

## UNWTO & ETC Datalab to power European tourism forward

- A Monitor Desk Report

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The DataLab network, led by the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and the European Travel Commission (ETC) will provide a unique platform for sharing best practices, including know-how in data management and analytics. Users will also be able to share knowledge on the identification of relevant data sources, the use of big data, and the implementation of market intelligence systems. Europe's National Tourism Organizations (NTOs), National Tourism Administrations (NTAs) and other relevant partners are all eligible to be part of the DataLab, and representatives from more than 30 countries have signed up to be part of the first stage.

“The UNWTO-ETC DataLab network represents an innovative and collaborative way to grow the competitiveness of countries through market intelligence. This will help tourism organizations to be better prepared in light of an increasingly digitalized and data-driven sector,” says Zoritsa Urosevic, UNWTO Executive Director.

“By fostering knowledge sharing through the UNWTO-ETC DataLab initiative we will provide a platform for destinations to collaborate and build collective

knowledge, which is crucial, especially in times of challenges. We trust this initiative will help our members minimize risks and increase competitiveness to build a tourism sector that is more resilient, innovative and sustainable in the years to come”, stated Eduardo Santander, Executive Director at ETC, at the network’s launch.

### **Filling the data gap**

Market intelligence has become paramount to accelerate tourism’s sustainable recovery from the Covid-19 crisis, understand current and future trends, and make informed decisions. At the same time, there is a need to address data gaps, support the development of new digital tools and improve access to real-time data.

According to a recent survey carried out by UNWTO and ETC on data needs and use, issues related to data access, cost and skills appeared to be some of the major constraints faced by NTOs and NTAs across Europe. In this regard, “the network will explore ways to better understand the current data requirements, enhance knowledge and strengthen capacity by learning from each other”, indicated Sandra Carvão, Director of UNWTO Tourism Market Intelligence and Competitiveness.

### **Enhanced collaboration**

The network strengthens the collaboration between UNWTO and ETC in a critical area of knowledge and expertise for tourism destinations and is the outcome of an initiative proposed in 2021. A working group with representatives from Visit Flanders, Fáilte Ireland, Malta Tourism Authority, NBTC Holland Marketing, Turismo de Portugal and the Slovenian Tourist Board, guided UNWTO and ETC in the foundations of this initiative. Moving forward, the UNWTO-ETC DataLab will provide capacity building events for members in the form of webinars and networking sessions.

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