

# Foreword

*OECD Tourism Trends and Policies 2020* has become an international reference and benchmark on how effectively countries are supporting sustainable and inclusive tourism growth. The publication highlights good practices and key policy and governance reforms in tourism, providing a global perspective with the inclusion of 51 OECD member and partner countries. It is a rich source of data on domestic, inbound and outbound tourism, as well as on the overall size of the tourism economy, and highlights new policies designed to improve the sustainability and competitiveness of the sector.

Tourism is of vital economic, social and cultural importance in OECD member and partner countries, and provides real prospects for enduring and inclusive economic growth. It plays a key role in job creation, export revenue and domestic value added, and directly contributes, on average, 4.4% of GDP, 6.9% of employment and 21.5% of service related exports to OECD countries.

The global tourism economy has steadily expanded over the last six decades. While the short-term outlook for tourism is mixed due to an uncertain economic outlook and external shocks, over the long term the sector is likely to continue to grow and become an increasingly important element of OECD economies. Nevertheless, large-scale social, economic, political, environmental and technological trends continue to impact the sector and forward-looking public policies are needed to shape the development of sustainable and competitive tourism destinations.

The digital revolution is a prime example of a key driver of tourism growth that is having a profound effect on the sector, changing the way people travel and service delivery. Meanwhile, continued growth in visitor numbers raises important questions about how to best manage this growth to benefit all people, places and businesses, while mitigating adverse impacts on the environment.

*OECD Tourism Trends and Policies 2020* provides an assessment of how digitalisation is transforming tourism business models and explores ways to support tourism SMEs to adapt to this digital transformation. The report also analyses the need to rethink tourism success for sustainable growth. In particular, it encourages policy makers to take steps to help destinations avoid potential pitfalls, as they strive to strike a balance between the benefits and costs associated with tourism development, and implement a sustainable vision for the future.

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