

# Editorial

In recent years, world tourism has become one of the most important sectors of the global economy, not only as a contributor to the gross domestic product of many countries but also as a job generator. In 2015, after the peak of the world economic crisis, international tourist arrivals achieved its best results ever. To understand these results and the underlying issues, our theme editors selected a set of contributions, covering various areas of the tourism value chain to answer the following strategic question: What global trends are challenging tourism organisations and destinations currently? Along the 12 articles that integrate this special issue, offering a balanced mix of opinions by researchers and practitioners, relevant contributions to the understanding of global tourism trends are identified and their potential impacts analysed. I would like to thank Mónica Montenegro and João Gomes, my co-theme editors and their writing team led by Daniela Rodrigues for their thorough and prospective analysis of present and future trends shaping the world tourism industry.

**Jorge costa**

*Global Trends editor, WHATT*

## **What global trends are challenging tourism organizations and destinations currently?**

This theme issue examines some of the key world tourism trends and their foreseeable impacts on tourism organisations and destinations. The articles selected contextualize the present situation of tourism globally while focusing on some specific geographic and market realities. The themes covered range from methodological proposals on scanning the tourism business environment and market segments, project and services' projects and market solutions for tourism organisations and destinations, profile of future tourists and specific market segments, as well as viewpoints on tourism strategy development and implementation in specific contexts.

From the various contributions, it is possible to identify some major challenges that the tourism industry will face, resulting from new tourist profiles, a growing middle class, political tensions and terrorism, technological evolution and the decline in loyalty by customers. As a result of this demanding context, service providers, such as hotels, need to support their pricing strategies on attributes and characteristics that are most valued by increasingly demanding tourists.

The examples and proposals contained in this theme issue also demonstrate the need to systematically monitor changes that may affect tourist demand. In fact, forecasting tourism demand has been a top-rated subject for both researchers and practitioners, holding a profound impact on the tourism and hospitality sectors as is emphasised by some authors.

In respect to segmentation, a key strategy tool for destinations and organisations alike, the female traveller deserves a special attention in one of the articles presented. As their authors contend, presently, more than half of the jobs in the tourism industry are taken by women, whereas these travellers have set an effective trend in both leisure and business travel.

---

These are some of the key themes analysed in this edition. Taken together, the collection of articles integrating this theme issue enhances our understanding of the global trends that are challenging tourism organisations and destinations currently and the best-suited answers to explore the opportunities they provide.

**Jorge Costa, Mónica Montenegro and João Gomes**  
*Theme Editors*

Editorial

**619**

---