

NOTA DE PRENSA

PRESS RELEASE

UNWTO PARTNERS WITH TELEFÓNICA TO PROMOTE TOURISM SECTOR DIGITALIZATION

- The framework agreement between the two organizations was signed in Madrid by Jaime Cabal, Deputy Secretary-General of the World Tourism Organization, and by Eduardo Navarro, Director of Communication, Corporate Affairs, Branding and Sustainability of Telefónica.
- The alliance, whose first phase will be in effect until the end of 2020, revolves around four initial lines of action: digital entrepreneurship; application of new technologies in the tourism sector; Digital Education and training; and the development of a specific Digital Agenda for the tourism industry.

Madrid, 30 April 2019.- Telefónica and the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) have announced an agreement to collaborate in the development and implementation of digital entrepreneurship and training initiatives that allow the tourism sector to increase its competitiveness and strengthen its long-term sustainability. This agreement comes at a time of profound technological change that impacts all industrial sectors, where a commitment to innovation and transformation is essential.

In this regard, the application of new technologies such as Big Data and the Internet of Things are already leading to new uses and applications that will revolutionize services in the tourism sector and responses to new customer demands. For this reason, this alliance places special emphasis on jointly addressing the challenges and opportunities that this technological change entails and initially takes concrete form in four specific lines of action.

First, both parties are committed to promoting innovation and **digital entrepreneurship** within the tourism sector through the creation of innovation forums, collaboration in open innovation programmes with third parties, and public-private collaboration models focused on Open Innovation. The aim of these initiatives is to create the suitable spaces for the development of innovative ideas and outreach to all the actors involved.

New technologies will have an increasing role in the modernization and growth possibilities of the tourism sector and, therefore, both entities will launch initiatives aimed at the use of **Internet of Things (IoT), Artificial Intelligence** and **Big Data**, among others. Many of IoT's solutions, such as Retail, help build customer loyalty by digitizing spaces that create a unique visitor experience. Or mobility solutions, which allow tourists to enjoy rental cars or car-sharing in a completely safe way. An enormous amount of knowledge is generated about the behaviour of travellers through the sensors that make up the different IoT services, allowing us to offer them what they particularly need at any given moment.

On the other hand, the analysis of **Big Data** makes it possible to understand patterns of behaviour to better address some of the challenges facing tourism in Latin America and Europe, and to draw relevant conclusions that influence decision-making and public policies. LUCA -Telefónica's Big Data and AI unit- is already working with national and local tourism organizations in eight countries in Latin America and Europe through more than 40 projects.

Another important point of this agreement is to focus on **Digital Education and Training**, something essential in a new technological world in which jobs and skills are changing radically, affecting the employability and sustainability of businesses. In this sense, both entities will collaborate through the training platforms managed by Telefónica Educación Digital, such as Miríadax, to promote local and international courses on digital technologies and skills applied to tourism and aimed at different entities in the sector.

Lastly, Telefónica will lend its support to the UNWTO in the development of a **specific Digital Agenda for the tourism sector** guided by a set of very concrete objectives: to place new technologies at the service of sustainable growth, foster innovation and promote inclusive economic and social development.

The framework agreement between the two organizations has been signed in Madrid by Jaime Cabal, Deputy Secretary-General of the World Tourism Organization, and by Eduardo Navarro, Director of Communication, Corporate Affairs, Branding and Sustainability of Telefónica S.A.

During the signing, Cabal said that "innovation and digital transformation are among the priorities of the World Tourism Organization in order to provide additional impetus to tourism as an ally of sustainable development". He added: "Together with Telefónica we can help our more than 160 Member States build their tourism innovation ecosystems and create digital tools that facilitate more efficient decision-making thanks to the use of Big Data, artificial intelligence and many other advances."

For his part, Eduardo Navarro stressed that "this framework agreement is very important because the technologies are drawing the future of travel and tourism. Virtual and augmented reality, Big Data, cognitive intelligence and the Internet of Things will be a fundamental part of the tourist experience and Telefónica is a very important player in the provision of these services. The fibre networks deployed by Telefónica will also be decisive in making this a reality that will have an impact on the experience of users and on the services provided by the different players in the sector".

About Telefónica

Telefónica is one of the largest telecommunications companies in the world by market capitalization and number of customers with a comprehensive offering and quality of connectivity that is delivered over world class fixed, mobile and broadband networks. As a growing company it prides itself on providing a differential experience based both on its corporate values and a public position that defends customer interests. With over 345 million accesses, Telefónica has a strong presence in Spain, Europe and Latin America, where the company focuses an important part of its growth strategy. Telefónica is a fully private company with more than 1.5 million direct shareholders. More information: www.telefonica.com

About the UNWTO

With more than 1.4 billion international tourists per year, tourism is one of the main economic sectors of the world. Tourism generates 10% of world GDP and one in every 10 jobs is in tourism. Due to its transversal impact, it touches a wide range of economic value chains, from infrastructure and communication to food production and transport. The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) is the United Nations specialized agency that promotes tourism as a vehicle to foster sustainable development through the many benefits that this sector can offer to societies and the economy: www.unwto.org