In this context, the Secretary-General of the World Tourism Organization, Zurab Pololikashvili, affirmed that "the crisis will not end soon," pointing out to the "work to coordinate and digitize measures to reduce risks associated with Covid-19 in terms of travel, especially infection detection checks, tracing the cases and vaccination certificates are essential to promoting safe travel and prepare for the recovery of tourism when conditions permit."

Asia-Pacific is the region that witnessed the largest decline in the number of tourists in 2020 (-84% within a year) because it was the first to be affected by the epidemic and is still currently imposing the most stringent restrictions on travel. As for Europe, the decline was recorded at 70% within a year, but the continent witnessed the largest decline in terms of numbers, as it lost 500 million visitors. The Middle East and Africa region registered a decline of 75% and the Americas 69%.

Source (Al-Arabiya.net website, Edited)
The United Arab Emirates topped the Middle East and North Africa countries, ranking 21st in the world in the Corruption Perceptions Index for 2020 issued by Transparency International, to be among the most transparent and honest countries in the world, with 71 points on the general anti-corruption index. The UAE surpassed countries such as France, the United States, Portugal, Cyprus, Poland, Croatia and South Korea.

The index, which ranks 180 countries and territories according to perceived levels of public sector corruption according to experts and the business community, uses a scale from zero to 100, with zero being the most corrupt and 100 the most honest.

Denmark topped the ranking of countries, with 88 points on the general index, followed by New Zealand in second place, Finland in third, Singapore fourth, and Sweden in fifth place in the world.

This year’s Corruption Perceptions Index paints a bleak picture of the state of corruption around the world, while most countries have made little or no progress in tackling corruption in nearly a decade, more than two-thirds of countries scored less than 50 points.

The index shows that corruption not only undermines the global health response to the “Covid-19” pandemic, but also contributes to the continuing crisis of democracy. Reports show widespread corruption throughout the response to the Covid-19 pandemic, from paying bribes for corona tests, treatment and other health services, to purchases of medical supplies and overall preparedness for emergencies. The analysis also reveals that countries that do well on the index are investing more in healthcare, are more able to provide universal coverage and are less likely to violate democratic norms or the rule of law when responding to a crisis.

Western Europe and the European Union scored highest on the index, with an average score of 66, while Eastern Europe and Central Asia (36 points) and Sub-Saharan Africa (32 points) scoring the lowest scores on the index.

Source (Al Khaleej Newspaper-UAE, Edited)