

Full Members

Full Membership is the highest level of membership in the UNWTO and is reserved for sovereign states. These members have full participation rights in the organization, including voting rights in the General Assembly. Full Members contribute to decision-making processes, policy formulation, and the strategic direction of global tourism development. They are also eligible to be elected to UNWTO governing bodies such as the Executive Council. Through Full Membership, countries collaborate on tourism standards, sustainability initiatives, capacity building, and international cooperation.

Associate Members

Associate Membership is open to territories or regions that are not fully responsible for their external relations but have autonomy in tourism matters. These members participate in UNWTO activities and benefit from technical support, research, and capacity-building programs. However, Associate Members do not have voting rights in the General Assembly. This category allows dependent territories to engage in global tourism governance while acknowledging their specific political and legal status.

Affiliate Members

Affiliate Membership is designed for non-governmental stakeholders in tourism. This includes private sector companies, tourism associations, educational institutions, research centers, and local tourism authorities. Affiliate Members do not participate in voting but play a crucial advisory and collaborative role. They contribute expertise, innovation, and market perspectives, helping to bridge the gap between public policy and industry practice. Affiliate Members also benefit from networking opportunities, research access, and participation in UNWTO initiatives.

2. Who qualifies as a Full Member of UNWTO?

To qualify as a Full Member, a country must first be recognized as a sovereign state with responsibility for its own international relations. This means the state has full authority over its foreign policy and can independently enter into international agreements. Territories or regions without this authority cannot qualify as Full Members.

Secondly, the state must formally accept the UNWTO Statutes. This involves signing and ratifying the organization's founding documents, thereby agreeing to comply with its principles, objectives, and governance structure. Acceptance of the Statutes signifies the country's commitment to promoting sustainable tourism, ethical practices, and international collaboration.

The country must demonstrate competence and responsibility for tourism policy within its national administration. This ensures that the state can actively participate in UNWTO programs, implement recommendations, and contribute meaningfully to global tourism initiatives.

Once admitted, Full Members gain full rights and obligations, including voting rights in the General Assembly, eligibility to serve on governing bodies, and the responsibility to contribute financially to the organization's budget. They also engage in data sharing, policy development, and joint projects aimed at enhancing tourism's economic, social, and environmental impact.