

PRESS RELEASE

NET calls for policies that foster the competitiveness of the European tourism industry during a meeting with Commissioner Bieńkowska.

A NET delegation comprising high level representatives from the European Private Sector in Tourism met with EU Commissioner for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs Bieńkowska to discuss the main challenges and opportunities within the tourism sector.

Tourism is a key contributor to Europe’s competitiveness. It is the third socio-economic activity which is mainly composed of small and medium-size enterprises 91% of which are microenterprises. Tourism accounts for 9% of the EU GDP and employs 10% of the total EU workforce. This translates to 13 million jobs¹. It is also one of the key sectors to further contribute to economic growth and job creation, a President Juncker’s priority.

However, unless Europe is competitive in terms of tax and regulatory regime, destination appeal, perceptions of value and visa facilitation, Europe will continue to lose out. The loss is actual, not potential.

Discussions focused on NET suggestions on how to unlock the full potential of tourism to foster innovation, create jobs and stimulate economic growth.

“The tourism sector is a key contributor to jobs creation and growth. In order for the sector to become even more competitive, we call on the Commission to help develop fair competition and practices on the online market and a level playing field for all players in the tourism market. We believe that this is perfectly in line with President Juncker’s priorities for Jobs, Growth and Investment” said Susanne Kraus-Winkler, President of HOTREC.

The Commissioner’s support was sought for:

- Continuing to raise awareness of and support the adoption of a smart Schengen visa policy to facilitate legitimate travellers from important tourism source markets, such as China, India and Russia;
- Adoption of a well-functioning Single Market, with special focus on the Digital Single Market;
- The simplification and streamlining of the regulatory framework for tourism, in particular as regards taxation. Avoid proliferation of taxes at various levels, which render Europe excessively costly and uncompetitive;
- Upgrading skills and competences across the tourism sector in order to enhance the competitiveness of companies and keep on creating jobs

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CLIA Europe
CRUISE COMPANIES OPERATING
IN EUROPE

ECTAA
TRAVEL AGENTS &
TOUR OPERATORS IN EUROPE

EFCO&HPA
CAMPS SITES, HOLIDAY PARKS
& HOLIDAY VILLAGES IN EUROPE

ETOA
EUROPEAN INBOUND TOURISM

HOTREC
HOTELS, RESTAURANTS
& CAFÉS IN EUROPE

IAAPA
INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
AMUSEMENT PARKS AND ATTRACTIONS

IRU
BUS, COACH & TAXI OPERATORS
WORLDWIDE

¹ Source: [EUROSTAT](#)

NET, the Network for the European Private Sector in Tourism is a contact group of pan-European trade associations. Our members are: CLIA, ECTAA, EFCO&HPA, ETOA, HOTREC, IAAPA, IRU. NET's purpose is to develop common goals for the tourism industry and work with policy makers and other partners to achieve them. For more information please email one of the NET members.

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