G7

Tourism Ministers' Communiqué

Florence, November 13-15, 2024

We, the G7 Ministers in charge of tourism, met in Florence, Italy, from November 13th to November 15th, 2024, to emphasize the strategic role of tourism as a driver for progress and sustainable and inclusive development. Together, G7 members welcomed 43% of global tourism arrivals in 2023 and accounted for 41% of outbound tourists to destinations around the world, confirming our role and responsibilities as a group of major tourism destinations and source markets.

Florence, with its unique heritage and centuries-old tradition in welcoming visitors proved to be the ideal location for our discussion on the sector and the present and future challenges and opportunities for the tourism ecosystem.

In line with the Apulia G7 Leaders' Communiqué, we state our commitment to providing opportunities for development and pursuing shared and sustainable prosperity, taking advantage of new technological advancements.

In an international context marked by multiple crises and conflicts, we reaffirm the prominent role of tourism in building bridges among nations and promoting mutual understanding and respect among peoples and cultures. Tourism is a vehicle for peace and needs peace to thrive.

In light of tourism's importance as an engine for economic prosperity, employment and well-being, as well as of its cross-cutting nature, we recognize the need to maintain tourism high on national and international policy agendas.

We aim to work closely at all levels of government, in cooperation with the private sector, local populations and other stakeholders, to support a paradigm shift towards a human-centred, well managed and balanced tourism development. We underline the need for effective governance practices and coordinated policy action, supported by sufficient resources at all levels.

We emphasize that G7 members can assume a leading role in the following interlinked and mutually reinforcing areas for tourism development: strengthening the drive towards economic, social, and environmental sustainability; enhancing the role of human capital through skills development; and harnessing the potential of digitalisation and AI, while managing the associated risks.

In this respect, based on the priorities identified by the Italian Presidency and the work of the G7 Tourism Working Group, as summed up in the Presidency's document "G7 Tourism Working Group Main Takeaways", and based on the policy papers, developed in cooperation with the OECD, focusing on "Creating Economic Prosperity through Inclusive and Sustainable Tourism" and "Artificial Intelligence and Tourism", we share the following objectives:

Spreading the benefits of tourism for a sustainable and inclusive development

We are committed to fostering a balanced development of tourism, aligned with the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and other relevant international instruments such as the Paris Agreement and the Global Biodiversity Framework, with the aim of maximizing its positive direct and indirect effects, while adopting evidence-based measures to manage and address the externalities on local populations, the environment, climate, and natural and cultural heritage.

We underline that tourism success should not be solely measured on visitor numbers. Instead, it should be assessed based on a holistic perspective, taking into account the positive impacts that tourism can deliver at destination level. The tourism industry should strive towards a long-term comprehensive sustainable model to ensure the benefits of tourism are widely distributed to all, including underserved and local populations, micro-small and medium sized enterprises and the whole value chain. We recognize that diversifying tourism offerings, supporting a well-planned participatory development of destinations and tackling seasonality are key elements of this approach.

Recognising tourism's impact and reliance on the environment, we support the green transition of the sector to contribute to overall climate goals, reduce resources consumption and embrace circular economy models. We will consider the needs of tourism businesses, especially MSMEs, in their climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts, while responding to the economic and social impact of environmental policies, including at the subnational level.

To strengthen the resilience of our tourism economy, we aim to improve the sector's crisis preparedness and ability to minimize the impact of and recover from disasters caused by natural or man-made hazards.

At the same time, we recognize the opportunity to promote and increase the availability of environmental-friendly tourism practices and experiences as well as tourists' awareness and agency, enabling travellers to make sustainable and well-informed choices.

Recalling the G7 commitment to further integrate the rights of persons with disabilities across all political agendas and considering the needs of an ageing society, we acknowledge the need, as well as the economic opportunity, to embrace the principles of accessibility and universal design. To this end, we will strive to adopt policies and concrete measures, such as on investment, information and training, to promote greater accessibility and ensure full and effective participation in tourism activities for all.

Strengthening the human factor

We acknowledge human capital as the most valuable resource in the tourism ecosystem, where the person is at the core of both the supply and demand sides. Tourism professions require a varied and unique set of abilities, encompassing technical and transversal skills, including interpersonal and communication skills, cultural awareness, problem-solving abilities, and flexibility.

We acknowledge that the tourism labour market has a high potential for further development, considering the new opportunities stemming from digitalisation and artificial intelligence (AI) and the evolution of the tourism model, along with the possibility of market growth. The labour market would therefore benefit from further innovation and entrepreneurship.

We will work towards better training of the workforce, to further develop high level technical skills, including skills related to sustainable tourism management, digitalisation and new technologies. Upskilling and reskilling the tourism workforce to meet the needs of changing and new jobs is of utmost importance, including for youth.

We aim to address labour shortages, by strengthening policy frameworks that support businesses to improve working conditions and address barriers to attracting and retaining tourism talent.

We reiterate that developing a varied, geographically diversified and -year-round tourism offering can contribute to reducing seasonality and job instability, improving the appeal of employment in tourism, especially if the specific needs of tourism employers and employees are better integrated into wider economic and community development strategies.

We encourage coordination between relevant authorities, educational institutions and the private sector to effectively align education and training on tourism with the needs of a fast-changing sector, including through upskilling and reskilling opportunities along the career path.

Harnessing digitalisation and AI

We acknowledge that tourism development can leverage the adoption of digital technologies, including safe, secure, and trustworthy AI, supporting a human-centred and secure digital transformation.

Technological progress can broaden tourism and business opportunities, spurring innovation and productivity growth. Indeed, technologies such as generative AI can redefine the boundaries of tourism, paving the way to new customised suggestions and experiences for tourists, improved business operations and work organisation, and creating new employment opportunities.

AI can contribute to tourism sustainability by allowing predictive analysis of complex data, enabling a better management of tourism flows and service planning at destinations, including transport and waste management, and fostering efficiency in the use of resources.

At the same time, we identify the need to ensure cybersecurity of tourism enterprises, protection of customer data transparency, and accountability to prevent harm to customers, as well as abuses of AI technology, which can distort the market and unfairly alter competition, such as "fake reviews," deep fakes or consumers' behaviour manipulations.

We recognise the need to raise awareness among tourism businesses and destinations about the opportunities and risks linked with digital technologies, including AI, and to consider measures to overcome infrastructure and resource constraints in the development and adoption of AI solutions and strong cybersecurity practices especially for MSMEs.

We encourage dialogue between educational institutions, technology providers and the tourism industry to develop the necessary skills and competencies for all stakeholders to leverage the benefits of digital technologies, including AI.

Conclusion

We are grateful for the valuable contributions and insights from Ministers and representatives of invited countries (Brazil, Egypt, India, Saudi Arabia), UN Tourism, and the OECD as the knowledge partner for the G7 Tourism Working Group.

We reaffirm our commitment to further coordinate and cooperate in relevant international fora to advance the global tourism agenda.