



Press Release

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Innovation and training on the agenda of UNWTO Secretary-General visit to Portugal

Innovation and training were at the centre of the official visit of Zurab Pololikashvili, the Secretary-General of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), to Portugal on 22-23 January. Following meetings with the Portuguese President, Prime Minister, Ministry of Economy and Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as well as representatives from the private sector, a joint training and innovation action plan was agreed between UNWTO and Portugal. On the occasion, the Alentejo Sustainable Tourism Observatory joined the UNWTO International Network of Sustainable Tourism Observatories (INSTO).

The Secretary-General praised Portugal for focusing its tourism strategy on people, and stressed that its good tourism results are a consequence of strong policies and solid public/private sector cooperation.

Mr. Pololikashvili met with the Secretary of State of Tourism, Ana Mendes Godinho, and the Minister of Economy, Caldeira Cabral, to discuss the priorities of the Portuguese Tourism Strategy 2027, particularly the programmes related to education and innovation. Mr. Pololikashvili also met with five start-ups supported by these programmes, which are innovating in the fields of energy and water efficiency, customer relations and marketing.

The Secretary-General met with Prime Minister Antonio Costa who highlighted that “tourism is a priority in Portugal for job creation and rural development” and agreed to strengthen the relationship between Portugal and the Organization.

Meeting Mr. Pololikashvili, President of Portugal Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa highlighted his commitment to tourism as a key economic activity for Portugal.

Discussions with the Secretary of State of Foreign Affairs, Teresa Ribeiro, focused on tourism and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), visa facilitation and UNWTO cooperation with the Lusophone Commonwealth.

During the ceremony of acceptance of the Alentejo Sustainable Tourism Observatory into INSTO, Secretary-General Pololikashvili said: “The inclusion of Alentejo’s Observatory into the UNWTO Network shows the commitment of Portugal to sustainable tourism and its will to guide the development of the sector in the years to come by evidence-based measurement and policies”.

UNWTO has been promoting the measurement of tourism at destination level through sustainable tourism indicators since the early 1990s. In order to support destinations to advance their monitoring of tourism impacts, the UNWTO International Network of Tourism Observatories was created in 2004. With the incorporation of the Alentejo Observatory, as of January 2017, INSTO includes 22 Observatories worldwide.

During his visit the Secretary-General also met with the Mayors of Cascais, Carlos Carreiras, and of Reguengos de Monsaraz, Jose Calixto.

Additional information:

UNWTO Network of Observatories: <http://insto.unwto.org/>

Pictures of the visit

Portuguese Start-ups: Optishower – <http://www.optishower.com>; Hi Jiffy – <http://hijiffy.com/pt-pt>; Strayboots – <https://www.strayboots.com>; Doinn – https://doinn.co/en_US; Storyo – <http://storyoapp.com>.

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The World Tourism Organization ([UNWTO](#)), a United Nations specialized agency, is the leading international organization with the decisive and central role in promoting the development of responsible, sustainable and universally accessible tourism. It serves as a global forum for tourism policy issues and a practical source of tourism know-how. Its membership includes 156 countries, 6 territories, 2 permanent observers and over 450 Affiliate Members. Follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [Flickr](#).