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PRESS RELEASE

D-8 ORGANIZATION FOR ECONOMIC COOPERATION

D-8 STRENGTHEN POLICY ALIGNMENT AND JOINT ACTION ON AI IN TOURISM

The Developing-8 Organization for Economic Cooperation (D-8) convened a technical workshop on Artificial Intelligence (AI) and its Governance in Tourism on 9 April 2026, hosted virtually by the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities of the Arab Republic of Egypt.

This workshop constitutes the third in a series of thematic capacity-building engagements agreed under the Cairo Declaration, adopted at the Fourth D-8 Ministerial Meeting on Tourism held from 5–6 May 2025 in Cairo. The series reflects a structured approach by Member States to strengthen cooperation in tourism through targeted knowledge exchange and policy alignment.

The Meeting was chaired by H.E. Yomna Elbahar, Vice Minister of Tourism and Antiquities, the meeting brought together senior officials from ministries responsible for tourism across D-8 Member States to advance policy coherence and practical cooperation on AI adoption in the sector. In her remarks, H.E. Ms. Elbahar underscored the importance of responsible AI governance frameworks that balance innovation with ethical considerations, while highlighting Egypt's commitment to fostering regional collaboration and knowledge-sharing to accelerate digital transformation in tourism.

In his opening remarks, Ambassador Mustafa Özcan, Director of the D-8 Organization, emphasized the imperative of transitioning from fragmented national initiatives toward coordinated regional frameworks that effectively align innovation with implementation. He further underscored that the advancement of intra-D-8 tourism will hinge on enhanced digital integration and greater interoperability among Member States.

Egypt contributed dedicated presentations on best practices in AI deployment and governance in tourism. Mohamed Shaaban, Associate to the Minister for Digital Transformation, outlined national efforts to integrate AI into tourism services, while a representative from the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology of Egypt presented complementary perspectives on digital infrastructure and governance frameworks supporting AI adoption.

Participants further examined shared challenges, including disparities in digital capacity and the need to better link AI governance frameworks with operational implementation, particularly in support of small and medium-sized tourism enterprises.



In this context, Member States considered a set of cooperative measures at the D-8 level, including the development of a shared AI-powered smart tourism platform, institutionalized knowledge-sharing mechanisms, and joint pilot initiatives to test scalable solutions.

The workshop is part of a series of capacity-building activities. The earlier workshops focused on *Capacity Building in Tourism* and *Promoting Green Practices in Tourism*, while a final workshop on *Investment and Development in Tourism* is planned next. Member States expressed their appreciation to the Government of Egypt, especially the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, for successfully hosting and organizing this series of workshops.

The workshop concluded with a convergence of views on strengthening technical collaboration, enhancing policy coordination, and advancing practical, results-oriented initiatives to support a more integrated, competitive, and digitally connected tourism ecosystem across D-8 Member States.



Istanbul, 14 April 2026