

The World Tourism Organization (WTO), since 2003 a specialized agency of the United Nations, is the leading international organization in the field of tourism. It serves as a global forum for tourism policy issues and practical source of tourism know-how. With its headquarters in Madrid, Spain, the WTO plays a central and decisive role in promoting the development of responsible, sustainable and universally accessible tourism, with the aim of contributing to economic development, international understanding, peace, prosperity and universal respect for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The WTO plays a catalytic role in promoting technology transfers and international cooperation, in stimulating and developing public-private sector partnerships and in encouraging the implementation of the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism, with a view to ensuring that member countries, tourist destinations and businesses maximize the positive economic, social and cultural effects of tourism and fully reap its benefits, while minimizing its negative social and environmental impacts.

In 2004, the WTO's membership comprised of 144 countries, seven territories and more than 300 affiliate members representing the private sector, educational institutions, tourism associations and local tourism authorities.

The history of the WTO dates back to 1925 when the International Congress of Official Tourist Traffic Associations (ICOOTTA) was set up in the Hague. It was renamed the International Union of Official Travel Organizations (IUTO) after World War II and became a technical, non-governmental organization. As tourism grew and became an integral part of modern life, it started to be clear that there was a need for more effective tools to keep developments under review and to provide tourism intergovernmental machinery especially equipped to deal with the movement of persons, tourism policies and tourism impacts. In 1969 the UN General Assembly passed a resolution recognizing the central role of the IUTO in the field of world tourism and in cooperation with the existing machinery within the UN. In 1975 the IUTO was renamed to the World Tourism Organization and its headquarters moved to Madrid.

The General Assembly as its principal gathering meets every two years to approve the budget and programme of work as well as to debate topics of vital importance to tourism sector. The Executive Council, Regional Commissions, Committees and the Secretariat deal with more day-to-day issues. There are six Regional Commissions corresponding with the division of the world into six regions for the purposes of the WTO. These regions are as follows: Africa, the Americas, East Asia and the Pacific, Europe, the Middle East and South Asia.

To reflect the growing decentralization of tourism administration, the WTO formed a task force to focus on issues that are of special concern at the destination level, such as management of congestion at coastal destinations, economic measurement of tourism at the local level, destination marketing for cities, information and communication technologies, human resource development and risk and crisis management at individual tourism destinations.

The WTO provides all stakeholders in tourism with methodological materials and manuals to all important issues of the tourism industry.

The WTO also plays an important role in collecting tourism statistical data. It publishes for example The Compendium of Tourism Statistics (annually), a Yearbook of Tourism Statistics (annually) and The Travel and Tourism Barometer (quarterly) mentioned in the Listening Comprehension.

headquarters = vedení firmy, decisive = rozhodující, promoting = propagující, universal = celosvětový, všeobecný, reap = sklízet ovoce (přen.),

public-private sector partnership = partnersví mezi státní sférou a soukromým sektorem, implementation = plnění, realizace, non-governmental organization = nevládní organizace, day-to-day issues = každodenní problémy, effective tool = účinný nástroj, gathering = uskupení to approve the budget = schválit rozpočet, task force = komise, annually = ročně, quarterly = čtvrtletník

WTO and Statistics

Statistics provided by the WTO emphasizes the economic significance of tourism at a global level. The ability of a tourism destination to attract tourism revenues is influenced by a complex set of characteristics discussed in chapter 1. One source of economic data on the economic significance of tourism in each country is its balance of payments. As it was already mentioned, the complexity of tourism as an industry makes it difficult to statistically distinguish tourism activity from other economic activities and to measure its contribution to the overall economy. This leads to underestimating the role of tourism. The WTO has played a key role in improving the way in which tourism activity is statistically identified and measured.

emphasize = zdůrazňovat, significance = význam, global level = celosvětová úroveň/rovina, revenues = příjmy, balance of payment = platební bilance, distinguish = rozlišovat, overall = celkový