High-Level Dialogue on Digital Skills in Tourism
7 March, 10:00 to 11:30, ITB 2019

Biographies

Opening ceremony:

Mr. Zurab Pololikashvili, Secretary-General of the UNWTO

Mr. Zurab Pololikashvili is Secretary-General of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) since 1 January 2018 after being elected by the 22nd Session of UNWTO General Assembly. He was Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Georgia to the Kingdom of Spain, the Principality of Andorra, the People’s Democratic Republic of Algeria and the Kingdom of Morocco and Permanent Representative of Georgia to the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) up to December 2017. Between 2009 and 2010, he was Minister of Economic Development of Georgia. As a Minister of Economic Development of Georgia, Mr Pololikashvili was responsible for overseeing the country’s long-term fiscal growth strategies, advancing foreign trade and investment policy initiatives as well as for promoting the development of the tourism, infrastructure and transportation sectors. He was instrumental in launching an innovative policy for the development of tourism in Georgia, prioritizing the sphere on both the government and private sector agendas. During Mr Pololikashvili’s tenure as Minister of Economic Development, through key policy reforms, marketing activities, improvement of infrastructure and visa liberalization initiatives, Georgia nearly doubled the number of international tourist arrivals, from 1.5 million (2009) to exceeding the 2.8 million mark by 2011. Those reforms paved the way for sustainable tourism practices in Georgia and poverty alleviation initiatives, placing Georgia among the top tourism destinations in the region. Minister Pololikashvili successfully led the economic liberalization processes, introducing supportive policies for SMEs, and incentive programmes to attract foreign investment for the development of hard and soft infrastructure. 2006 – 2009 Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Georgia to the Kingdom of Spain.
Panel discussion:

**Mr. Lee Hayhurst, Moderator**

Mr. Lee Hayhurst has been the editor of Travolution, the pioneering travel technology and digital travel brand in the Jacobs Media Group, for the past eight years. He has been covering the UK and international travel sectors for 13 years at the leading B2B media titles. Jacobs Media Group is the parent of the UK's leading trade title Travel Weekly and is Europe's largest B2B publisher dedicated to the travel and hospitality sectors.

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**Ana Mendes Godinho, Secretary of State of the Ministry of Economy of Portugal**

Secretary of State for Tourism Ana Mendes Godinho was appointed Portuguese Secretary of State for Tourism in November 2015. Before joining the Government of Portugal, she was Vice-President of the Portuguese National Tourism Authority (Turismo de Portugal), Member of the Board of Turismo Capital (venture capital company) and Member of the Board of Turismo Fundos (real estate fund company), among other leading positions. Ana Mendes Godinho holds a Post Graduation in Labour Law and a Law degree from the Lisbon University (Universidade de Lisboa). She is also Coordinator of the post graduate degree on Tourism Law at the Lisbon University.
Mr. Richard Kämpf, Head of tourism affairs, State Secretariat for Economic Affairs SECO, Switzerland

Richard KÄMPF has been Head of Tourism Unit at the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs SECO since 2008. Professional and HR management of the unit and the Federal Competence Centre for Tourism. Development of the strategic design and implementation of the tourism policy of the Swiss Confederation. Supervision of the national marketing organisation Switzerland Tourism and the Swiss Association for Hotel Credit on behalf of the Confederation. Tourism-related consulting services for the senior federal agencies. Implementation of country-wide activities related to the tourism policy at Confederation level. Representation of the Confederation at national and international committees and institutions. 2016 – 2017 Chairperson of the European Commission of the UN World Tourism Organization UNWTO. Since 2013 member of the Bureau of the OECD Tourism Committee. From 1997 to 2008, Richard Kämpf worked for the private consulting firm BAK Basel Economics: Development and management of the tourism department. Acquisition and management of tourism studies (impact analyses, benchmark analyses, tourism forecasts, specific studies). Management of regional analyses for the Swiss region (structural analyses and forecasts for business locations and regions). Development of new topics for location factors and new products (including in the areas of "Quality of life" benchmarks and property market forecasts). From January 2006 to April 2008, member of management. Richard Kämpf studied business sciences at the University of Bern; major subject economics, secondary subject law. He completed further training in the subjects of management and leadership in public administration, regional economy and tourism. He has qualified knowledge of economics, with focus on tourism, and extensive experience in managing processes and committees.

Mr. George Tziallas, Secretary General for Tourism Policy and Development, Greece

George Tziallas holds a Diploma in Civil Engineering (University of Patras, Greece) and a Master's Degree (M.Sc.) in Urban and Regional Planning (University of Tennessee at Knoxville, USA). He has a twenty-five year professional experience in management consulting, specializing in the fields of local and regional development, tourism development and planning, as well as in the management, monitoring and evaluation of EU Programmes and projects, in Greece and abroad. George has worked in senior positions in management consulting firms for more than twenty years, and served as a member of the Board of Directors of the Hellenic Association of Management Consulting Firms (SESMA). He has been the project manager of large-scale technical assistance projects at national and EU level and has an excellent knowledge of the Greek public administration procedures, as well as of the EU Structural Funds context.
**Mr. Lutz Behrendt, Travel Industry Leader, Google**

As one of the first Google employees in Germany, Lutz opened Google’s first office in Dusseldorf in 2003, led business operations and won the first clients in this region for the company. In his last 15 years of executive positions at Google, Lutz was advising and consulting leading clients from different industries with his teams in Duesseldorf, Hamburg, Berlin, Dublin and Bangkok. Lutz transitioned from his last role in Germany as Industry Leader Retail in 2016 to lead the Strategic Partnerships business for Google in Thailand. In Thailand, Lutz was supporting various travel clients such as Thai Airways and the Tourism Authority of Thailand. Lutz pursues his passion in digital media, technology and innovation through actively mentoring technology startups and advising entrepreneurs. Since February 2018 Lutz has returned to Germany as Industry Leader Travel.

**Ms. Natalia Bayona, Leader of innovation and digital transformation, UNWTO**

Natalia Bayona is the leader of the Innovation and Digital Transformation Strategy of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), an agency of the United Nations specializing in the promotion of responsible, sustainable and accessible tourism worldwide. Natalia Bayona holds a Bachelor’s Degree in Government and International Relations from the Universidad Externado de Colombia and an Executive MBA from IE Business School. She is part of the World Economic Forum network as a European Digital Leader for IE Business School. In 2017, she served as the Vice President of International Development for the Spain Startup - South Summit. Natalia organized the first South Summit Pacific Alliance, connecting the main stakeholders of the entrepreneurship ecosystem of Colombia, Chile, Mexico and Peru. With tenure in ProColombia for ten years, she has lived in six countries where she has developed strategies that boost export, foreign investment and tourism for Colombia. She began in 2006 as part of the team that created the first international tourism campaign for Colombia: The campaign “Colombia, el riesgo es que te quieras quedar” sought to change the image of the country abroad. The successful execution of the campaign in more than 15 countries was made possible thanks to her work.