

# Airbnb now a member of World Tourism Organization

Airbnb has officially joined the [World Tourism Organization](#) (UNWTO) as an affiliate member and in doing so, joins influential community leaders within the travel and tourism sector. This includes the UNWTO's 157 member states and over 480 affiliate members from the private sector, educational institutions, tourism associations and local tourism authorities.



"From Cuba to Cape Town, Airbnb is helping to grow and diversify tourism and democratise its benefits for more families, communities, and local businesses," said Chris Lehane, global head of public affairs at Airbnb. "It's a sustainable form of tourism that provides transformative travel by allowing people to live like a local. Airbnb guests don't just go there; they live there by staying in the homes of actual people, visiting the real neighborhoods and experiencing life the way a local does. We are excited to work with UNWTO and global leaders to harness the positive impacts of travel to activate new communities and bring the world a little closer together."

Said Taleb Rifai, UNWTO secretary-general "The UNWTO Affiliate Members Programme gathers representatives from a wide range of non-governmental organisations and is a key feature of UNWTO work." Airbnb will participate in the UNWTO Seminar on "New Business Models" taking place at the 60th meeting of the UNWTO Commission for Europe, in Lithuania.

## How tourism supports communities

According to the UNWTO, travel and tourism are one of the biggest sectors in the world: in 2015 international tourist spending increased by 3.6 percent to reach a record \$1.4 trillion, making it the third largest export sector in the world after fuels and chemicals. Airbnb has seen first-hand how tourism is supporting communities from all walks of life around the world, including:

- Seniors - Hosts 60 years and older are the fastest-growing age demographic of hosts joining the Airbnb community in the US, and nearly two-thirds of all senior hosts are women. The average senior host earns just under \$6,000 a year hosting on Airbnb, and for many of them hosting provides essential income that aids in their retirement.
- Activating communities - In London and Barcelona, the outer districts of the cities are the fastest growing destinations for Airbnb guests, spreading benefits beyond the tourist hotspots to more families, communities, and local businesses.
- Laos - The average Airbnb host in Laos earns about \$115 dollars per booking, which represents a significant supplementary income in a country where the average income is about \$138 per month.
- Kenya - Airbnb hosts in Kenya make an average of \$260 per booking, where the average income is about \$108 per month.

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