

Media Information

4th World Tourism Forum Lucerne presents packed programme

Some 450 specialists from 65 countries – representatives of tourism, economics, politics, finance and science – are assembling in central Switzerland for the 4th World Tourism Forum Lucerne. Over the next two days they will discuss changes and challenges facing the global travel and tourism industries. One of the keynote speakers is Jeremy Rifkin, Founder and President of the US-based Foundation on Economic Trends.

Lucerne, 22 April 2015 – Specialists and speakers at the 4th World Tourism Forum Lucerne at the KKL this Thursday/Friday 23 and 24 April will again include top names from the tourism, political, financial, economic and scientific fields. According to Martin Barth, General Manager of the World Tourism Forum Lucerne: "The list of participants this year emphasises once more the increasing international orientation of the Forum." The opening keynote address, for example, will be delivered by Her Majesty the Queen Mother Sangay Choden Wangchuck of Bhutan who will outline her country's long-term strategy of sustainable tourism. In his keynote speech, American sociologist, researcher and political advisor Jeremy Rifkin will address the Forum on digitalization and the sharing economy. In his latest book he theorises that the global spread of networking and digital communication is creating a "zero marginal cost society" leading to an era of nearly free goods and services. This, he predicts, could even precipitate the eventual eclipse of capitalism and the onset of the third Industrial Revolution.

In advance of the Forum itself, a Think Tank of selected specialists has formulated tourism-related recommendations focusing on sustainability and innovation. Their findings will be presented in Lucerne within the framework of a panel discussion. Panel participants will include Helena Egan, Director of Industry Relations with TripAdvisor.

The Forum will also comprise workshops and break-out sessions focusing on tourism-associated aspects ranging from the sharing economy and digitalization trends to sustainability concepts, international shopping tourism and China's outbound travel sector. Top session speakers will include Tobias Ragge (CEO Hotel Reservation Service HRS), Marcus Bernhardt (CCO Europcar) and René Estermann (CEO myclimate). Within this framework, the results will also be presented of a study by the Lucerne University of Applied Sciences & Arts into the use of mobile end devices by the Generation Y in their travel planning. Thursday afternoon will see a breakout session under the title: "Currency and competition – how to manage world challenges". Kevin Roberts (Executive Chairman, Saatchi & Saatchi) and Ian Goldin (Director, Oxford Martin School, University of Oxford) will endeavour with Reto Wittwer (moderator and former CEO, Kempinski Hotels & Resorts) and other selected participants to outline plans of action for the tourism industry.

GUEST COUNTRY:



As in previous years, the 4th World Tourism Forum Lucerne will also focus on the future generation of decision-makers. A panel of leading international hoteliers will debate how best to make their industry more attractive for talented up-and-coming tourism professionals.

For the first time, the Forum has this year invited a guest country – Azerbaijan. The Azerbaijan Deputy Minister of Culture and Tourism, Nazim Samadov, will report on economic planning and tourism development in his country.

Another Forum first is the "Start-Up Innovation Award" for pioneering business models. Awards will be presented to three projects selected from among the 30 submitted. The three winning projects will each be awarded USD 10,000 or USD 5000 respectively.

World Tourism Forum Lucerne

The WTFL is an interdisciplinary professional platform which offers decision-makers in business, politics, science and finance an overview of current topics and trends in the global tourism industry. It is the only international platform enabling leading decision makers and emerging young talents in the industry to interact under the "Next Generation" designation. The World Tourism Forum Lucerne is supported by an international Advisory Board under the chairmanship of Reto Wittwer (former CEO Kempinski Hotels & Resorts). The next World Tourism Forum Lucerne will take place on 4 and 5 May 2017. Further information: www.wtflucerne.org

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