

AM News

VOL. 82 - November 2025



UN Tourism



Dear Affiliate Members,

I am pleased to introduce the latest edition of the Affiliate Members Newsletter. This monthly publication will keep you updated on the latest news, events, and initiatives related to your membership and the Affiliate Members network. Also included is the calendar of events for 2025, featuring key UN Tourism events.

With only a few days remaining until the 26th UN Tourism General Assembly, we are preparing for a series of dedicated initiatives and institutional meetings for Affiliate Members, including:

- The 45th Plenary Session of Affiliate Members*
- The 8th Meeting of the Committee on Matters Related to Affiliate Membership (CMAM)*
- The Affiliate Members Corner: “Exploring Disruptive Technologies in Tourism”*
- The 62nd Meeting of the Board of Affiliate Members*

I encourage all Affiliate Members to stay informed via AMConnected+, where updates and documentation will be shared regularly.

We are also pleased to announce that the results of the elections for the Board of Affiliate Members are now available. Congratulations to the newly elected members. UN Tourism looks forward to working closely with you throughout the 2026–2029 mandate to strengthen the value of the Affiliate Membership and foster public-private collaboration in tourism.

We continue to see a positive reception of the new tools available on AMConnected+, including the mobile app, now accessible on both iOS and Android devices.

As 2025 marks the 50th Anniversary of UN Tourism, we look forward to celebrating this milestone with all of you. I encourage you to remain active on AMConnected+, where you can access resources, discover collaboration opportunities, and contribute to shaping the future of tourism together.

The Affiliate Members and Public-Private Collaboration Department remains fully committed to supporting your initiatives and fostering meaningful partnerships across the network. Please feel free to share your suggestions, ideas, or needs with us at any time.

*Sincerely,
Ion Vilcu
Director, AM-PPC*

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Ion Vilcu', with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke extending to the right.

AGENDA OF THE AFFILIATE MEMBERS - EVENTS 2025

UN TOURISM STATUTORY AND HIGH-LEVEL MEETINGS

UN TOURISM GENERAL ASSEMBLY & EXECUTIVE COUNCILS

29-30 May	<u>123rd Executive Council</u>	Segovia, Spain
7-11 Nov.	<u>26th UN Tourism General Assembly</u>	Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
7 Nov.	<u>45th Affiliate Members Plenary Session</u>	Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
8 Nov.	<u>124th Executive Council</u>	Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
11 Nov.	<u>125th Executive Council</u>	Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

UN TOURISM REGIONAL COMMISSIONS

11-13 Feb.	<u>51st Regional Commission for the Middle East</u>	Doha, Qatar
15-16 April	<u>37th Joint Meeting of East Asia and the Pacific and South Asia</u>	Jakarta, Indonesia
4-6 June	<u>71st Regional Commission for Europe</u>	Baku, Azerbaijan
11-13 June	<u>68th Regional Commission for Africa</u>	Abuja, Nigeria
31 July-2 Aug.	<u>70th Regional Commission for the Americas</u>	Lima, Peru

BOARD OF THE AFFILIATE MEMBERS

29 May	<u>61st Meeting of the Board of the Affiliate Members</u>	Segovia, Spain
8 Nov.	<u>62nd Meeting of the Board of the Affiliate Members</u>	Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

COMMITTEE ON MATTERS RELATED TO AFFILIATE MEMBERSHIP

29 May	<u>7th Meeting of the Committee on Matters Related to Affiliate Membership (CMAM)</u>	Segovia, Spain
8 Nov.	<u>8th Meeting of the Committee on Matters Related to Affiliate Membership (CMAM)</u>	Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

UN TOURISM/AM-PPC THEMATIC EVENTS WITH THE PARTICIPATION OF AFFILIATE MEMBERS

8-10 April	2nd UN Tourism Africa & Americas Summit	Livingstone, Zambia,
23-25 April	2nd UN Tourism Regional Forum on Gastronomy Tourism for Africa	Arusha, Tanzania
28-29 April	Expo Japan Women Pavillion: Empowering Innovation, Investment, and Inclusion	Osaka, Japan
12-13 May	World Tourism Forum Prague 2025	Prague, Czech Republic
24-25 June	UN Tourism Global Forum on Urban Tourism: Shaping the Future of Urban Tourism	Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran
22-24 July	2nd UN Tourism and ICAO Ministerial Conference on Tourism and Air Transport in Africa	Luanda, Angola
27 Sept.	World Tourism Day 2025	Melaka, Malaysia
6-7 Oct.	9th UN Tourism Global Wine Tourism Conference	Plovdiv, Bulgaria
1-3 Dec.	10th UN Tourism World Forum on Gastronomy Tourism	Santa Cruz de Tenerife, Spain
2-6 Dec.	III International Seminar on Tourism Law	La Habana, Cuba

AFFILIATE MEMBERS AND PUBLIC-PRIVATE COLLABORATION DEPARTMENT'S EVENTS/INITIATIVES

8 Nov.	Affiliate Members Corner	Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
--------	---------------------------------	-------------------------

AM-PPC NEWS

The new composition of the Affiliate Members Board, for the mandate 2026-2029

The new composition of the Board of the Affiliate Members for the 2026–2029 mandate is now available.

The voting process, carried out in full accordance with the established calendar and procedures, concluded on 22 October. During the three-week voting process, 64 % (192 entities) of eligible voting members cast their ballots.

Below is the list of the 23 entities:

Africa

- Ethiopian Tour Operators Association - ETOA (Ethiopia)
- Zanzibar Association of Tourism Investors - ZATI (United Republic of Tanzania)

Americas

- Cámara Argentina de Turismo (Argentina)
- Confederación Panamericana de Escuelas de Hotelería y Turismo - CONPETH (Mexico)
- Expedia Group (United States of America)
- Fideicomiso de Promoción Turística del Estado de Nayarit (Mexico)
- TripAdvisor (United States of America)

East Asia & the Pacific

- Chameleon Strategies (Thailand)
- JTB Corp. (Japan)

Europe

- Agencia Catalana de Turismo (Spain)
- Asociación Empresarial Hotelera de Madrid - AEHM (Spain)
- CETT-Barcelona School of Tourism, Hospitality and Gastronomy (Spain)
- Croatian National Tourist Board (Croatia)
- European Network of Regions for a Competitive and Sustainable Tourism - NECSTouR (Belgium)
- IFEMA / FITUR Madrid (Spain)
- International Congress & Convention Association - ICCA (Netherlands)
- Madrid Destino Cultura, Turismo y Negocio S.A. (Spain)
- Red Española de Turismo Accesible - Red Estable (Spain)
- Türkiye Tourism Promotion and Development Agency - TGA (Türkiye)

Middle East

- Red Sea Global (Saudi Arabia)
- Saudi Tourism Authority (Saudi Arabia)

South Asia

- Maldives Association of Tourism Industry - MATI (Maldives)
- Touring and Automobile Club of the Islamic Republic of Iran - TACI (Islamic Republic of Iran)



FIA and Tourism launch the 1st Awards for Excellence in Sustainable Sports Tourism

Featuring four categories, the awards are designed to recognise initiatives that drive sustainability, innovation, social impact, and successful examples of public-private partnership within the sports tourism sector, while promoting and encouraging responsible practices that align with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals.

1. Most Sustainable Sport Event
2. Community Impact in Sports Tourism
3. Innovation in Sports Tourism Development
4. Outstanding Public-Private Partnerships in Sports Tourism

The launch of these Awards builds on the strategic partnership established between the two Organizations in September 2024, to foster collaboration in areas where tourism, sport and sustainable mobility intersect.

UN Tourism Secretary General, Zurab Pololikashvili, stated: "These Awards reflect the growing recognition of sports tourism as a strategic driver of sustainable development, social cohesion and innovation. We are proud to partner with our Affiliate Member FIA to honour the efforts of those making a meaningful impact through sport and tourism".

As one of the fastest-growing sectors globally, sports tourism reached a market value of \$609 billion in 2023 and is projected to grow to \$2.3 trillion by 2032, and this initiative seeks to spotlight exemplary initiatives that are shaping the future of the sector. The awards are open to UN Tourism Members, FIA Member Clubs, and other stakeholders involved in the fields of sports and tourism.

The Awards are now open, and UN Tourism and FIA invite all eligible organizations to take part in this first edition – a unique opportunity to showcase how sport and tourism can drive sustainability.

You can find more information [HERE](#)



AM-PPC NEWS

Affiliate Members take part in ABAV Expo 2025 and hold discussions ahead of COP30 in Brazil

UN Tourism participated in the ABAV Expo 2025, held from 8 to 10 October in Rio de Janeiro, one of Latin America's leading tourism fairs that gathered over 42,000 professionals and 2,000 exhibiting brands.

During the Opening Ceremony, Ion Vilcu, Director of the Affiliate Members and Public-Private Collaboration Department (AM-PPC), joined national and regional tourism authorities, reaffirming UN Tourism's commitment to strengthening the international component of the fair and to enhancing public-private collaboration in the region.

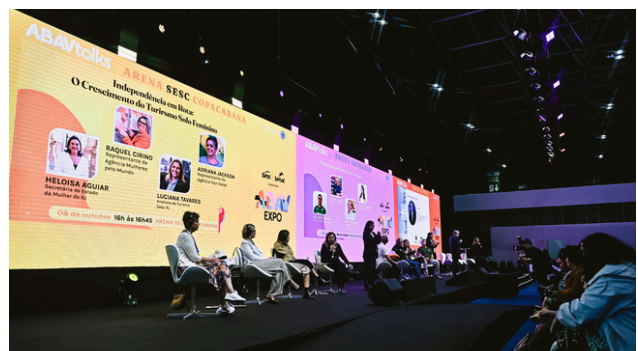
In collaboration with ABAV – Associação Brasileira de Agências de Viagens, UN Tourism organized the Affiliate Members Corner – Road to COP30: Inside Latin America's Private Tourism Sector,

featuring presentations from Affiliate Members in Argentina, Brazil, and Mexico:

- FAEVYT (Federación Argentina de Asociaciones de Empresas de Viajes y Turismo): presented the National Registry of Travel Agencies to strengthen transparency and consumer trust.
- ABAV (Associação Brasileira de Agências de Viagens): highlighted initiatives in professional training and sustainability.
- CONCANACO SERVYTUR (Confederación de Cámaras Nacionales de Comercio, Servicios y Turismo): shared programs such as La Gran Escapada and Viernes Muy Mexicano to boost domestic tourism and local economies.

The discussion explored how private sector associations can contribute to sustainable and competitive tourism development ahead of COP30 in Brazil.

You can find more information [HERE](#)



AM-PPC NEWS

UN Tourism Takes the Stage at World Football Summit Madrid

UN Tourism strengthened its presence at World Football Summit Madrid 2025, one of the leading global events connecting the football, sports, and tourism industries. Organized by the Affiliate Member World Football Summit, the event counted with over 2,000 attendees from more than 100 countries and provided a dynamic platform for networking, innovation, and high-level dialogue.

Ion Vilcu, Director of the Affiliate Members and Public-Private Collaboration Department, participated in the Opening Session, sharing UN Tourism's strategic focus on sports tourism and the contributions of its network of over 500 affiliated entities.

During the event, UN Tourism and WFS signed a Memorandum of Understanding to advance sports tourism as a strategic segment within the global tourism agenda.

UN Tourism also organized and moderated the panel “Technology and Tourism: Redefining the Sports Experience”, featuring representatives from FIA, Mabrian Technologies, FC Porto Museum, and Klook. The session explored how AI, data analytics, and immersive technologies are reshaping how fans travel and engage with sport.

You can find more information [HERE](#)



UN TOURISM HIGHLIGHTS

The Fundació Turisme Responsable de Mallorca renews its UN Tourism QUEST certification

UN Tourism has renewed the UN Tourism QUEST certification for the Fundació Turisme Responsable de Mallorca (Spain), recognising the organisation's ongoing commitment to excellence in destination management and governance.

The UN Tourism certification, valid for four years, was designed to promote and recognise the performance of Destination Management Organisations in three key areas: strategic leadership, effective execution, and efficient governance.

The Fundació Turisme Responsable de Mallorca, an Affiliate Member of UN Tourism, was in December 2020 the first destination management organisation (DMO) in Europe and the fourth worldwide to obtain this certification. Its renewal in 2025 reaffirms its leadership in the implementation of innovative and results-oriented destination management strategies, positioning Mallorca as a destination committed to competitiveness and sustainability.

In this renewal, the Fundació Turisme Responsable de Mallorca has demonstrated progress in its institutional coordination and participatory governance, as well as a change in the organisation's mission, whose main objective is no longer solely to attract visitors, but to manage tourism activity responsibly, ensuring that it is sustainable, accessible, and has a positive impact on the community and the environment.

The renewal of the UN Tourism QUEST certification of the Fundació Turisme Responsable de Mallorca once again reflects the value of public-private-community partnerships, as well as horizontal and vertical cooperation in tourism management.

This certification is part of UN Tourism's commitment to establishing quality and management standards that strengthen the institutional capacity of tourist destinations. This tool is particularly relevant in a global context in which DMOs must be increasingly agile, resilient and results-oriented in order to meet growing challenges.

You can find more information [HERE](#)



UN TOURISM HIGHLIGHTS

UN Tourism Announces Best Tourism Villages 2025: 52 Communities Leading Tourism for Rural Development

From Koyasan in Japan to Chamarel in Mauritius, Bled in Slovenia, Carlos Pellegrini in Argentina, and Masfout in the United Arab Emirates, 52 newly recognized Best Tourism Villages from 29 countries showcase the power of tourism.

In this fifth edition, 52 villages from all regions - Africa, the Americas, Asia, Europe, and the Middle East - received the recognition, selected from over 270 applications from 65 UN Tourism Member States.

Another 20 villages have joined the Upgrade Programme, with all 72 villages joining the Best Tourism Villages (BTV) Network. The BTV Network grows every year, and with the announcement of its 72 new members, 319 villages are now part of the largest community of rural destinations in the world.

UN Tourism Secretary-General Zurab Pololikashvili says: "Tourism can be a powerful tool to progress shared prosperity, inclusive growth, and territorial cohesion in rural areas.

Our Best Tourism Villages 2025 highlight communities that are working to safeguard their cultural heritage, preserve their natural resources, and create economic opportunities through tourism. These villages show that by embracing tourism, they can promote social inclusion and build a future where no one is left behind."

The list of new villages was announced during a special ceremony in Huzhou City, China.

The Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism initiative, launched in 2021, under the UN Tourism for Rural Development Programme, accelerates the role of tourism in rural development by valuing and safeguarding rural areas along with their associated landscapes, knowledge systems, biological diversity, and cultural heritage. The call for submissions for the sixth edition will take place in the first quarter of 2026, opening a new opportunity for rural destinations to share their inspiring initiatives and get global recognition as tourism for rural development champions.

You can find more information [HERE](#)



UN TOURISM HIGHLIGHTS

UN Tourism Global Conference on Wine Tourism highlights the value of Culture

The UN Tourism Global Conference on Wine Tourism took place in Plovdiv, Bulgaria, on 6–7 October 2025. Under the theme “The Art of Wine Tourism”, the event explored the synergies between wine tourism, art, and culture, showcasing its role as a catalyst for innovation, job creation, and regional development.

Set against the backdrop of historic Plovdiv, one of the world’s oldest continuously inhabited cities and European Capital of Culture in 2019, the Conference bridged innovation and tradition. With thousands of years of winemaking roots and a dynamic contemporary scene, Bulgaria provided a fitting example of how wine tourism can unite heritage and modernity to inspire professionals and visitors alike.

Bringing together more than 300 participants from 27 countries, the Conference featured high-level panels, masterclasses, and immersive site visits. It offered a platform for destinations, academics, entrepreneurs, wineries, and tourism professionals to exchange knowledge and good practices in wine tourism with a focus on the areas of policy, product development, communication, and talent.

A high-level policy session brought together representatives from the Ministries of Tourism of Bulgaria, Greece, and Montenegro, as well as from the Türkiye Tourism Promotion and Development Agency (TGA) and the UNESCO Regional Office in Sofia, to foster regional development. Coordinated policy approaches were underlined as essential to strengthen infrastructure, diversify products, and improve marketing, ensuring that wine tourism effectively advances the goals of sustainable tourism development.

You can find more information [HERE](#)



AFFILIATE MEMBERS NEWS

Viristar and Samtök ferðapjónustunnar Partner on Outdoor Safety

Viristar has partnered with Samtök ferðapjónustunnar (SAF), the Icelandic Travel Industry Association, to expand access to safety education for Iceland's travel and tourism professionals.

Through this collaboration, members of SAF can now enroll in Viristar's internationally recognized Risk Management for Outdoor Programs course at a 20 percent discount, helping strengthen safety practices.

The Risk Management for Outdoor Programs certification training is a 40-hour online course that occurs over four weeks. The rigorous and intensive course includes both self-paced study and seminar-style group discussions. Topics covered include incident prevention, safety culture, adventure standards, emergency planning, media relations, legal considerations, documentation, staff training, systems thinking, and more.

Ágúst Elvar Bjarnason, Project Manager of SAF, stated, "Introducing Viristar's Risk Management for Outdoor Programs course is a valuable development for the industry, and we're proud to make it available to our members.

Icelandic travel and tourism companies understand the importance of safety, and Viristar's training programs are widely regarded for their exceptional quality. These courses are specifically designed to equip travel professionals with the skills needed to effectively manage risks and provide safe, high-quality outdoor experiences."

The training, facilitated by Viristar instructors, will help travel and tourism professionals navigate safety challenges.

Jeff Baierlein, Director of Viristar, commented, "We're excited to collaborate with SAF and its network of Icelandic travel professionals. Those committed to excellence in outdoor safety will find great value in the Risk Management for Outdoor Programs training."

Viristar has provided risk management training and consulting for outdoor, travel, and experiential programs in more than 75 countries and territories worldwide. To enroll with the SAF partner discount, please contact SAF directly.

For more information about the course, visit <https://www.viristar.com/course/risk-management-for-outdoor-programs/>.



VIRISTAR®



AFFILIATE MEMBERS NEWS

Winners of the Skål International 2025 Sustainable Tourism Awards

Skål International proudly announced the winners of the 2025 Sustainable Tourism Awards, selected from a record 106 entries across 30 countries, highlighting global dedication to responsible and innovative tourism.

Since 2002, these awards have recognized best practices in sustainable tourism, showcasing exemplary initiatives that serve as models and inspiration for businesses, organizations and tourist destinations worldwide. Through this long-standing commitment, Skål International is increasingly becoming a global reference in promoting and fostering best practices that contribute to a more sustainable and resilient tourism sector.

The Award Ceremony took place during the Opening of the 84th Skål International World Congress in Cusco, Peru, on 26 September, attended by global Skål leaders and senior Peruvian officials. <https://skal.org/blog/skal-international-news-1/post/winners-of-the-skal-international-2025-sustainable-tourism-awards-1174>

Collaboration

Skål International is proud to continue its valued partnership with UN Tourism, a prestigious organization that has supported our Sustainable Tourism Awards programme by offering global platforms to promote the awards and their winners. This collaboration provides a meaningful opportunity to showcase outstanding best practices that can inspire institutions, companies, and countries in their journey toward a more sustainable future.

We are also pleased to maintain our ongoing partnership with Biosphere Tourism and the Responsible Tourism Institute, and to note the strengthened support from Sustainable Travel International, further reinforcing our shared commitment to responsible and impactful tourism.

Check out the exceptional list of 106 participants from 30 countries worldwide: <https://skal.org/blog/skal-international-news-1/post/record-participation-for-the-skal-international-sustainable-tourism-awards-2025-1118>

For more information, contact awards@skal.org



AFFILIATE MEMBERS NEWS

From Community to Classroom, from Classroom to the World: Toro Toro and the Human-Centered Model of Rural Tourism Management.

Marco Antonio Abastoflor. Ph.D.

The Bolivian Catholic University “San Pablo”, La Paz campus, has played a crucial role in strengthening professional competencies within the rural tourism sector, taking the development of Toro Toro in Bolivia as an emblematic case. The success achieved in this region is directly linked to the comprehensive education provided by the Tourism Management program, which has embraced inclusive, dialogical, and culturally sensitive learning models adapted to the social realities of local communities.

Toro Toro, with its remarkable paleontological, geological, and cultural wealth, has become a national benchmark for sustainable tourism. However, its progress was not immediate. Change began when the UCB, together with strategic partners, launched the program “Learning Communities in Biocultural Community-Based Tourism.” The focus was on building key competencies—tourism enterprise management, lodging and restaurant operations, biocultural guiding—as well as strengthening soft skills such as leadership, teamwork, and self-confidence.

Thanks to this training model, the residents of Toro Toro ceased to be mere hosts and became active agents of development. They understood that service quality, deep knowledge of local heritage, sustainable practices, and genuine hospitality are the true drivers of success. Academic support and certification processes provided confidence and legitimacy, fostering the professionalization of rural tourism and increasing employability, especially among women and youth.

The outcome goes beyond economic growth. Tourism in Toro Toro has contributed to strengthening local identity, revitalizing traditional festivities and ancestral knowledge, and improving the community’s quality of life—demonstrating that a university deeply connected to its environment can become a catalyst for sustainable transformation and a replicable model of management across Bolivia.

Ref.

Sánchez Mitru, M., & Abastoflor Portugal, M. A. (2023). Tourism planning and development with a biocultural approach in Torotoro, Bolivia.



UNIVERSIDAD
CATÓLICA
BOLIVIANA
LA PAZ



AFFILIATE MEMBERS NEWS

JLL's Tourism Readiness Index, Commissioned by Africa's Eden, Charts Investment Roadmap for Southern Africa

Africa's Eden Tourism Association (Africa's Eden), in partnership with JLL and the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC), have assessed tourism readiness of Botswana, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The findings are based on JLL's globally recognised Tourism Readiness Index, a proven framework previously applied to over 200 destinations worldwide.

The Index uses more than 70 indicators across eight pillars — Scale, Concentration, Leisure, Business, Urban Readiness, Safety & Security, Environmental Readiness and Policy & Prioritisation. The four countries are categorised as “Dawning Developers” — destinations with strong natural and cultural assets, emerging infrastructure and major upside if strategic investment and policy reforms are pursued.

The Index is not a ranking system: it identifies the “delta” between what destinations offer today and what they will need to service future visitors sustainably. That means actionable guidance on where to invest so growth is inclusive, climate-sensitive and resilient.

Strategic insights for Investment and Policy

- Air connectivity & scale: Zimbabwe and Zambia show stronger seat capacity and route networks; Botswana and Namibia need targeted route development to unlock new markets and reduce over-reliance on a few nodes.
- Product diversification: All four countries rely heavily on leisure/wildlife. The Index highlights immediate opportunities to grow culture, adventure, city breaks and MICE to smooth seasonality and extend average length of stay.
- Sustainability & resilience: Botswana leads on environmental readiness but each country needs a clear tourism resilience strategy — from protected-area finance to encouraging more hotels to adopt sustainability standards.
- Visa & policy levers: Updating visa regimes and creating coordinated regional travel corridors (SADC cooperation) would materially improve multi-country itineraries and boost arrivals.

From Insights to Action

The full report is being made available to government agencies, tourism associations, investors and civil-society partners today, accompanied by regional webinars to turn insights into action.



AFFILIATE MEMBERS NEWS

Sustainable Travel Milestone: Türkiye Reaches 2,000+ Gstc-Certified Hotels

In 2022, Türkiye signed a cooperation agreement with the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) to implement a sustainable framework for Turkish tourism. This initiative positioned Türkiye as the first country to develop a national program with the GSTC at the government level, which has influenced other countries in similar efforts.

With this initiative, Türkiye has achieved a remarkable milestone in global tourism by enabling over 2,000 accommodation facilities to earn the internationally renowned GSTC Certification within a span of just three years. Türkiye has not only implemented a profound transformation in the tourism sector but also presented a model that is referenced as an example on a global scale for its outstanding performance. Türkiye boasts the highest number of GSTC-certified accommodation facilities in the world, meaning that more than 80% of these certified facilities are located in Türkiye.

Nationwide Commitment to Global Standards

Under Türkiye's National Sustainable Tourism Program's Third Stage, where accommodations obtain the GSTC Certification, it has become a symbol of prestige for all facilities striving to offer visitors the highest quality and most comfortable experience in Türkiye. By the end of 2024, 1,466 facilities had qualified for GSTC certification, and as of September 1, 2025, this number reached 2,005, with an impressive 37% increase in just nine months. Today, the certification of over 2,000 facilities further strengthens Türkiye's vision of global leadership in sustainable tourism.

Stage 3 certification rates have exceeded 50% based on room and bed capacity in Antalya, Kırşehir, and Kilis provinces. Following closely behind are İstanbul, Konya, Şırnak, Gaziantep, Kayseri, and Aydın, each of which has achieved more than 30% of its accommodation capacities certified against GSTC Standards. These figures show that not only major tourism hubs, but also emerging destinations are strongly committed to sustainability principles.



AFFILIATE MEMBERS NEWS

Celebrating World Tourism Day 2025 at ACTAT

To celebrate the World Tourism Day and the National Tourism Week, the Abasabad Cultural and Tourism Area of Tehran (ACTA) hosted a week-long festival from September 26 to October 8, 2025. The event was held with the presence of Vice President for Executive Affairs of I.R.I, the Minister of Communications and Information Technology, and the Vice Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts. The festival featured a variety of indoor and outdoor events.

Festival Highlights

Indoor events included:

- Official Opening and Closing ceremonies: Speeches delivered by prominent political and cultural figures.
- Launch of the Tehran-e- Dinadani App: A tourism guide for the ACTAT's attractions.
- Book Launch Ceremony: A cultural tourism guidebook for Tehran.
- Two Moderated Panel Discussions on the following topics:
 - Innovative and technological opportunities in green tourism.
 - Crisis management in tourism during the post-war period.

Outdoor Events in the Open Spaces of ACTAT included:

- Tourism & Sustainability Exhibition: Promoted equal opportunities for new tourism businesses and startups.
- National Trail Cycling Championship: A two-day event supported by Iran's Cycling Federation and Union Cycliste Internationale (UCI).
- Tehran Art History and Reverse Glass painting Workshops: Held on Tabi'at Bridge, this workshop introduced the public to this unique form of art while sharing the historical beauties of Tehran.
- Reverse Glass Painting Exhibition: Showcased 250 artworks by 90 professional artists.
- Special-Interest Tours: Artist-focused tours and scientific tourism for students at Mina Dome Planetarium.
- Map Reading Session: Prepared participants for a navigational rally with the Touring and Automobile Club of I.R.I.
- Mothers' Choir: To empower women, a 700-member choir of trained mothers performed national, local, and iconic Iranian songs in ACTAT.
- Children's Paradise Farm Opening: Established to promote creative tourism, this farm provides children the opportunity to learn gardening, botany, and become familiar with nature.



AFFILIATE MEMBERS NEWS

Diriyah Company drives growth through Saudi talent empowerment, expansion of global retail partnerships

Diriyah Company continues to progress its vision of creating a global cultural and lifestyle destination by announcing three major developments reflecting its growing impact across retail, hospitality, and entertainment.

The company has launched Jabal AlQurain Avenue, a new pedestrian-focused retail and cultural district designed to empower Saudi talent and entrepreneurship. Located within the Qurain Cultural District, the development features more than 70 retail and dining units, offering local brands and creatives a platform to showcase innovation while maintaining and celebrating the architectural authenticity of Najdi design.

In Wadi Safar, Diriyah Company introduced Faena Residences, an exclusive collection of 20 ultra-luxury branded villas located alongside the upcoming Faena Hotel. The residences merge art, architecture, and lifestyle, offering residents access to wellness, equestrian, and leisure experiences across Wadi Safar's natural landscape.

The Faena Residences Wadi Safar join a growing portfolio of unique branded residences within the Diriyah and Wadi Safar masterplans. This latest launch contributes to Diriyah Company's plans of hosting 100,000 residents, offering an outstanding quality of life in a human-centric urban development of world-class impact while building an extraordinary future rooted in Diriyah's 300 years of history as the birthplace of the Kingdom. As part of the global partnership between Faena and Accor, residence owners will also enjoy exclusive Accor Live Limitless benefits, including Diamond tier status and special privileges across Accor's international portfolio.

Diriyah Company has also announced a landmark partnership agreement with Majid Al Futtain Holding, a leading communities, retail, and leisure pioneer across the Middle East, Africa, and Central Asia. The partnership will introduce a state-of-the-art VOX Cinemas multiplex and curated collection of seven premier brands to the prestigious Diriyah Square, a world-class premium lifestyle district.



AFFILIATE MEMBERS NEWS

TOPOSOPHY Provides Key Options and Insights for Kilkenny's Medieval Mile

TOPOSOPHY successfully concluded its collaboration with Kilkenny County Council by delivering an Orientation and Animation Report for the city's Medieval Mile, supporting sustainable and community-centric development.

About the Project:

Kilkenny is home to some of Ireland's most important Medieval heritage, offering unique opportunities to unite locals and visitors around the development of the Medieval Mile at the city's heart. Alongside its rich heritage, Kilkenny is recognised for its creative scene, cultural calendar, and global achievements such as those of the award-winning Cartoon Saloon.

Guided by the Kilkenny Tourism Strategy and Fáilte Ireland's DEDP, TOPOSOPHY was commissioned to explore the visitor experience potential of the Medieval Mile. The project addressed key challenges, including sustainable visitor distribution, Night-Time Economy activation, and the alignment of new heritage investments like the Medieval Mile Museum.

The resulting research focused on how Kilkenny County Council could harness its creative economy and festival network to foster community-led activation along the Medieval Mile.

Delivery Modules:

Comprehensive review of relevant strategic plans, public policy frameworks, and Night-Time Economy funding mechanisms.

Benchmarking & Best Practice:

Comparative analysis of Wexford's Viking Quarter, Limerick's King's Island, and Kinsale's Historic Quarter to identify lessons and differentiation opportunities.

SWOT Analysis:

Evaluation of strengths (heritage and infrastructure), weaknesses (sensitive public realm), opportunities (alignment with investment channels), and threats (heritage wear and infrastructure pressure).

Executive Implementation Report:

Definition of key "place priorities," with a practical implementation plan, potential suppliers, and indicative costs.

Imagining Success:

Four creative scenarios illustrating how Kilkenny's Medieval Mile could thrive through community, creativity, and culture.

TOPOSOPHY was delighted to deliver this project and strengthen its collaboration with Kilkenny County Council and Fáilte Ireland's Ireland's Ancient East team.

TOPOSOPHY
PLACE MAKING & MARKETING AGENCY



AFFILIATE MEMBERS NEWS

IPDT – Tourism Intelligence presents the “Guide to Local Tourism Management 2025–2029”

IPDT – Tourism Intelligence has released the second edition of the “Guide to Local Tourism Management”, a study that gathers insights from municipal officers and decision-makers across the country on the main priorities and challenges for tourism in the coming years.

The report reveals a clear shift in the way local governments view tourism: from an occasional promotional activity to a strategic pillar of governance.

Covering the period 2025 to 2029, the guide establishes key lines of action for municipal tourism policy: strategic planning, development of tourism products, digital communication, investment attraction, and the enhancement of local resources. Shared governance, between local governments, businesses, and communities, is essential for tourism to become a true driver of balanced and sustainable development.

Among the main conclusions, it is clear that tourism should be reinforced as a core element of local policy, closely integrated with culture, urban planning, the environment, and social cohesion.

The study shows that the future of municipal tourism depends on clear strategic plans, stronger team training, and simpler, more flexible funding suited to the realities of each area.

“Local authorities now have the opportunity to make tourism a force for territorial and social cohesion. Municipal action in this domain should follow an integrated vision, one that values heritage, promotes sustainability, and places residents’ well-being at the centre of decision-making. Balancing economy, environment, and quality of life will create the right conditions to attract responsible investment and foster socially fair development”.

— António Jorge Costa, President of IPDT – Tourism Intelligence

The Guide to Local Tourism Management 2025–2029 presents a forward-looking vision in which local governments embrace tourism as a vital part of their development strategy. The ebook is available free of charge on the official IPDT website: www.ipdt.pt



AFFILIATE MEMBERS NEWS

Join hands with SHTM to transform Hospitality and Tourism for Sustainable Future at IMPACT2025 Conference

The hospitality and tourism sectors are undergoing significant transformation, driven by digital advancements and evolving operational practices. The IMPACT2025 Conference is dedicated to the theme “Transforming Hospitality and Tourism for a Sustainable Future.” This event serves as a vital platform for industry leaders, government representatives, and academics to engage in discussions about transformational trends, share research findings, and explore innovative strategies that capitalise on these changes for evidence-based education and practice.

Organised by the School of Hotel and Tourism Management at The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, in collaboration with the Research Centre for Digital Transformation of Tourism and the Co-Star SHARE Center, IMPACT2025 will take place from December 7 to 9, 2025, in Hong Kong.

Join us at IMPACT2025, where world-class research converges with unparalleled experiences! Hong Kong, a vibrant metropolis blending Eastern and Western cultures, invites you to explore its stunning skyline, rich cultural heritage, and diverse culinary delights. With its lively streets and tranquil retreats, this dynamic city promises a unique journey of discovery and inspiration.

Registration Fee:

	Early-bird price (until 15 Nov.)	Standard price (after 15 Nov.)
Full-time student	HK\$3,000	HK\$4,000
Regular participant	HK\$4,000	HK\$5,000

Details:

<https://www.polyu.edu.hk/htm/emailer/HTRC/IMPACT2025/2nd/index.html>



SCHOOL OF HOTEL AND TOURISM MANAGEMENT

Organised by  THE HONG KONG
POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY
香港理工大學
SCHOOL OF HOTEL AND TOURISM MANAGEMENT

 RCdTT
Research Centre for Digital Transformation of Tourism

 CoStarGroup™



HONG KONG
7-9 DEC
2025

Experience Hong Kong at
IMPACT2025
Discover the Future of Hospitality & Tourism



AFFILIATE MEMBERS NEWS

CETT What's Next? | Immersive Technologies for Memorable Experiences

On Thursday, November 13, CETT, in collaboration with the Barcelona Provincial Council, will host an in-person event at the CETT Campus focused on immersive technologies applied to tourism, hospitality, and gastronomy.

Throughout the morning, innovative projects that are already transforming the way we live and manage tourism experiences will be presented. The program will also feature keynote talks, pitches of applied solutions, and an interview with Héctor Zapata, President of Tetravol.

Registrations will be open until November 10 at 11:59 p.m., and interested students can sign up through the Virtual Campus.



CETT What's Next? Barcelona 2025

13 de novembre | 9.30 h | Hotel Alimara

**Tecnologies immersives
per a experiències
memorables**

Amb el suport de:





The UN Tourism Affiliate Members and Public-Private Collaboration Department is responsible for the management of the partnership between UN Tourism and the public and private sectors.

Contact us at: am@unwto.org

*UNprecedented Perspectives
by UN Tourism Affiliate Members*