

Summary

Travel South over Cloud Webinar Series

South-South exchanges on Sustainable and Cultural Tourism in World Heritage Cities of Latin America and the Caribbean

29 November, 8:00 am -9:30 am (New York Time)

Under the framework of the [South-South Cities Project](#) – which supports and promotes South-South and triangular cooperation for sustainable development at the city level – the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC) and UNESCO Mexico organized the webinar “South-South exchanges on Sustainable and Cultural Tourism in World Heritage Cities of Latin America and the Caribbean” that took place on 29 November, 2021.

The event brought together representatives of international organizations, cities, think tanks, and the private sector from Latin America and the Caribbean, to (1) exchange good practices and experiences in sustainable tourism, including the particular measures taken to protect world cultural and natural heritage to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic; (2) discuss the role and potential of South-South and triangular cooperation in the growth and recovery of the tourism sector in cities, especially in helping SMEs recover better; and (3) facilitate partnership brokering among multiple stakeholders from the Global South for sustainable tourism in cities.

Format

- Presentations and panel discussion among local government representatives, think tanks, private sector companies, and international organizations and cities partners in LAC
- Presentation of 2-minute videos of world heritage cities
- The webinar will be recorded via Zoom Meeting platform and broadcast through UNOSSC and partner’s media channels.

Guiding Questions for Discussion

- From the point of view of the cultural and creative sector, what are the criteria for sustainable tourism (management, socioeconomic, cultural, and environmental impacts) and how to monitor them?
- What were the lessons learned in cities’ responses to COVID-19 pandemic? What was the role of South-South and triangular cooperation in sustainable tourism, cultural heritage and creative industries?
- Share measures taken and good practices on using digitalization, data management and monitoring, IP assets, etc. to help tourism, cultural and creative SMEs recover and build back better and more sustainably.
- How to ensure wide participation and consensus-building? How do individuals take the part in striving towards sustainable tourism and the linkage between the tourism activities and the management of cultural heritage and creative cities?

Summary

The event started with the opening remarks of the representative of UNESCO Mexico, Frédéric Vacheron, who stated that "reviving the sector is one of the main concerns for small and island countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, since it represents an important source of income." Along these lines, he expressed UNESCO's vision of a tourism sector based on sustainable development, which "respects local communities", and which generates "an intercultural dialogue for a more peaceful world". "We must promote tourism that generates income and growth, but also that fosters social inclusion; tourist countries cannot live with hells of local marginalization ", he added.

The presentation panel started with the General Director of the National Association of Mexican World Heritage Cities, Jorge Ortega, who shared Mexico's experience in reactivating tourism through the promotion of cultural tourism and digitalization, through the creation of a platform where more than 400 small-medium enterprises (SMEs) joined and focused how to use their full potential to "improve the image and online positioning of Mexican tourist cities."

From Chile, the Director of the Valparaíso Creativo program, Mauricio Cifuentes, contributed to the panel with lessons learned from Valparaíso, as a Chilean creative touristic center during the pandemic. The city tourism was able to survive through a participatory process and sharing of experiences in the National Network of Creative Territories, and also thanks to a national program to support domestic tourism linked to culture.

The Coordinator of the Network of National Conservation Offices of the Heritage Cities of Cuba, Arsenio Sánchez, considered "fundamental" the continuous identification of the cultural values of the cities to "continue branching and diversifying the offer of cultural products."

The President of the Network of World Heritage Cities of Peru, Luis Bogdanovich, mentioned that Peruvian cities are working to "recover elements of the entire historical landscape, festivities and cultural expressions". Cities like Lima are rehabilitating streets, intervening in public squares and churches to achieve "more livable places and where the sustainable tourism industry can be developed".

From Brazil, the President of the Organization of Brazilian World Heritage Cities, Mário do Nascimento, valued the efforts of the institution he directs to "sensitize local, state and federal governments to prioritize actions focused on Brazil's world heritage", through participation in forums, awareness-raising efforts, and the promotion of public-private collaboration.

In representation of the World Organization of United Cities and Local Governments -UCLG), the Deputy Director of Relations Internationals and Cooperation of the Union of Ibero-American Capital Cities (UICC), Mr. Francisco Mugaburu, stressed the "importance of innovation and sustainable development to guide the governance model of tourist destinations." With that purpose, UICC focused its efforts on an Ibero-American Tourism Strategy of the Future (EIT), together with the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), the International Union of Public Transport (UITP) and UCLG, currently supporting Mexico City, Lima, Bogotá, Buenos Aires, Sao Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Madrid and Andorra La Vella.

To conclude the event, Xiaojun Grace Wang, Deputy Director of Programs and Operations of the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC), thanked participants for sharing their knowledge and invited cities representatives and institutions to join the South-South Cities Cluster "to facilitate the exchange of experiences in real time." Ms. Wang, also presented the Global South-South Development

Expo organized by UNOSSC, and co-hosted by the Government of Thailand and UNESCAP. The event will take place in September 2022 in Bangkok, Thailand.

Agenda

8:00-8:10	<p>Opening Remarks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Frédéric Vacheron, Representative of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in Mexico (8 min)</i> • <i>Video synopsis event (2 min)</i>
8:10-9:10	<p>Presentation panel – moderated by Muriel Obon, Programme and Event Management, United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Jorge Ortega, General Director, Mexican World Heritage Cities Association (8 min)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Video of World Heritage Cities of Mexico (2 min) • <i>Mario Cifuentes, Director, Valparaíso Creative Programme and Representative of National Network of Creative Territories of Chile (8 min)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Video of Valparaiso from Network of Creative Territories of Chile (3 min) • <i>Arsenio Sánchez Pantoja, Coordinator, Network of National Offices of Conservation of Heritage Cities of Cuba (8 min)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Video of Heritage Cities of Cuba (2 min) • <i>Mário do Nascimento, President, National Association of Touristic and World Heritage Cities of Brazil (OCBPM) (8 min)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Video of World Heritage Cities of Brazil (2 min) • <i>Video message of Luis Bogdanovich, President, Peruvian World Heritage Cities Network about World Heritage Cities of Peru (7 min)</i> • <i>Francisco Mugaburu, Subdirector of International Relations and Cooperation, Union of Ibero-American Capital Cities (UCCI, as part of the World Organization of United Cities and Local Governments -UCLG) (8 min)</i>
9:10 - 9:25	<p>Q&A / Open Discussion</p>
9:25 - 9:30	<p>Summary and Closing Remarks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Xiaojun Grace Wang, Deputy Director, United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC) (5 min)</i> • <i>Video presentation Global South-South Expo 2022 (2 min)</i>