

Empowering youth entrepreneurship in the Dominican Republic: TUI Care Foundation supports new ecotourism experiences

- *TUI Futureshapers programme supports sustainable tourism businesses in the up-and-coming southwest of the Dominican Republic*
- *80 young entrepreneurs receive technical support to strengthen their capacity in running their businesses*
- *Participating businesses support a lower carbon, inclusive economy by offering sustainable tourism experiences*

Berlin, 14 August 2025. *Education and employment opportunities in certain regions of the Dominican Republic are limited for young people. This issue disproportionately affects women and is more apparent in the southwestern part of the country, which paradoxically has high potential for ecotourism due to its immense natural beauty. As a result, there is a higher need for differentiated strategies to address youth unemployment and encourage tourism entrepreneurship as a solution for inclusion in the formal labour market.*

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The TUI Care Foundation has therefore partnered with Plan International to launch TUI Futureshapers Dominican Republic - an initiative that empowers and strengthens youth entrepreneurship by supporting the growth of youth-run businesses with strong female representation. These tourism enterprises, called Eco Routes, support a lower carbon, inclusive economy by offering sustainable tourism experiences.

TUI Futureshapers Dominican Republic will provide 80 young people working in the participating businesses with technical support, which includes multiple workshops on environmental education, life skills, female leadership as well as legal and financial advice. Additional learning objectives covered by the workshops include developing, establishing and positioning a brand, and devising promotional strategies. The project empowers the business leaders to strengthen their skills in negotiating, financial management, communication and decision making, with gender as a key focus to break the existing male-dominated gender bias.

TUI Futureshapers Dominican Republic also creates links with existing hotels in the area and builds an understanding of how best to develop these partnerships. This is particularly important since the southwestern region of the Dominican Republic holds enormous potential for tourism development in the coming years and infrastructure development has already started here. The project covers the presentation of participating businesses to over 300 major stakeholders including community leaders as well as local governments and institutions. It culminates with the creation of additional Eco Routes to provide further employment and growth opportunities for young Dominicans within the tourism industry.

The project is part of the global TUI Futureshapers programme that empowers people to turn social challenges into entrepreneurial opportunities in holiday destinations.

About the TUI Care Foundation

Building on the potential of tourism as a force for good, the TUI Care Foundation supports and initiates projects which create new opportunities and contribute to thriving communities in tourism destinations all over the world. Connecting holidaymakers to good causes, it supports education and training opportunities for young people; drives the protection of natural habitats and the marine environment; and helps local communities to thrive sustainably and benefit from tourism. The TUI Care Foundation builds on strong partnerships with local and international organisations to create meaningful and long-lasting impact. The independent charitable organisation was founded by TUI, one of the world's leading tourism businesses, and is based in the Netherlands.

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About Plan International

Plan International is a child-centered, humanitarian development organisation. It strives for a fair and just world that advances children's rights and equality for girls and young women. Plan International is committed to children's rights and for better compliance with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child worldwide.

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