



San Diego Declaration on Youth, Student and Educational Travel

- Background -

WYSE Travel Confederation

The World Youth Student & Educational (WYSE) Travel Confederation is a global not-for-profit membership organisation dedicated to promoting and developing opportunities for the youth, student and educational travel industry. With a membership network of over 550 members from 120 different countries, WYSE Travel Confederation is highly regarded as the international voice for a spectrum of governmental and non-governmental organizations, business and associations with one common goal: to ensure the long time development of the dynamic and valuable youth travel market.

The Confederation works on behalf of its members, sector stakeholders and partners around the globe to:

- Promote the personal, social, economic and cultural benefits of youth travel and international education by working in partnership with governments and tourism boards worldwide
- Support the development and success of student and youth travel specialists, and the critical role they play in this unique \$173 billion industry
- Provide trading, networking and knowledge-sharing platforms
- Develop innovative travel and educational products and services for youth and students

The World Youth Student Travel Conference (WYSTC)

One of WYSE Travel Confederation's primary platforms is the annual World Youth Student Travel Conference (WYSTC). This world-class event brings youth travel professionals and government officials together for over four days of B2B trading appointments, educational exchange and top-level meetings.

Working with destinations at WYSTC

A key highlight in the WYSTC program is the meeting for destination promotion and management bodies, a unique opportunity for governmental bodies and industry association representatives to discuss insights and share knowledge in the effort to understand the needs of the sector and how governments can support its development.

During the 2011 World Youth Student Travel Conference in Barcelona, WYSE Travel Confederation brought together destinations from around the world to discuss the state of the industry, how to overcome barriers to growth and create a favourable operating environment for the sector.

On the agenda for 2012 was the creation of a Declaration that would effectively capture the state of the global youth travel today and put forward recommendations on how this industry should grow to benefit more destinations, boost the global economy and, of course, positively change the lives of young people around the world.

The Declaration that follows is highly reflective of the views of the youth travel industry as over 700 delegates from 63 countries present at WYSTC 2012 tweeted, emailed, voted and posted their priorities for youth travel in the coming decades.



The San Diego Declaration on Youth, Student and Educational Travel

The participants gathered at the 21st World Youth Student Travel Conference, held in San Diego, United States of America, from 18 to 21 September 2012 convened by the World Youth Student & Educational Travel Confederation, where approximately 700 delegates from 64 countries representing youth, student and education travel, organisations, businesses associations and governmental tourism bodies, resolved to adopt principles to guide WYSE Travel Confederation members through the following declaration:

Referring in particular to the following instruments:

- World Tourism Organization (WTO) Manila Declaration of 1980 on World Tourism as Key to the Social and Economic Development of Nations and on the Freedom of Movement of Tourists;
- WTO Acapulco Document of 1982 on removing the barriers to wider tourism development;
- The Final Report of the WTO International Conference on Youth Tourism, New Delhi, 1991;
- International Bureau of Social Tourism (BITS) Montreal Declaration of 1996 on a Humanist and Social Vision of Tourism and the subsequent Aubagne Addendum of 2006 on moving towards a tourism based on development and solidarity;
- UNESCO Lisbon Declaration on Youth Policies and Programmes of 1998;
- The ECPAT Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children of 1998;
- UNWTO Global Code of Ethics of 1999;
- UNWTO Seoul Declaration on Peace and Tourism of 2001;
- The findings of the 2008 joint UNWTO – WYSE Travel Confederation Publication ‘Youth Travel Matters’;
- The findings of the 2011 joint UNWTO – WYSE Travel Confederation Report ‘The Power of Youth Travel’;
- The findings of the 2012 joint UNWTO – World Travel and Tourism Council Report on The Impact of Visa Facilitation on Job Creation in the G20 Economies;
- The Constitution and Rules and Regulations of WYSE Travel Confederation;



Taking into account that:

- Tourism will continue to be a vital component of the global economy, an important contributor to the Millennium Development Goals and an integral, positive element in our society;
- Youth are a positive force in society and have enormous potential for contributing to the development and advancement of societies;
- Youth, student and educational travel provides a strong vehicle to foster cultural understanding, social interaction and peace;
- Young people can be a major force for social and economic development in the destinations they visit;
- The impact of youth travel in developing countries is particularly important, given the propensity of many young travellers to engage in volunteering programmes and development projects;
- The youth travel market demonstrates relative resilience in times of political and civil unrest, disease or natural disasters;
- For young individuals,
 - Travel is a form of learning
 - Travel is a way of socialising
 - Travel is a form of discovering other cultures
 - Travel is a means of self-development
 - Travel is a source of career development

Recommendations

This Declaration calls on international organisations, governments and all sections of the youth, student and educational travel industry to support the leadership shown by the World Youth Student & Educational Travel Confederation in bringing together the relevant sector stakeholders at the 2012 World Youth Student Travel Conference and by facilitating and encouraging partnerships, alliances and cooperation between WYSE Travel Confederation members, the broader industry and governments around the world.



Given the above, the participants call for action on the following recommendations:

- Highlight the economic, social and cultural importance of promoting youth travel to governments worldwide;
- Call on tourism authorities to take youth into account in the formation of tourism development strategies to ensure their destinations benefit from the positive impacts that youth travel can bring;
- Ensure that such strategies seek to optimize the social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits to stakeholders in destinations;
- Promote, in the formation of such strategies, the principles of fair trade, inclusive economic development and the protection of human rights for the economically poor and socially vulnerable;
- Seek a standard terminology and agree on parameters to be used in research to ensure the consistency and authority of said research;
- Establish the necessary mechanisms to understand the profile, characteristics and interests of young travellers so their travel needs may be better served;
- Encourage the formation of partnerships between stakeholders in all destinations to ensure the sharing of information, consensus on policy and the best possible service to young visitors;
- Facilitate the cross-border passage of young travellers through flexible immigration policies that recognise the economic and social benefits that youth tourism can bring;
- Strengthen the mechanisms of cross-border passage to ensure that visas and other travel formalities are processed, issued and verified in an effective and efficient manner;
- Devise and implement the proper mechanisms to ensure the safety and wellbeing of young travellers;
- Highlight the importance to young people of engaging in programmes and projects that will enhance their personal and professional development, particularly where these involve travel;
- Highlight the importance to young people of engaging in programmes and projects that benefit social and economic development in developing countries;
- Education authorities and institutions should consider the value of introducing travel within curricula as a means of enhancing the skills and personal development of young people;



- Stakeholders of the youth, student and educational travel industry are actively encouraged to seek common positions and speak with unity on the issues that concern them; and
- The World Youth Student & Educational Travel Confederation is charged with taking this Declaration forward and recommending it to the relevant stakeholders.

San Diego, 21 September 2012

Signature

Espen M. Falkenhaus
Director General
WYSE Travel Confederation

Signature

David Chapman
Chair of the Executive Board
WYSE Travel Confederation

The San Diego Declaration will provide the basis for WYSE Travel Confederation's work with international organisations, governments, sector stakeholders and other NGOs in furthering the cause of global youth travel. At the invitation of the Secretary General of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), it was presented to the 94th Session of the UNWTO Executive Council in October 2012 and will be considered for adoption by the 20th UNWTO General Assembly in August 2013.

WYSE Travel Confederation invites you to read and share this Declaration. We are calling for industry backing as it is debated by the world's tourism authorities and we look forward to working with all industry stakeholders on implementing the recommendations in the years ahead.

In order to maximise the Declaration's reach, WYSE Travel Confederation would also like to appeal to Members and other interested parties for assistance in translating the Declaration into as many languages as possible. For more information please contact peter.jordan@unwto.org

WYSE Travel Confederation would like to thank the following destination bodies that gave particular support in creating the San Diego Declaration:

Destination NSW, Australia
Tourism Australia
Tourism Northern Territory
National Youth Commission (Taiwan)
Gold Coast Tourism

Tourism Queensland
Australian Tourism Export Council
EMBRATUR - Brazilian Tourism Board
South African Youth Travel Confederation
Tourism Victoria