News Release

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UN Tourism

Malta joins International Code for Protection of Tourists and hosts landmark conference on tourism law

Malta has become the 29th country globally, and the 6th in Europe, to adhere to the International Code for the Protection of Tourists (ICPT). The move marks a significant step in strengthening global commitments to travellers' rights and consumer protection.

The signing took place on 18 September 2025, during the I Tourism Law Conference in Europe, hosted in Malta. In a message to the conference participants, Dr. Ian Borg, Malta's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Tourism, highlighted that tourism law is a crucial, but often overlooked subject. He noted that Malta's adherence to the ICPT reflects the country's commitment to enhancing legal security for tourists and Malta´s.growing engagement in UN Tourism initiatives.

Alicia Gomez, Director of Legal Affairs and International Standards at UN Tourism, underlined the importance of Malta's adherence, highlighting its commitment to building safe and resilient destinations and the landmark nature of this event, the first European conference fully dedicated to tourism law. She stated, "challenges like overtourism or digital platforms require swift regulatory responses. This is not just legal technicality, it's about protecting communities, consumers, and the environment, while ensuring tourism remains a driver of sustainable development".

I Tourism Law Conference in Europe

Hosted by the University of Malta with the support of the Malta Tourism Authority and in collaboration with UN Tourism, the I Tourism Law Conference in Europe brought together policymakers, legal experts, and academics to discuss key legal trends and harmonized tourism legislation in Europe, with a special focus on four critical pillars requiring urgent legal attention: sustainability, overtourism, regulation of short-term rentals, and consumer protection in tourism.

Representatives from Malta, Croatia, and Andorra shared insights into legislative initiatives, offering practical models for the development and optimization of regulatory frameworks for tourism, while UN Tourism representatives delivered a comprehensive overview of the organization's activities in tourism law at the global, regional and national levels.

A major milestone was the signing of memoranda of understanding between UN Tourism and the International Forum of Travel and Tourism Advocates (IFTTA), formalizing and renewing long-term cooperation to promote sustainable and responsible tourism using legal tools.

UN Tourism is a specialized agency of the United Nations
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Participants praised the hospitality and support of the Malta Tourism Authority and the University of Malta, noting that the event strengthened professional networking and advanced dialogue on tourism law in Europe. The conference reinforced a shared commitment to harmonizing legal frameworks that support sustainability, innovation, and ethical practices across the sector.

About the ICPT

The ICPT establishes minimum international standards for the protection of tourists, particularly in emergencies, and to uphold consumer rights of tourists. Addressed to governments, public and private stakeholders, and tourists themselves, the ICPT aims to restore consumer confidence, enhance safety, and improve contractual relationships between service providers and tourists. Adopted by UN Tourism's General Assembly resolution 732 (XXIV), it offers practical guidance on policy, legislation, and regulatory practices across all stakeholders responsible for tourism services.

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