



# GITT MAGAZINE

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## the digitization OF THE GITT

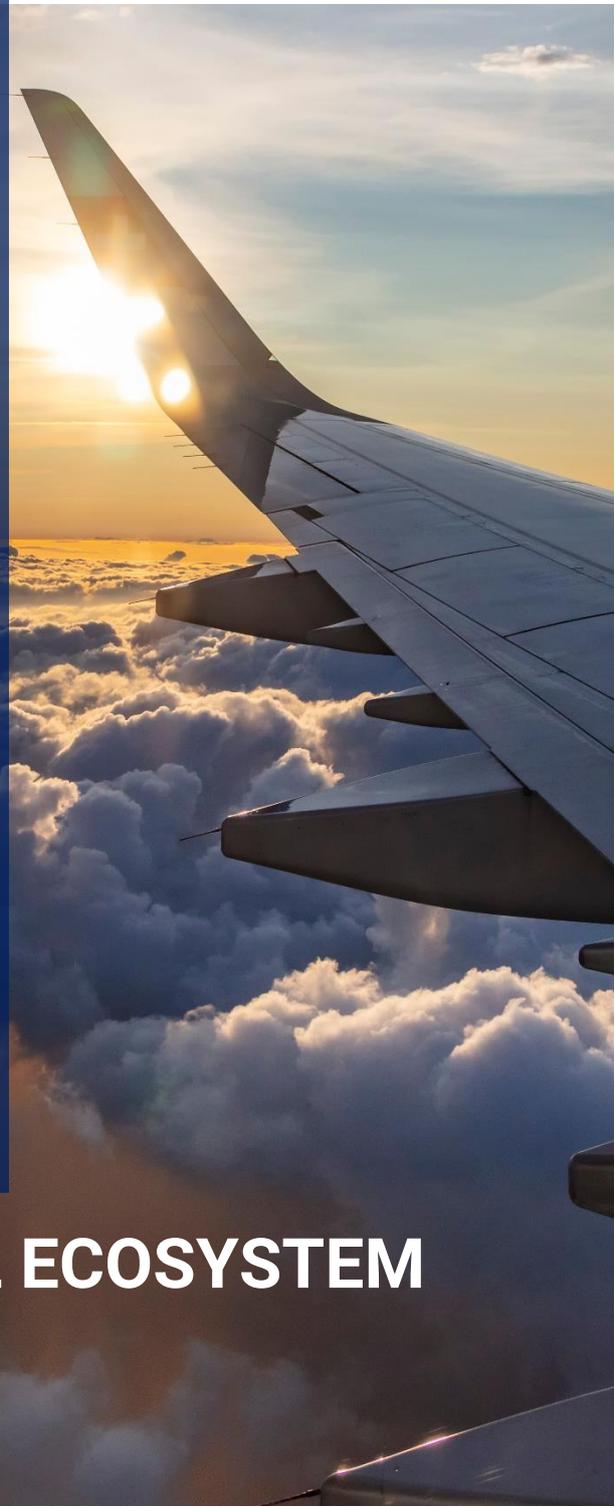
how COVID-19  
has shown the needs  
of digitization in the sector

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## a summit IN LESS THAN 4KM<sup>2</sup>

the challenge of celebrating  
an international summit  
with more than 250 delegations  
in less than 4km<sup>2</sup>

GOVERNMENTAL TRAVEL ECOSYSTEM





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# FROM DR. LIVINGSTONE TO THE METAVERSE

*Technology as power of the human element.*

*Maybe you have heard of the meeting, on 11/10/1871, of Mr. **Henry Morton Stanley** with the Scottish explorer **David Livingstone** in a remote village next to Lake Taganika. After 6 years without knowing anything about Livingstone, who traveled through Africa discovering left and right, Stanley's greeting: "Dr. Livingstone, I suppose", was at the level of "as we said yesterday..." by Miguel de Unamuno...*

The story comes up because in a time without Google Maps or location sharing, the spontaneity of the human element is what prevails in memory.

The tourist industry has developed enormously since then. From asking for shelter in an inn, he went on to ask for them in all of our itinerary, from there to having an "agent" who would plan the errands, the stops, the meals... Then a long hiatus with traveling "for the rich", until the massive arrival of the concept of "vacations" for the middle class - where tour operators appear (I no longer plan the trip; I choose among those who offer me), and with the digitization of plane seats, hotel and excursion appear Online Travel Agents (OTAs) such as Booking and Expedia and bedbanks such as Hotelbeds Group. From here intermediaries continue to emerge (such as aggregators, or metasearch engines, concentrators, etc.) but always in the search and demand part.

**The trip itself:** the means of transportation, the hotel or residential experience, the interaction with the culture at the destination, etc. **It hasn't evolved as much or as fast.** The biggest change comes from increasing the size of the pie thanks to vacation rentals (Awaze, AirBnB).

Think about it. If the world of transportation had evolved as much as telecommunications (for example), today we would be teleporting ourselves -as in Star Trek- from Madrid to Punta Cana in seconds.

And yet, as Emerson reminds us: "**the journey is as important as the destination**", and it is crucial that the industry remembers this in the years to come, given the changes that lie ahead.

The word tourist comes the rich British who at the end of the 18th century made it fashionable to take a great "tour" through Europe to get to know the continent. It is high time that **we help tourists become travelers again and stop treating them in herds.**

I am referring, for example, to using all the data that governments have on their citizens (not counting Prism and Pegasus) to **eliminate lost time queuing** at customs, to be able to have your key on your mobile and avoid the tedious **check-in at the hotel**, to have the opportunity to know your destination well with reliable information and to have the opportunity to interact with the culture and **local people**, live experiences with them and they with visitors, learn together by communicating with google translate or meet them earlier in the metaverse...

We have to think about **how to manage** a middle class from India and China with sufficient purchasing power and avidity to see the world, with a particular idiosyncrasy (noodles for breakfast, and little alcohol at dinner, for example) that does not fit with the current model. (communal breakfast room, subsidy for dinners with the price of wine, etc.), but which presents **enormous potential** and an opportunity to bring cultures together and a way of life that no policy can improve.

Why not offer tours to the Sagrada Familia 24 hours a day for all those jet-lagged travelers who would exchange an uncomfortable sleep for a visit at night and without so many crowds? Why not offer a master class in Meta on Gaudí before the visit? What if that class was taught by a retired professor and his students pre-recorded videos to accompany the visit? Like links to see on the return flight and keep the experience beyond the mere visit? **The technology to make all this possible exists today.**

We must also create offers for **generations that are much more aware of the environmental and socioeconomic impact** (beyond the carbon emissions of Google Flights) that are looking for more real interaction experiences and that can be managed with **personalized platforms** (which currently do not exist). that put the population at destination in contact with the traveler (no longer a tourist).

There is a lot to do, in different areas, and **many initiatives are already**

**underway.** Most of these initiatives are based on public-private collaboration, staged in bilateral and multilateral meetings framed in the field of governmental and institutional travel.

This cooperation is essential in terms of technological development, impact on destinations, Sustainability, improvement of the labor market and, of course, in the necessary progress of International Relations. The current geopolitical scenario requires an increase in understanding for all purposes, and these trips, events, summits and forums, now more than ever, are fundamental.

As evaluated in this issue, through improvements in motorcades (a caravan of cars that accompanies a leader), destination certifications, or emblematic hotel initiatives such as the Alfonso XIII, this sector is acquiring a dimension every greater time. The pandemic has given us an unparalleled opportunity to launch a new way of traveling (exemplified by our rulers in Davos, seen by drivers), one that puts us back in the traveler and the journey, in a position as a central human element empowered by technology.



**Álvaro de Nicolás**  
CEO DNA Ventures

# TECHNOLOGY, VOLUMETY AND SEASONALITY

*Interview Álvaro Fuentes Díaz, Consultant and CTO of Tourism Optimizer Platform (TOP)*

The Tourism Optimizer Platform (TOP) Project, a pioneer in the governmental and institutional travel sector, and responsible, among others, for the identification of the sector, has always been characterized by its firm commitment to technology.

The project itself, the preparation of the International Standard, the important package of aids and solutions proposed by TOP, and its recent integration into a digital ecosystem called GOVERSYS, rest on eminently technological precepts.

Álvaro F. Díaz, from his position as CTO of TOP, and thanks to his professional career, narrates below how all this was carried out, as well as some of the particularities of the sector and of GOVERSYS.

# GOVERSYS®

GOVERNMENTAL TRAVEL ECOSYSTEM

**Q: Being in TOP since its inception, we understand that you are responsible for the strong technological leverage of the project, but what exactly does this mean?**

A: The truth is that technological leverage has been my fault, or thanks to me. During my professional career, I have opted for technology to help business processes to increase their productivity, not only by automating these processes, but also by making them more robust and objective.

When I understood the scope of what was intended to be carried out in the first study and analysis of the sector, we drew up a roadmap that would allow requirements to be taken offshore in a very agile way, in order to be able to draw conclusions and

apply algorithms to already standardized data. and uniforms.

This allowed us to draw conclusions about the homogenization of needs. Something that led us to create the GITT International Standard.

This process was possible thanks to technology, moreover, as a curiosity we must understand that the idea of creating a document that included the standardization was not human, but rather came from an algorithm.

Since then, everything, absolutely everything, has been developed supported by technology, from the solutions offered to the agents involved, to internal solutions to speed up the operations of our team.

**Q: TOP has decided to centralize its solutions on a platform called GOVERSYS. What is GOVERSYS and what does this centralization imply?**

A: This question reminds me of hours and hours, and meetings, debating what would be GOVERSYS and what would not be.

For this, I am going to try to give a very pragmatic vision.

We are talking about Government Trips. An activity that today is carried out daily and will continue to be carried out with or without us. How is it done now? It is done with what in business is called "substitute product". That is, there is nothing specific for my need, but I adapt to what does exist to meet my minimum needs.

This can be a problem for certain types of travelers and, above all, organizers; since, as we know, this type of travel is characterized by needs that are different from other trips, and cannot always be adapted to this substitute product.

Not only did the Standard emerge from that analytical study, but the need for professionalization and specialization solutions for certain services remained latent, since many of these do not end up reaching 100% of the needs of the delegations.

That being said, my fellow marketers would probably tell you that GOVERSYS is the government travel vertical, or vertical platform, that solves real market demand. But that may not concretize the answer, so I'll go into a bit more detail.

GOVERSYS brings together and integrates in one place, in this case a web portal, all the solutions that TOP has created, as well as third-party solutions that TOP validates that may be of interest to the agents involved in the operation of this type of travel. .

In addition to this, information of interest about the sector is offered, always within this same portal, such as interviews, opinion articles, advice and an endless number of activities that are collected on the portal.

The summary of all this is that if someone is dedicated to government trips, and at TOP we have done our job well, this person will find in GOVERSYS an unprecedented and extremely useful tool, the use and consultation of which will always help them when propose, organize or carry out any operation related to this type of travel.

**Q: At a technological level, what differentiates this segment from others?**

A: I will be brief: volumetry and seasonality.

What do I mean by volumetry? Well, the volume (quantity) of transactions in this sector differs greatly from other sectors due to volumetry. These transactions are of greater amount and are less quantity.

Regarding seasonality, it is precisely what is most remarkable at a technological level, since, unlike other sectors, computer systems and particularly servers, are prepared throughout the year for the "high

season" periods. In this case, the seasonality of the requests is almost linear. Government travel takes place almost equally throughout the year in all regions of the world.

**Q: Finally, it is important to ask what we consider to be a key question, as well as a compromise for the sector, could these trips be replaced with technology in the future? And if so, what terms are handled?**

A: Yes, it is true that this is both a very important and a compromising question. It is evident that my answer is clearly subjective, but I am going to try to make an exercise of objectivity based on my experience.



Álvaro Fuentes and TOP-GOVERSYS team.

First of all, it is important to provide an overview of tourism. I firmly believe that tourism will never stop and that technology will not stop us from visiting places and living experiences and adventures. The warmth of the people, the climate, the smells and the sensations I believe that we will never be able to replace them with technology; not even with technologies like "META" that aims to digitize the individual in a digital world with an "avatar". We will be able to communicate, but we will always want to travel.

With this background, which I think many would subscribe to, we must extrapolate it to government trips. Many of these meetings require a certain complicity, closeness and even extreme confidentiality. We are talking about a type of confidentiality that is

more personal than diplomatic, but this is precisely what makes diplomacy flow... the complicity between some of the agents involved in it.

As I said, it is my vision, but I think that this extrapolation is correct.



**Álvaro Fuentes Díaz**

*CTO Tourism Optimizer Platform*

# MANAGEMENT SYSTEM FOR CITIES

*The great allies of destination managers.*

**R. Merás**

November 2022

**Management systems** are a fundamental and increasingly widespread tool in organizations, both public and private, in all economic sectors of countries worldwide. This is due to the innumerable benefits that these systems bring to the organizations that apply them. **The fact of keeping the procedures updated for each operation and type of task**, as well as for any work area of the companies, helps in the reduction of personnel training times, **cost savings, unification of work** and **avoids the loss of information and the generation of mistakes**.

All these factors are of vital importance in the **trips made by governments and institutions**, both officially in the exercise of their functions and privately, as they present very specific features to be borne in mind, depending on the nature of this type of travelers. In this regard, the nature of the **GITT** clients, together with the type of event that motivates the trip they make, may imply a set of specific requirements. Well, it is here where the destinations themselves **play a very important role**, since the fact of going to a city or country that facilitates such arrangements, streamlines part of the process of organizing and developing the trip.



Thus, following examples of successful cases in which **standardization** has resulted in the improvement and saving of work time and economic resources in companies, it is easy to conclude that this same system can be implemented in destination management offices and, even more so, in those cities that **receive a large number of governmental and institutional visits**.

The number of **logistical operations, agents involved and specific requirements** that this type of travel entails, make the fact of having an organization that centralizes and coordinates all these processes, making the destination that owns it a much more attractive place for holding major summits, conferences and / or events involving government personalities. Even more so, taking into account that **any event can be considered a potential GITT event, since the inaugurations of these events are usually attended by members of governments and large institutions, both nationally and internationally**.

In addition to the above and under the coordination of Tourism Optimizer Platform (TOP), the **International GITT Standard** was born, always **seeking to achieve the objective of promoting the planning, operational management and supervision of travel in the GITT sector through its standardization**. Thus, as a result of its specialization in different fields of knowledge about this new concept of travel, the certification model of GITT destinations is proposed, whose scope extends to different areas, such as the relations that delegations maintain with travel organization professionals, the promotion of management policies, or the resources and services offered by a destination; all

of this, conceived as the sum of the specific requirements of this type of travel.

In this way, **the GITT certification process for cities**, not only seeks to provide a seal of quality for destinations based on the processes of consulting and verification of different areas of the city, covering areas such as airport infrastructure, historic buildings for official reception, institutions and diplomatic bodies in the city, tourism suppliers involved in this type of travel, or both public and private security of the destination, among others; **The process also assists and guides the managers of the destination** to be certified in the creation of a cross-cutting department specialized in government and institutional tourism, i.e., a GITT Tourism Office.

The **GITT Tourist Offices** are designed as a body dependent on the city's managing body, which centralizes and coordinates the operations related to a GITT-type visit to the city. In this way, they are set up as another agent involved in government trips, which serves as support and back-up for the other agents, whether they are delegations, suppliers, specialized receptive services or public entities that play a role during the visit of the mandataries or diplomats.

# GITT AMBASSADORS

*A key role model in the evolution and promotion of governmental and institutional Travel.*



**Diego Fuentes Díaz and the Hon. Mr. Edmund Bartlett**  
*The CEO of the Tourism Optimizer Platform presents the GITT Ambassador badge to the Minister of Tourism of Jamaica.*

The recently defined **governmental and institutional travel sector** includes all those trips that personalities belonging to this type of entities make, both officially, in the exercise of their functions, and unofficially in trips related to their private life.

This sector is so standardized in our daily lives that we hardly realize what is involved, logistically, in making a trip of this kind. This is due to the fact that we are constantly hearing news about the visit of this or that president to our country; the trip of the president of that country to the headquarters of the European Union in Brussels; the summit held in a certain city that has brought together such and such international leaders; etc.

Thus, and considering the large number of specific security and protocol requirements, among others, involved in this type of travel, it is really important for initiatives and people to give visibility and provide added value and professionalism to this sector of tourism. For this reason, the company TOP (Tourism Optimizer Platform), as the main precursor and disseminator of the governmental travel industry, has created a specific program called **GITT Ambassadors**, which aims to give recognition to those personalities of the sector who, thanks to their involvement and work, promote and collaborate actively in the recognition and dissemination of the GITT sector (Governmental and Institutional Travel and Tourism).

These ambassadors of governmental and institutional travel, are referents within the tourism industry, for all

purposes, as well as in the academic, diplomatic, governmental and institutional spheres.

Some of these people who have been appointed as Ambassadors of the GITT sector, are such important figures, from the public-private sphere, such as **the Minister of Tourism of Kenya, His Excellency Mr. Najib Balala, and the Minister of Tourism of Jamaica, His Excellency Mr. Edmund Bartlett**; the CEO of Les Roches International School of Hotel Management in Marbella, **Mr. Carlos Díez de la Lastra**; the member of the UNWTO Tourism Market Intelligence and Competitiveness Department (Regional Office of the Middle East), Mr. Antonio López de Ávila; or the Vice Chancellor of the Faculty of Tourism of the Complutense University of Madrid, M<sup>a</sup> Concepción García.

The GITT Ambassadors allow, thanks to their involvement, to **take the Governmental and Institutional travel sector much further, and rebuild, in turn, the future of Tourism under the pillars of excellence, professionalism and Sustainability.**

# THE TRANSFORMATION OF MOTORCADES

*The evolution of motorcades throughout history.*

**E. González**

December 2022

Nowadays we understand that, for many reasons, when a **high-ranking leader**, whether national or foreign, visits a specific **destination**, his or her movements between different parts of the city are carried out in caravans that bring together a **large number of cars of almost any type, often for security or protocol reasons.**



**Motorcade of the 26th President of the United States, Theodore Roosevelt, in Amsterdam (1910)**  
*White House Archives.*

In terms of **security**, this phenomenon is called **motorcade**, and implies an important deployment involving a multitude of intervening agents, requiring **meticulous logistics** that make the motorcade one of the most important aspects in this type of travel.

### **The origin of motorcade.**

These caravans of authorities are a protocol and security phenomenon with a long historical trajectory. In absolute terms, they have existed since the beginning of civilization as such, due to the need to move, by land, leaders or other types of authorities between two or more specific points.

Although they have existed since the dawn of civilization and the constitution of states, caravans of authorities began to be used more commonly during Classical Antiquity in Europe, North Africa and the Middle East. Thus, both for diplomatic and warlike reasons, they became increasingly common.

These caravans were composed of different carriages driven by draught animals, as well as an escort, more or less militarized, depending on the political situation, the solemnity of the visit or the different points through which it passed. Some of the best examples can be found in the caravan of Alexander the Great, whose escort, the *hetairoi*, accompanied him throughout his journey; of the Roman emperors, escorted by the famous Praetorian Guard; the extensive corps of *Almogavars* that accompanied the Aragonese kings throughout the Middle Ages.

The militarization of Antiquity and the Middle Ages led to a hybrid system from the Modern Age onwards, in which the escort and the protocol of these movements were unified, creating a series of trends both in terms of security and solemnity.

### **El triumph of the automobile as a means of transport for authorities.**

The automobile, which was invented as we know it at the end of the 19th century, completely changed the previous scheme, and this type of transportation began to be carried out in electric or motor vehicles, instead of saloons or horse-drawn carriages.

The arrival of the automobile to the caravans of authorities, in today's terms, took place in 1903, when the President of the United States, Theodore Roosevelt, made use of a series of motor vehicles during an event in the city of San Francisco, something he would repeat again in 1910, when he attended an air show in St. Louis, Missouri.

This motorcade by Teddy Roosevelt set an important precedent, since from that moment on, numerous authorities would begin to use automobiles in their travels, both private and official. The use of these motor vehicles led to the coining of the term motorcade by the journalist Lyle Abbot years later.

### **Redesigning the motorcade.**

These automobiles have been, and still are, of great importance in travel, and some of them have gone down in history due to situations of the time or convulsive times, such as the case of Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria, at the beginning of the 20th century.

The configuration of the motorcade, in its beginnings, was based on a trial-and-error model, from which security forces and delegations began to learn according to the different problems, or gaps in security, that they encountered over the years. In the mid-twentieth century, and more so with World War II

looming, motorcades of authorities in the United States were conducted with covered vehicles, flanked by other escort vehicles, with sirens.

In fact, during World War II, authorities on both sides of the conflict made extensive use of these highly militarized and armored motorcades, as was the case with President Harry S. Truman's visit to Berlin in May 1945, days after the German defeat.

The end of the war eased the tension with regard to the transport of authorities, and in the great majority of countries and territories convertible cars were again used, in spite of the struggle between the United States and the Soviet Union at that time. However, the tragic assassination of the President of the United States, John F. Kennedy, during a motorcade in the city of Dallas (Texas), caused most governments and institutions to reconsider the use of convertibles and even armored vehicles.

This set an unparalleled precedent, despite the high level of security involved in this type of event. The exception to the rule was marked by the Pope, John Paul II, when he suffered an assassination attempt in his convertible car, which meant that, except on rare occasions, he himself and his successors have made use of covered cars.

***The word motorcade was coined by Arizona Republican journalist Lyle Abbot in 1913.***



## **The motorcade today: an impressive security display.**

### **The motorcade today: an impressive security display.**

Since the early 1980s, most government and institutional security services have significantly increased all security measures at motorcades. To this end, since then and up to now, the vast majority of these events usually involve a very significant deployment of security forces.

In addition to all this, the main motorcade is usually escorted by different vehicles of the Government or Institution, as well as Security Forces and Corps of the destination. Accesses are cordoned off, explosive device inhibition technology is used, adjacent buildings are searched and successive aerial surveillance and scans are carried out.

Motorcades are not limited exclusively to the transport of authorities in bilateral and multilateral meetings and participation in large forums or events, but also, based on the nature of their components, are adapted to the needs of each scenario. Recent examples of this are the visits of different U.S. and European presidents to conflict zones in the Middle East, or Eastern Europe, where authorities, presidents and heads of state of the European Union have traveled throughout 2022.

This exponential increase in security has turned motorcades into real spectacles where security and protocol are intertwined, attracting large numbers of people. Currently, the United States, China and Russia are the leading exponents in this respect. However, the vast majority of countries in the world usually have important formal and security protocols regarding the configuration and development of this type of caravans.



# THE DIGITIZATION OF THE SECTOR SECTOR

*How the pandemic has highlighted the needs for digitalization in the industry*

**M. González Buiza**

December 2022

Since March 2020, the pandemic caused by **COVID-19**, or SARS-CoV-2, has marked the lives of practically the entire world population and, with it, the agendas of the authorities belonging to governments and institutions around the world.

The **international community** had not faced a disease of such virulence and impact for more than a century, with the 1918 influenza pandemic, a time when international relations and organizations, as we understand them today, did not yet exist. Moreover, the world had just emerged from an unprecedented conflict and economic crisis, there was no industrial fabric outside Europe, North America and Japan, and travel for leisure or business was heavily marked by its high costs and duration.

However, a century later, the world has nothing to do with that of the Great War. **Globalization**, thanks to incredible technological development, has reached a level never before reached by any cultural, economic, political or structural phenomenon in history.



In addition to the enormous benefits it brings, it also inherently entails a series of risks that the international community has undertaken to assume. Through different international organizations, but mainly **through the UN and all its bodies, the vast majority of countries and territories have reached, over the last 70 years, a multitude of commitments and cooperation agreements on social, environmental, health and hygiene, economic, political, digital and cultural issues, among many others.** And all these agreements have been developed exclusively within the framework of multilateral trips and summits between authorities and representatives of all the countries of the world.

Despite this more than undeniable cooperation, and also based on **the necessary public-private collaboration**, the emergence of a new coronavirus, detected in December 2019 in the city of Wuhan, in the People's Republic of China, broke schemes and forecasts in the whole world. Without exception, absolutely, in economic terms, all sectors have been affected by the pandemic, including the Tourism industry, experiencing in mid-2021 a timid, but sustained, recovery that has ended up normalizing throughout the 2022 financial year.

In this scenario, of practical global paralysis in all sectors, **governmental and institutional travel**, on the other hand, although initially reduced due to mobility restrictions, videoconferences and telephone calls, continued to be made even in the hardest months of the pandemic because even if the world stops, the management of it, and cooperation between regions, countries and institutions, cannot do so.

### **International relations and during the pandemic. governmental travel**

The initial months of the COVID-19 pandemic, especially in the months from March to July 2020, were marked by pitiful contagion and death figures, but also by the cancellation of almost all major events and scheduled multilateral meetings. The initial restrictions affected flights, road traffic and border closures, bringing all types of travel to a standstill, including, initially, governmental and institutional travel.

This situation led many governments and institutions, mainly of an international nature, such as the World Health Organization (WHO), which is part of the United Nations, to hold the vast majority of their necessary meetings remotely, via videoconferencing. This, in practice, was subsequently transferred to the vast majority of the world's governments and private companies, popularizing "teleworking" throughout the world. In

fact, and in view of the initial danger to which the tourism industry was exposed, the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) convened a World Committee on Crisis by **telematic** means, in which UNWTO authorities, United Nations, Ministers of Tourism and leaders of the private sector took part.

In spite of the situation, in the governmental and institutional sphere, the conclusion was reached, almost in unison, that, due to the issues to be dealt with in these meetings, and because of the international emergency that required cooperation and common policies to solve the problems caused by the pandemic, most of the meetings should be held in person, through militarized travel, and maintaining the relevant health and hygiene protocols, in order to expedite the agreed measures, and **to preserve both confidentiality and security of the information.** In other words, this type of meeting could not be held telematically due to the security

implications mentioned above. The meeting of leaders and authorities in a specific space is necessary and, practically, almost an obligation due to the issues that are addressed in them.

Thus, and although depending on the geographical area and the progress of

the pandemic, leaders of the European Union, the United Nations, the G7, G20, and even private companies such as Xiaomi Inc. began to resume both bilateral and multilateral meetings and events, outlining the return to normality in the last months of 2020.



**The President of the United States, together with other authorities, using PPE (individual protection equipment).**  
*White House.*

### **COVID-19: understanding and cooperation through "impromptu" telematic meetings**

The virtual and, mainly, face-to-face meetings accelerated the foundations for recovery in the vast majority of countries and international organizations. These measures, focused on mitigating the adverse effects of the pandemic, allowed economic measures and injections such as those carried out by the European Central Bank or the European

Commission, many of them aimed at recovering strategic sectors such as tourism, the automobile industry and, of course, the health sector.

Although videoconferences, events and online meetings continued to be held, thanks to the vaccination figures and the loss of strength of the virus through its variants, countries gradually began to open their borders. In perspective, this rapid reaction on the part of the international community, leaving important precedents in terms of diplomacy, understanding and cooperation, facilitated the beginning of recovery in all terms, and many of these objectives began, precisely, from a clearly technological perspective: thanks to video calls, forums and meetings, both governmental and public-private sector, in which the next steps to be taken were outlined.

Although remote meetings have a number of undeniable benefits, they also entail a number of risks that governments, institutions and the private sector, due to their nature and the information they contain, are unable to assume. For this reason, the successive meetings that have taken place, and continue to take place, are held in person.

This, in turn, coincided with the UNWTO's average recovery estimate of between 9 and 19 months after the official start of the pandemic, as well as those of the International Monetary Forum, estimated at 10 months. These estimates, despite the consequences of the pandemic, are supported by the data and the current good health of travel.

***The confidentiality of the information shared during this type of travel is so important that security teams advise against remote meetings as far as possible.***

### **The new players in the aftermath of the pandemic**

The pandemic has created a new geopolitical scenario, unprecedented in times of peace, in which the position of two main blocks, the digital era and, of course, globalization as a phenomenon, play a very important role.

Accordingly, the gradual economic, political and military importance that the People's Republic of China has been acquiring has historically reached its highest point. Although it has been in the making since the mid-1980s, China has gone from being a regional power to a world power, overtaking Russia in its geopolitical significance and moving ever closer to the United States and the European Union. This has had a logical and evident response from its neighbors, such as Japan, South Korea and Singapore, which have further strengthened their ties with the Western world, seeking to act as a counterweight to a possible Chinese hegemony.

Despite diplomatic and military conflicts, sometimes resulting from periods of economic or health crises such as the one we have recently experienced, the world is moving towards a non-polarized scenario in which effective multilateralism prevails. Despite this, there are currently more than fifty armed conflicts around the world, such as in the Sahel, Syria, Libya or Burma, the most recent being the Russian-Ukrainian conflict, which exemplifies how territories are committed to mutual cooperation, and a good example of this is the European Union. In the face of the Euroscepticism prior to the pandemic,

the vicissitudes caused by the pandemic, the response of the European authorities, the commitment to digitalization and sustainability, among other aspects, has definitively united the EU Member States, which have also attracted other countries in the area to their orbit.



## **Digitalization and Globalization: technology as a diplomatic tool**

We are already immersed in the so-called Fourth Industrial Revolution, based on digitalization, in which public-private cooperation, environmental sustainability, public economic growth and social inclusion are the main objectives to be achieved by the entire international community.

This involves all sectors and industries and, precisely, Tourism, for decades, has been one of those that, by its very nature, has experienced an unprecedented digitalization, leading these precepts, and where the OTAs themselves have become both a great engine for Tourism, and for the economy of many countries, this being the case of companies like Amadeus -which holds more than 40% of the world market of reservations, and an important part of the Spanish GDP-, or SABRE, its U.S. counterpart.

Technological development and innovation that, on the other hand, is debated, forged and staged in the travel of governments and institutions, which, in turn, currently show an important need for digitalization, policies and agreements that involve all the intervening agents, in accordance with their nature and demands, motivated by the status, rank and role of their components.

These are trips that now, more than ever, and with the European Union at the forefront in terms of digitalization and sustainability policies, are tremendously necessary to continue promoting this type of measures, and should serve as an example and tool to move forward consistently in this era of digitalization.

This scenario, with increasingly competitive markets, has also brought with it an accelerated digitalization that is the focus of debate by authorities and public-private sector agents. From their close collaboration, as we say, within the framework of this type of trips, meetings and gatherings, measures aimed at adapting and improving such important aspects as logistics, confidentiality and user confidence are born, which can only be carried out within a new framework of national and multinational cooperation. A framework in which the governmental and institutional travel sector plays a leading role.

# GITT TRIPS IN THE SCREENS

*How cinema and television bring us closer to many of the intricacies of these displacements.*

**W. Mertens**

December 2022

**GITT (Governmental and Institutional Travel and Tourism) travels** are so assimilated in the minds of today's society that we hardly realize that it is **constantly happening around us**. Visits by ministers, presidents or former presidents, members of royalty, etc. are the daily routine, both in the real world and in the fiction that we constantly consume in series, movies, novels, etc. This makes us unaware of the **amount of requirements and special features that surround this type of travel**; both security, protocol and other types.

## What examples can we find?

To justify our statement, we will give some examples. The movie *"London has fallen"*, is one of the best fictions that show, in great detail, the complexity of GITT travels. In it, a large number of heads of state from several countries of the world travel to London on the occasion of the state funeral of the British Prime Minister. It is possible to appreciate situations so characteristic of these trips, such as the preparatory meetings of the hosting parties (joint security committee), as well as those of the invited delegations (preliminary considerations phase) in which the information gathered by the advance teams, among other issues, is discussed.

But there is still more; the film also shows the different displacement operations of the day in which the State Funeral is celebrated. There are scenes as usual in governmental trips as the runway pickup of a president upon arrival at an airport, the helicopter transfer to the place where the motorcade that will take him to the cathedral where the event will take place will start, the boat transfer of another head of state on the River Thames, the impressive security measures deployed in the city (snipers, blocked streets, police on foot, on horseback, in vehicles...), the security rings surrounding the VIPs of the Delegation, and so on. In addition, in this film, we can also see what happens when the security of the VIPs is compromised and the security teams and rings are activated. In short, this is a film in which one can see, to perfection, all the details, especially those related to security, that a GITT trip entails.



### And then here comes the protocol...

But we also find GITT details in other fictions, as for example in the Netflix series "**The Crown**", where, in **episode 8 of its second season, a historic meeting is described**: the visit of President **Kennedy**, accompanied by his wife, First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy, to **Queen Elizabeth II** and her consort, the Duke of Edinburgh. In this episode, more protocol-oriented requirements are represented in the GITT sector; or rather, errors in protocol that occur during the meeting. This is something much more common than one might think in this type of meeting, since the difference in cultures and, therefore, in the way of relating to each other, of the different representatives of the countries, can lead to errors, confusions or mistakes that sometimes cause more than one headache for the heads of protocol of the different delegations.



'The Crown'  
Netflix.

Issues such as the place to occupy during dinner, the treatment of the Queen or the curtsies, can be observed perfectly during the almost 58 minutes that the chapter lasts. But undoubtedly, the most striking scene takes place when, at Buckingham Palace, during the reception by Queen Elizabeth II to the President and the First Lady, the hierarchy is not respected. By this hierarchy, President Kennedy is, saving the differences, the counterpart as Head of State, of Queen Elizabeth, so they are the first to greet each other, giving way then to the consorts. The curious thing is that this does not happen in fiction, but rather, President Kennedy, making a display of courtesy and chivalry towards his wife, gives way to her to greet the Queen first and, after the greetings, gives way to her again, to go, accompanied by the Queen, to the room where the dinner will be held. It is understood that, due to the customs of the time, this was normal among ordinary people, without institutional or governmental positions or roles, but these rules change when it comes to two figures representing their countries as Heads of State, which equates them, and entails that they should treat each other as such, regardless of their sex or the rules of courtesy of the moment.

### **GITT travels within the borders of the represented country?**

In addition to these two examples of fictions that portray the GITT reality, we can name many others, such as, for example, some scenes from the movie "**JBL**", where we can see, at the beginning of the movie, scenes typical of the governmental and institutional travel sector, such as President Kennedy's arrival in Dallas. Here we can identify an intra-border GITT trip, since this type of travel includes all those trips made by members of governments and institutions to any place, whether within or outside the borders of the country they represent.

As already mentioned, there are numerous examples of GITT trips in fiction. In this article we have tried to exemplify some of them, since their identification, when their special characteristics are recognized, is quite simple, precisely because of their peculiar and characteristic features. The high level of security, the protocol requirements and many other particularities are perfectly represented in series, movies and novels, bringing the general public closer to all those details of the movements of governments and large global institutions that sometimes go unnoticed.





# AN INTERNATIONAL SUMMIT IN LESS THAN 4KM<sup>2</sup>

*The challenge of holding an international summit with more than 250 delegations in less than 4km<sup>2</sup>*

**A. Pedrajas**

January 2023

The **World Economic Forum**, held in **Davos** (Switzerland), is **one of the annual events with the largest number of GITT (Governmental and Institutional Travel and Tourism)** travelers worldwide. It is an event that brings together the world's main economic, political, journalistic and intellectual leaders and where, year after year, important international issues are debated.

Since 1971, when the German economist and professor Klaus Martin Schwab came up with the "stakeholder theory" and founded the Forum, the small town of Davos, with a population of only 11,000 inhabitants and an area of 3.92 km<sup>2</sup>, has been the center of attention. The small town of Davos has witnessed many of the key events of recent history on our planet, such as its continuous mediation work between Greece and Turkey, with the aim of avoiding a conflict between the two countries, the construction of countless international economic ties between the public and private sectors, the beginning of the end of Apartheid, pacts for the vaccination against meningitis and other diseases of millions of children around the world, and so on.



The World Economic Forum is widely known by the international community and civil society. However, certain questions can be asked: **why in Davos, why choose a small Swiss town of less than 4 square kilometers in area, without adequate infrastructure to accommodate so many visitors, or without suitable access by land and air?** The answer to this was already given by Professor Schwab in 1971: Davos was chosen in order to "escape from the everyday" of the big cities, and because of "what the mountains represent for European culture, specifically Swiss and German culture, as was captured in the novel *The Magic Mountain* (Thomas Mann, 1924)".<sup>1</sup>

This has become so important in Davos that its fame as the site of the World Economic Forum has led to it being known internationally as the "Davos Forum". In fact, it was only held outside Davos in 2002, after the September 11 attacks in New York, as a sign of solidarity with the American people.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, an attempt was made to temporarily move the venue to Singapore, as this city can more easily host an event of this magnitude due to its size and infrastructure. However, this temporary change was finally not executed, and in May 2022, after two years without the Forum, it has been held again in what is and will be, in its own right, its venue: Davos.

***Every year, Davos brings together the most important world leaders in just 4 square kilometers.***

**Davos '22: A summit marked by the return, the climate emergency, common pacts on health and sustainability, and the Russian-Ukrainian war.**

**2022** and **2023** is proving to be a pivotal year. The return to normality, after two years of severe pandemic and restrictions, has allowed some economic recovery in all industries and sectors. In addition, the pandemic has shown that common policies, agreements and cooperation between countries, institutions and private entities are needed to tackle problems of this type as effectively as possible. For this reason, Davos 2022 has been a fundamental and essential meeting for leaders from all over the world.

More than 250 delegations from governments, institutions, companies and the media gathered in Davos from May 22 to 26. As every year, this brings with it an impressive logistical challenge for local authorities, service suppliers, intermediary agencies and delegations, as the size of the location does not allow all attendees to stay, move around or wander around Davos normally, due to the security requirements involved.

In fact, we have to take into account that **Davos does not have an airport**, and the nearest one is in Zurich, 148 kilometers and practically two hours away, due to the infrastructure and accesses. For this reason, heliports are improvised in the outskirts of the town, with the aim of making certain trips using helicopters.

On the other hand, the size of Davos makes accommodation more difficult especially if we take into account the security needs of governmental and institutional delegations.

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<sup>1</sup> Fuente: <https://es.weforum.org/agenda/2020/01/el-foro-economico-mundial-a-los-50-una-linea-de-tiempo-de-los-aspectos-mas-destacados-de-davos-y-mas-alla-0a5878479e/>

This forces many villas to reconfigure themselves, temporarily, as accommodations offering services equal to, and sometimes exceeding, the standards of certain hotels. In fact, the accommodation problem is such that many delegations opt to spend the night outside Davos, in nearby villages, towns or cities.

The latter implies a very frequent use of automobiles, since access to Davos can only be by land and, on certain occasions, weather and air traffic permitting, by helicopter, as mentioned above. According to this scenario, chauffeured services suppliers and delegations are forced to reinforce their fleets, moving cars from other locations and even nearby countries such as France, Italy or Germany.

The challenges facing the international community in the coming years were intensely

***Davos '22 evidences the success and major international summits through historic numbers return to normality of: with over 2000 world leaders, thousands of business people, media, automobiles, aircraft and security teams.***

debated in Davos, with particular emphasis on the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change and the proliferation of armed conflicts. Practically in unison, government leaders, institutional authorities and representatives of the private sector concluded that, in this increasingly globalized scenario, in which technology plays a fundamental role as a means of cohesion, it is important to reach common agreements to alleviate existing problems and, at the same time, to anticipate future problems with sufficient margin, in order to avoid situations of paralysis and initial lack of coordination, such as that caused by the pandemic. For this reason, cooperation agreements, which are forged in the framework of this type of multilateral summits, and subsequently in bilateral meetings, are now more important than ever.

The challenges facing the international community in the coming years were intensely debated in Davos, with particular emphasis on the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change and the proliferation of armed conflicts. Practically in unison, government leaders, institutional authorities and representatives of the private sector concluded that, in this increasingly globalized scenario, in which technology plays a fundamental role as a means of cohesion, it is important to reach common agreements to alleviate existing problems and, at the same time, to anticipate future problems with sufficient margin, in order to avoid situations of paralysis and initial lack of coordination, such as that caused by the pandemic. For this reason, cooperation agreements, which are forged in the framework of this type of multilateral summits, and subsequently in bilateral meetings, are now more important than ever.

The 2022 summit was an unqualified success in every aspect. More than 2,000 world leaders, more than 250 GITT delegations, and more than 5,000 journalists coexisted for four days in less than four square kilometers<sup>2</sup>.

For the first time in decades, the international community seems to be responding favorably to all these vicissitudes, so that Davos 2022 has achieved what has always been its main objective: to become a meeting forum in which all parties cooperate consistently. This harmony and cooperation, in turn, highlights the need to resume both

the Forum and governmental and institutional travel, which in situations and scenarios such as the current one, are highly necessary.

Secondly, this edition has also been a success because it has shown that, at last, since the beginning of the pandemic, the World Economic Forum has been able to be held, and without the need to move its headquarters. This, as we have said, serves as a perfect example of the return to normality, and of how the high doses of vaccination, together with the hygienic-sanitary protocols, responsibility, and the loss of virulence of COVID-19, are gradually allowing the return to normality throughout the world.

Finally, it should be noted that Davos 2022 has been a logistical success, in which absolutely all the agents involved in the organization of the forum have shown unprecedented coordination, attending and providing service to a large number of delegations -even greater than in previous editions- in a reduced space, maintaining at all times the security and confidentiality protocols that this type of delegations and summits demand. Despite the challenge, common to many governmental and institutional trips, of lack of accommodation, vehicles, last minute changes, and the concentration of world leaders in a single space.

***The unmissable 2022 event, whose attendance has been historic, has required a reinforcement in the fleets of chauffeured services suppliers, an increase and transfer of more security personnel, and greater coordination by all the agents involved.***





# GOVERNMENTAL AND INSTITUTIONAL TRAVEL AND TOURISM

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