to promote the Ten Principles based on universal declarations and conventions relative to human right, labour rules, the environment and anti-corruption.

The United Nations Global Compact operates in Spain through the Spanish Network, which currently has more than 2,600 signatories to this corporate social responsibility initiative: 12% are large companies, 72% are SMEs and 16% are other types of entities (tertiary sector, trade unions / business associations and educational institutions).





# INITIATIVES OF THE WORLD TOURISM ORGANIZATION

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Below are the initiatives that the World Tourism Organization is working on with companies in the sector with a view to achieving sustainable and responsible tourism.

**UNWTO Global Code of Ethics for Tourism:** this is a fundamental frame of reference for responsible and sustainable tourism. It consists of a comprehensive set of principles designed to guide key-players in tourism development: governments, the travel industry, communities and tourists alike.

**Private Sector Commitment to the UNWTO Global Code of Ethics for Tourism:** This commitment represents a public statement of a business or tourist association's commitment to uphold the principles of the Code and to implement them into their corporate governance.

**Tourism and the Sustainable Development Goals:** The UNWTO has developed a practical guide on how tourism can contribute directly or indirectly to the achievement of each SDG. Through it, companies can see how their actions can influence each of the 17 SDGs.

**UNWTO.TedQual Certification System:** The UNWTO.TedQual Certification is aimed at tourism education, training or research institutions. Through the definition of minimum quality

standards for tourism education, this certification facilitates continuous improvement of education, training and research in tourism.

**ST-EP Initiative:** This initiative promotes poverty alleviation by supporting sustainable development projects carried out by the UNWTO in collaboration with partners from the public and private sectors.

**Hotel Energy Solutions (HES):** This initiative provides tools to enable hotel and tourism accommodation enterprises to measure, assess and reduce their energy consumption and carbon footprint.

**Nearly Zero Energy Hotels (neZEH):** This European initiative helps in renovations of hotels into nearly Zero Energy Buildings by providing technical advice and training activities.

**Manuals and recommendations on accessible tourism:** The UNWTO has developed a series of manuals on the tools and best practices to help companies acquire the necessary expertise to make infrastructure and tourist attractions accessible to all.

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# INITIATIVES OF THE UNITED NATIONS GLOBAL COMPACT

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Below are some of the specific initiatives that the United Nations Global Compact is promoting to help companies achieve the Sustainable Development Goals:

**Women's Empowerment Principles:** A joint initiative of the United Nations Global Compact and UN Women that provides guidance to companies on how to empower women in the workplace, markets and the community.

**Business for Peace:** An initiative to reduce conflict and instability in the world by the business sector.

**Food and Agriculture Business Principles:** Designed to promote sustainability in agriculture and food.

**CEO Water Mandate:** Initiative for the development, implementation and dissemination of water sustainability policies and practices.

**Caring for Climate:** Business Leadership Initiative on Climate Change.

**Business for the rule of law:** Initiative to strengthen the rule of law by the private sector.





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