

AGREEMENT UNWTO AND SKÅL

The two largest worldwide tourism associations have signed an agreement to seek out leaders to run the industry in the 21st Century

Karine Coulanges, President of Skål International and Taleb Rifai, Secretary of the United Nations World Tourism Organisation signed, in Madrid on Monday 21 July 2014, the Memorandum of Understanding between Skål International and the United Nations World Tourism Organisation. Skål International is an Affiliate member of the UNWTO. Also present were members of Skål International Spain from Madrid, Barcelona, Malaga, Granada and Ibiza.



The **United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO)** is the principal, international organisation in tourism, with 156 Member States, 6 Associate Members, 2 permanent observers and more than 400 affiliate members and **Skål International is the largest organisation for professionals in the tourism industry worldwide**, the only international association which brings together all branches of the tourism industry with approximately 17,000 members in 400 Clubs in 87 countries and territories and which, this year, is celebrating the 80th Anniversary of its foundation. There are 16 Clubs and approximately 400 members in Spain. The headquarters of both organisations are in Spain, the UNWTO in Madrid and Skål International in Torremolinos.

Among the UNWTO priorities are:

- Integrate tourism systematically into the global agenda
- Improve tourism competitiveness
- Promote knowledge, teaching and training
- Forge associations

The Skål mission

Through leadership, professionalism and friendship, to work together to achieve its vision, maximise networking opportunities and support a responsible tourism industry.

- The UNWTO and Skål International have signed an agreement so that Tourism Masters Graduates from universities and schools which join the scheme can receive practical training in companies of Skål members approved by the UNWTO.
- The objective of the agreement is that the 17,000 members on the five continents which make up Skål International will have a basic course structure so that students can complete their academic studies with practical experience.
- This formation will be based on parameters different from those of traditional teaching and only students who have shown their capabilities will be eligible for the practical training.
- Why is it not always the most intelligent student that has the greatest success? Some of them have greater abilities than others when faced with setbacks, when overcoming obstacles and seeing difficulties from a different angle. Emotional intelligence can be promoted and strengthened and the lack thereof can influence a professional career. Learning to support work pressures and frustrations, accentuate capacity for team work and adopting an empathetic and social attitude offer better possibilities for personal and professional development.
- Identify the aptitudes each person has when fulfilling certain tasks and for developing team work, the innovation of procedures or taking the initiative can give the profile which is needed today for the 21st Century tourism leaders
- The capacity to lead is one of the qualities that are sought after in 21st Century companies. New managers in the tourism sector have the challenge to be able to lead multidiscipline teams which must also be very polyvalent, polyglot and have a strategic vision of tourism development in different areas.

The President of Skål International said that this would have an impact on various European countries and moreover in Asia where Skål is growing the fastest. Her words were supported by Taleb Rifai, the Secretary General of the UNWTO.

After the signing all present had lunch at the Club Financiero Genova where they were welcomed by the General Manager, Arrate Oroni Saenz de Navarette.

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