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A New & Unique Industry Report

“Youth Travel Matters: Understanding the Global Phenomenon of Youth Travel”

Published by WYSE Travel Confederation and the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)

Available to buy now from UNWTO's e-library www.e-unwto.org

This global overview of the youth and student travel industry – based on extensive studies conducted by WYSE Travel Confederation and UNWTO over the past 5 years - **reveals the latest trends in youth student travel and international education**

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Some Key Findings:

Profile of the Young Independent Traveller, 2007

- Representing approx 20% of all international arrivals, youth travel is one of the tourism industry's fastest growing sectors
- Forget the 'budget image' – today's young travellers stay longer and spend more than mainstream tourists. Since 2002, the average spend per trip has increased 40% to €1,915 in '07
- A new generation of 'flashpackers' (older backpackers with bigger budgets) is emerging, extending the 'youth travel' market to 30+ years
- *70% of young people travel with a purpose – to learn a language, volunteer, work or study abroad.*
- *80% return home more tolerant and respectful of other cultures as a result*

Making destinations exciting, accessible and affordable

- 60% of the world's tourism authorities have identified youth and student travel as being "important or very important" to the future of their tourism industry
- A growing number of countries are therefore seeking to attract niche markets (e.g. sports and adventure) with specific youth travel marketing campaigns and policies
- Key aspects of destination development are: youth budget accommodation, cultural routes, information services, web portals, tour packages and discount programmes
- *Australia, USA and France are currently the most popular youth travel destinations*

This year's hottest topic – Budget Youth Travel Accommodation

- A new trend is driving growth in the youth accommodation industry. Youth hostels worldwide are upgrading their bunk-bed dormitories and developing innovative concepts to attract the 'flashpacker' market e.g. offering hostel and hotel rooms under one roof
- This, combined with major developments in social networking and environmental issues, has led to a dramatic increase in the quality & professionalism of the youth accommodation industry

- *50% of youth accommodation suppliers have recently invested in increasing their capacity and improving facilities*

Global Trends in Language Travel and Working Holidays

- The value of student travel has prompted many countries to ease visa restrictions on working holidays - particularly Australia and New Zealand - favourite destinations for GAP Year Students
- Demand from student travellers for a broader range of language travel products – combined with a series of industry mergers and acquisitions – have opened up new locations for the language travel market
- *Japan is currently the most important source market for language learning, followed by Spain and Germany. The UK continues to be the strongest language travel destination – with new destinations such as Australia and China opening up*

Background Info

“Youth Travel Matters: Understanding the Global Phenomenon of Youth Travel” has been developed within the framework of the Cooperation between the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and the World Youth Student & Educational Travel Confederation (WYSE Travel Confederation), a UNWTO Affiliate member.

The unique motivations of young travellers makes this niche market extremely important to the key objectives of the global tourism agenda. The personal social and economic value of youth, student and educational travel is increasingly being recognised by educational institutions, employers, official tourism organisations and governments worldwide.

Members of WYSE Travel Confederation serve 10+ million youth & student travellers each year www.wysetc.org

This report was written by Greg Richards of Tourism Research & Marketing, Barcelona.
It will be on sale for €40 from UNWTO’s e-library in late May 2008 www.e-unwto.org

**Members of WYSE Travel Confederation – request a free copy of this report from
WYSE Travel Confederation’s Communications Officer
s.cooper@wysetc.org**

**Non-members - this 103page research report is available to buy for €40 from UNWTO’s
e-library www.e-unwto.org**

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