

TOURISM ETHICS PRAISES INITIATIVES ON ACCESSIBLE TOURISM



The fourteenth meeting of the World Committee on Tourism Ethics meeting in Rome, Italy (17-18 November 2014) commended the efforts of UNWTO and its partners to advance Accessible Tourism for All. The Committee firmly supported the “Montreal Declaration – A World for All”, the outcome document of the recent World Summit on Destinations for All, and participated actively in the 1st Conference on Accessible Tourism in Europe held in San Marino on 19-20 November.

Besides the issue of accessibility, the Committee also debated the ethical implications of the promotion of fair models of all-inclusive holidays, the impact on tourism of unfounded ratings on travel portals and the effect of the rise of sharing economy in tourism.

“Tourism makes a great contribution to economy, although in occasions it can be damaging at a local level, our Committee pays special attention to this. The tourism sector is undergoing great changes (online booking systems, user generated ratings, the use of ICT and social networks in tourism); topics which we have to understand and reflect in our initiatives”, said Pascal Lamy, chair of the Committee.

Welcoming the Members of the Committee, the Minister for Culture and Tourism of Italy, Dario Franceschini, said “In these difficult times, characterized by economic and financial instability, natural disasters and unpredictable socio-political events, we are all aware that development can only be addressed with a shared ethical framework”.

“I would like to thank the outstanding support received from the Italian Government in advancing the important agenda of the World Committee on Tourism Ethics. It is the fourth time that the Committee meets in Rome thanks to the excellent cooperation established with Italy and to the support of the Rome Centre for the Promotion and Dissemination of the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism. This collaboration shows the commitment of Italy to promote a more sustainable and responsible tourism development”, said UNWTO Secretary-General, Taleb Rifai.

The Committee further backed the “Be a Responsible Traveler” anti-trafficking campaign by UNWTO, UNODC and UNESCO in cooperation with the private sector, to stand against human trafficking and illegal trade in wildlife, cultural artifacts and drugs. In the sphere of Child protection, the Committee acclaimed the participation of UNWTO in the forthcoming Global Study on the Sexual Exploitation of Children in Travel and Tourism and will follow up with attention the progress of this research.

As the organ responsible for promoting and monitoring the implementation of the UNWTO Global Code of Ethics for Tourism, the Committee applauded the growing number of companies and trade associations that have adhered to the Private Sector Commitment to the Code. By November 2014, a total of 356 signatories from 51 countries had committed to promote and implement the Code in their business operations.

The World Committee on Tourism Ethics is the independent body responsible for promoting and monitoring the implementation of the UNWTO Global Code of Ethics for Tourism. Its 14th Meeting was held in Rome, host city of the Centre for the Promotion of the Global Code of Ethics in Tourism,

under the chairmanship of Pascal Lamy.

The next meeting of the Committee will take place in Istria, Croatia, on the occasion of the 100th Session of the UNWTO Executive Council.

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