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Ressort: Reise & Tourismus

UNTWO Meeting in Bahrain

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The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), the United Nations specialized agency which promotes the development of responsible, sustainable and universally accessible tourism, concluded its 109th Executive Council session in Manama, Bahrain. In Bahrain it is possible to see how innovation and a smart destination can be positioned high on the political and economic agenda, and how supporting tourism education and

capacity building is a sound investment.

UNWTO's Members showed appreciation both for progress made under the 2018 institutional priorities and for the Organization's financial stability and restructuring process. UNWTO introduced a forum named 'Tourism Tech Adventure: Big Data Solutions', which brings together the 'ecosystem' of tourism innovation and raising the sector's role in the digital agenda.

The 109th session of the UNWTO Executive Council brought with it much appreciation of the Organization's efforts in 2018. A number of Member States made manifest great support for UNWTO's efforts to prioritize tourism in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Admiration was expressed to the executive management team for creating a cleaner structure more equipped to effectively respond to Members' requests, as well as the clear management priorities and sharp focus placed on UNWTO's work areas of education and digital transformation.

In fact, in a mere ten months UNWTO was able to show a financial surplus. At this point in the year, the Organization has received higher contributions than in the last three years and the highest percentage of budgetary income since 2014, with expenditure also on target.

On the margins of the Council UNWTO held a high-level workshop on data-driven tourism management.

The Organization has introduced a new forum, 'Tourism Tech Adventure: Big Data Solutions', where panellists discussed how open data platforms are changing tourism, along with how to stimulate venture capital and greater gender equality in tourism and technology.

'Tourism Tech Adventure: Big Data Solutions' will also welcome another round of pitches for finalists of the 1st UNWTO Tourism Startup Competition in Collaboration with Globalia, launched in June 2018 to identify companies that can

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foster the sector's digital transformation. The finalists' projects will be presented at the next International Tourism Fair of Madrid (Fitur) in January 2019.

The forum serves as a follow-up to the official World Tourism Day 2018 celebrations on 27 September in Budapest, Hungary, under the theme of 'Tourism and the Digital Transformation', and a precursor to the upcoming UNWTO and World Travel Market ministerial summit in London, UK (6 November) on investment in tourism technology. All are part of UNWTO's strategy to give tourism its merited prominence on the digital agenda.

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