



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2009 - 2014

---

*Plenary sitting*

---

**A7-0265/2011**

13.7.2011

# REPORT

on Europe, the world's No 1 tourist destination – a new political framework for  
tourism in Europe  
(2010/2206(INI))

Committee on Transport and Tourism

Rapporteur: Carlo Fidanza

## CONTENTS

	<b>Page</b>
MOTION FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION.....	3
EXPLANATORY STATEMENT .....	18
OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE INTERNAL MARKET AND CONSUMER PROTECTION.....	23
OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON INDUSTRY, RESEARCH AND ENERGY .....	28
OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT.....	33
OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT	39
OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON CULTURE AND EDUCATION .....	44
RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE.....	49

## MOTION FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION

### **on Europe, the world's No 1 tourist destination – a new political framework for tourism in Europe (2010/2206(INI))**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to the Commission Communication entitled ‘Basic orientations for the sustainability of European tourism’ (COM(2003)0716),
- having regard to the Commission Communication entitled ‘A renewed EU Tourism Policy: Towards a stronger partnership for European Tourism’ (COM(2006)0134),
- having regard to the Commission Communication entitled ‘Agenda for a sustainable and competitive European tourism’ (‘Agenda 21’) (COM(2007)0621),
- having regard to the Commission Communication entitled ‘Europe, the world's No 1 tourist destination – a new political framework for tourism in Europe’ (COM(2010)0352),
- having regard to the Commission Communication entitled ‘Europe 2020. A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth’ (COM(2010)2020),
- having regard to the Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council concerning European statistics on tourism (COM(2010)0117),
- having regard to the Madrid Declaration ‘Towards a socially responsible tourism model’ adopted at the informal meeting of Ministers on 15 April 2010,
- having regard to the Council Conclusions of 12 October 2010 on ‘Europe, the world's n°1 tourist destination - a new political framework for tourism in Europe’ (14944/10),
- having regard to the Opinion of the Committee of the Regions entitled ‘Europe, the World's No. 1 Tourist Destination: a new political framework for tourism in Europe’ (CoR 342/2010 fin),
- having regard to the Council Recommendation of 22 December 1986<sup>1</sup> on ‘Fire safety in existing hotels’ (86/666/EEC),
- having regard to Council Directive 90/314/EEC of 13 June 1990<sup>2</sup> on package travel, package holidays and package tours,
- having regard to Directive 2006/123/EC<sup>3</sup> of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 December 2006 on services in the internal market,

---

1 OJ L 384, 31.12.1986 p. 60

2 OJ L 158, 23.6.1990, p. 59

3 OJ L 376, 27.12.2006, p. 36

- having regard to Council Directive 2009/47/EC<sup>1</sup> of 5 May 2009 amending Directive 2006/112/EC as regards reduced rates of value added tax,
  - having regard to the Commission Decision of 9 July 2009<sup>2</sup> establishing the ecological criteria for the award of the Community eco-label for tourist accommodation service (2009/578/EC),
  - having regard to Regulation (EC) No 66/2010<sup>3</sup> of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 November 2009 on the EU Ecolabel,
  - having regard to its Resolution of 8 September 2005<sup>4</sup> on new prospects and new challenges for sustainable European tourism,
  - having regard to its Resolution of 29 November 2007<sup>5</sup> on a renewed EU Tourism Policy: Towards a stronger partnership for European Tourism,
  - having regard to its Resolution of 16 December 2008<sup>6</sup> on the regional development aspects of the impact of tourism on coastal regions,
  - having regard to its resolution of 16 February 2011<sup>7</sup> on practical aspects regarding the revision of EU instruments to support SME finance in the next programming period,
  - having regard to Rule 48 of its Rules of Procedure,
  - having regard to the report of the Committee on Transport and Tourism and the opinions of the Committee on Internal Market and Consumer Protection, the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy, the Committee on Regional Development, the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development and the Committee on Culture and Education (A7-0265/2011),
- A. whereas the tourism sector accounts for 10 % of GDP and 12 % of total employment, making it the third most substantial socio-economic activity in the EU; whereas the sector is largely made up of micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises, is the main resource for some EU regions, such as the islands, and plays a key role in the economic development and economic, social and regional cohesion of the EU and in achieving the goals of the EU 2020 strategy,
- B. whereas tourism also contributes to human enrichment, exchange, welfare, wellbeing, culture and social cohesion; whereas, therefore, the focus should be on a qualitative approach,
- C. whereas the European Union is the world's No 1 tourist destination in terms of

---

<sup>1</sup> OJ L 116, 9.5.2009, p. 18.

<sup>2</sup> OJ L 198, 30.7.2009, p. 57..

<sup>3</sup> OJ L 27 30.1.2010, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup> OJ C 193E, 17.8.2006, p. 325.

<sup>5</sup> OJ C 297E, 20.11.2008, p. 184.

<sup>6</sup> Texts adopted, P6\_TA(2008)0597.

<sup>7</sup> Texts adopted, P7\_TA(2011)0057.

international arrivals and this lead position must be reinforced by tackling the challenges created by, firstly, greater global competition and a market demand that is continually changing and secondly, the need to ensure increased and more lasting sustainability,

- D. whereas tourism in Europe faces many challenges: the global economic crisis, the competitiveness of other destinations outside the EU and the diversity of tourist attractions on offer, the effects of climate change and seasonal fluctuations in tourist activity, demographic developments in Europe, the growing impact of information and communications technologies and many unforeseen events affecting the industry from time to time,
- E. whereas tourism contributes to promoting Europe and its cultural and linguistic heritage, while still respecting diversity, and to maintaining shared values and consolidating a sense of European identity, European belonging and European citizenship; whereas tourism development has a key role to play in enhancing the regional dimension within the EU,
- F. whereas Europe's diversity, multifacetedness and multiculturalism offer maximum growth for any form of thematic tourism, and the development and promotion of forms of diversified tourism may be the only effective response to the distortions, the problems and the deterioration to which the model of unregulated and undifferentiated mass tourism is leading,
- G. whereas, under the Lisbon Treaty (Article 195), tourism has become a specific competence of the EU, allowing the latter to support and complement actions within the Member States by encouraging the creation of an atmosphere that is conducive to developing tourism enterprises and fostering cooperation between Member States, while excluding any harmonisation of the legal and regulatory provisions of the Member States,
- H. whereas, on the basis of this new competence and in full compliance with the principle of subsidiarity, an EU strategy with clear and ambitious goals needs to be drawn up,
- I. whereas in order to ensure that the new competences and the future tourism policy of the EU have the effectiveness and visibility that European citizens and our visitors require, they will not only need a strategy and action plan but must also be adequately resourced in the EU's 2014-2020 financial programme,
- J. whereas the economies of the outermost regions and some island regions of the EU depend almost entirely on air transport in view of their extreme remoteness and isolated nature, calling for measures adapted to their dependence on that transport mode,
- 1. Welcomes the policy strategy presented by the Commission, which sets out 21 specific actions to reinvigorate the sector; considers that this document and its implementation plan provide a solid basis from which to develop an EU policy on competitive, modern, high-quality, sustainable tourism that is accessible to all; encourages the Commission, in the context of the implementation plan, to set as soon as possible specific timetables for implementing the actions and achieving the targets; asks the Member States to cooperate by submitting programmes for each action in accordance with the competent national, regional or local authorities; calls on the Commission to focus on priority actions which are innovative and entail a European added value;

2. Believes that the basis for the EU tourism strategy lies firstly in a package of specific measures solely concerning the tourism sector, and secondly, given the cross-cutting nature of tourism, in coordination with other related policy sectors in order to achieve a system which genuinely promotes tourism; considers, moreover, that a precise assessment is needed of how measures in other sectors impact tourism and calls for an integrated approach with a view to developing synergies both between the different sectoral policies and the various financing instruments;
3. Deplores the lack of coherence within the Commission with regard to tourism policy; considers it essential that the Commission should arrange for a coordinating and integrating approach among the Directorates-General concerned;
4. Stresses the need for close cooperation between the EU, international, national, regional and local authorities on the one hand and between the institutions as a whole and stakeholders in the sector on the other, with a view to addressing cross-cutting tourism-related issues, whilst respecting the principle of subsidiarity; recalls that in regard to tourism many European regions and municipalities have direct powers and therefore play a central role in implementing projects and specific actions; hopes, also in the context of the Europe 2020 strategy, to see regions and municipalities cooperate more closely with each other and play a sustainable, direct and effective part in developing the new tourism policy; believes that, for the same period, specific programming instruments such as strategies for macro-regions could enhance intra- and inter-regional tourism and foster the attractiveness and visibility of European regions and municipalities;
5. Calls on the Commission to consider introducing two new principles for tourism: ‘interregionality’ and ‘complementarity’, in order to promote joint planning and cooperation between tourist services within a single geographical area, i.e. either between neighbouring regions belonging to different Member States or at a specific thematic level between regions linked by common elements;

### ***Competitive, modern and good quality tourism***

6. Takes the view that tourism should be regarded as part and parcel of the EU’s industrial policy and innovation policy and asserts once more that reinvigorating tourism is a strategic and vital objective for employment in the various Member States; stresses in this connection the importance of micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), which both contribute to innovation from below and stability in the sector and guarantee the quality, diversity and authenticity of the regions where they are rooted; encourages the Commission to promote this approach more in European tourism services;
7. Calls on the Commission to collect and publish good tourism practices each year;
8. Agrees with the Commission’s proposal that a ‘Europe Brand’ should be developed in conjunction with the Member States, local and regional authorities and national tourism agencies, in order to promote Europe as a whole worldwide as a tourist destination; to this effect, calls on the Commission to launch publicity campaigns in cooperation with Member States and the competent tourism agencies; emphasises that any promotion initiatives should respect and highlight Europe’s territorial diversity while avoiding favouring any European destinations over others, and takes the view that the ‘Europe

Brand' should not prevent the different regions, cities and local entities from being able to promote their own image freely;

9. Welcomes the 'European heritage label' initiative as a tool giving prominence to some of the important sites in the history of European integration; stresses the need for coordination between this initiative and the UNESCO heritage sites and other historic routes; considers coordination with other comparable initiatives, such as the Europa Nostra Award, to be necessary in order to avoid overlapping; calls on the Commission to point out to Member States that sites which receive the 'European heritage label' must always remain open and accessible, with provision even being made for skeleton staff;
10. Calls on the Commission to support the inclusion on the World Heritage List of popular traditions within the Member States, including culinary traditions, with a view to preserving them for future generations and establishing a European strategy for the promotion of popular traditions at European and international level;
11. Calls on the Commission to assess the impact that the EU's European Capitals of Culture programme is having on tourism and to report to Parliament on whether governance approaches, funding arrangements and procedures for involving cultural bodies and associations should be reviewed, with a view to investing in durable and sustainable processes and partnerships;
12. Stresses the importance of collaborating, for instance through partnerships or the conclusion of international air transport agreements, with non-EU countries, in particular neighbouring countries and the BRIC countries, which represent a market of several million potential new tourists; emphasises in this respect the importance of continuing efforts to increase the visibility, quality, competitiveness and diversification of the European tourism industry and calls for the development of joint European marketing activities and combined tourism products in order to attract visitors from these new source markets;
13. Considers it advisable, while respecting the EU's rights and duty to control entry across its own borders, for the European institutions and the Member States to develop, in the context of the common visa policy, a long-term strategy for more coordinated and simplified visa procedures, with consideration given to establishing common consular desks/centres at EU level to ensure that visa procedures are implemented on time and bureaucratic costs reduced; to this end, further to the creation of the European External Action Service (EEAS), calls on the Commission to consider the possibility of deploying the EU delegation offices in the world in order to issue tourist visas in collaboration with the national embassies of the Member States and to explore additional ways of simplifying the issue of tourist visas, such as 'group tourist visas' for organised groups and easier access for business travellers;
14. Asks the Member States, in view of various emergency situations that place tourists abroad in danger, to consider, in close cooperation with the European External Action Service (EEAS), whether it would be appropriate to codify a uniform procedure for issuing notices advising against travel, creating a single European code for the seriousness of the situations concerned and acknowledging in worst-case scenarios the right of operators to apply for Community aid, within the limits of the funds available;

15. Calls on the Commission to draw conclusions from recent emergencies, such as the volcanic eruption, and to draw up specific scenarios for EU crisis management, so that coordination and uniform action in all Member States with regard to information and the measures to be taken become the rule;
16. Stresses the need to foster innovation and technological development in micro-enterprises and SMEs so that they may more effectively market their products and promote destinations; urges the Commission to create an 'ICT and Tourism' platform, launching a specific pilot project by the end of 2011 to boost the participation of micro-enterprises and SMEs in the digital supply chain, following on from the experience of other sectors such as textiles, transport and logistics and the automobile industry; calls for initiatives designed to promote e-commerce in the industry and eliminate remaining barriers to the development thereof within the internal market; calls on the Member States, moreover, to develop high-speed internet throughout their territory in order to enable advanced services to be developed and operators to become interoperable;
17. Calls for the entrepreneurial spirit to be promoted and supported in the industry, giving special attention to women and young people, and for access to funding, especially to microloans, to be facilitated for SMEs and self-employed workers;
18. Calls on the Commission to promote a specific innovation incubator for businesses in the tourism sector;
19. Considers that the sustainability of the tourism sector will greatly benefit from a more coordinated approach to R&D and from promoting innovative products and services; underlines the fact that the development of the tourism industry is directly linked to promoting energy efficiency and renewable technologies;
20. Urges the Commission to create a Virtual Tourism Monitoring Centre that links up not just research institutions, but also enterprises and public authorities, with the aim of driving forward market research through use of competitive intelligence systems, providing enterprises and public bodies with forward-looking information on the development of supply and demand and creating the conditions for improved strategic positioning of enterprises and the public sector;
21. Calls on the Commission to assess, in close cooperation with Member States and national actors in the sector, what innovative actions they can take in order to promote ad hoc European holiday packages during major historic, cultural and sporting events that certain Member States will be hosting in the next few years, such as the Olympic Games, the Universal Expositions and others, with a view to promoting destination 'Europe' with all its rich diversity; takes the view that European and international events of different kinds should be promoted in conjunction with existing local tourist amenities;
22. Believes that the potential of the European Travel Commission's (ETC) web portal [www.visiteurope.com](http://www.visiteurope.com) should be developed to maximise its availability and full accessibility (information in all EU official languages and the principal non-EU languages, with particular regard to the BRIC countries, use of formats accessible by the visually impaired and with information in sign language for the deaf, and use of all technological applications) and make it a genuine European tourism platform, with easy access to



national, regional and local tourism portals in the individual Member States; believes, moreover, that the portal should give greater visibility to the European Quality Label system, as well as to best practices and to initiatives such as Calypso, NECSTouR and EDEN, and that it should inform tourists about their rights in different circumstances;

23. Calls on the Commission to assess in conjunction with the Member States the possibility of creating a 'European Tourism Card' for the purpose of encouraging tourists from within and outside the EU who travel in Europe to do so regularly, by offering information including a list of their rights, discounts and dedicated services;
24. Considers that the European Union is founded on cultural and linguistic diversity and that it is therefore important to promote access to tourist sites by providing visitors with tools for facilitating their visit and helping them to understand, such as audio guides or brochures offering explanations in at least two EU official languages, particularly where the sites visited are receiving structural funding;
25. Calls on the Commission to assess, in cooperation with tourism stakeholders, the feasibility of a 'European quality tourism label', identifying common quality criteria; considers that this should come about by coordinating the best experience already gained in different Member States and by industry associations, in order to create an umbrella label complementary to national labels and recognised on an opt-in basis;
26. Believes that a proliferation of labels must be avoided and that their number must be reduced, to prevent possible confusion on the part of consumers and excessive burdens on enterprises, and to make the labels more easily recognisable; calls on the Commission to assess existing labels in terms of their reliability, transparency and monitoring of compliance; calls furthermore on the Commission, Member States and stakeholders to promote existing instruments and best practices and to assess in the long term whether the 'European quality label' and the 'Eco-label for tourist accommodation service' could be gradually merged under the heading of one label, with sustainability as an essential criterion of quality;
27. Asks the Commission to promote a specific initiative to harmonise gradually the accommodation classification systems (hotels, guesthouses, rented rooms, etc.) through the identification of common minimum criteria, starting from the positive experiences of industry associations (ex. Hotelstars Union) and representatives of the sector; considers that such gradual harmonisation could enhance both Europe's visibility as tourist destination and the information provided to tourists; calls on the European hospitality industry to:
  - pursue its efforts towards a gradual harmonisation of hotel classification, taking into account accessibility criteria;
  - cooperate with, and regularly inform, the Institutions of progress achieved;
28. Stresses the importance of paying due attention to the question of safety in various types of accommodation, particularly in regard to fire safety regulations and carbon monoxide safety measures; takes the view, therefore, that incentives should be given for adherence to the MBS (Management, Building and System) method, without prejudice to national regulations in force, in line with the 1986 Council recommendations, or that alternative regulatory actions should be taken wherever self-regulation fails; highlights, furthermore,

the important role of the training of hotel staff on emergency planning and fire safety management, and stresses the need for systematic collection of data on accommodation safety; underlines the importance of always bearing in mind the needs of people with disabilities and people with reduced mobility, including in terms of training on disability awareness in fire prevention and safety of accommodation;

29. Considers that the Commission, in collaboration with the tourism industry and the social partners, should prepare a map of existing professional skills (Tourism Skill Competence Framework) as a starting point from which practical steps to match employment market supply and demand in the tourism sector in Europe can be developed;
30. Calls on the Commission, in collaboration with the Member States, to encourage mobility and to exploit and promote lifelong learning, vocational and university training schemes and apprenticeships in the tourism sector, to maintain close contact with the world of research and business and to put more emphasis on innovation in tourism in the 8th Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development; believes that Community programmes such as 'Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs' and 'Leonardo da Vinci' represent unique opportunities for acquiring professional and training skills, as well as enhancing career options, and should therefore be further developed and promoted, taking account also of the possibility of revising them so that they educate on best practices related to, among other things, customer care, accessibility and sustainability;
31. Urges the Commission to monitor more precisely the implementation of the Services Directive in the Member States with regard to tourism;
32. Asks for improved mutual recognition by the Member States of professional qualifications in the tourist industry, in order to allow those already working in the sector and those planning to do so to find the best job opportunities and to foster their mobility in the industry; believes that this would help tackle the problems of the seasonal nature of work in this sector, on the one hand, and undeclared work on the other;
33. Emphasises the close link between tourism and transport and asks the Commission and the Member States to make every effort to modernise national, regional and cross-border infrastructure for the different modes of transport, with a particular focus on the progress and timely implementation of Trans-European Transport Networks projects and on the completion of the Single European Sky with a view to more efficient air traffic management; considers it important to encourage co-modality and adopt suitable measures to manage tourism flows, in particular during seasonal peaks and emergencies of different kinds;
34. Urges the Commission to promote the use of more sustainable means of transport, for instance through the combination of public transport, rail, cycling and walking; calls on the Commission among other things to facilitate and support, including in the context of the Trans-European Transport Networks, the development of connections with islands, rural areas, mountainous areas, the outermost regions and, more generally, with less accessible destinations;
35. Stresses the need to promote integrated electronic ticket sales systems for the various means of transport, which would stimulate the system's intermodality, facilitate

international travel between Member States, guarantee freedom of movement and remove obstacles to the completion of the internal market; takes the view that during the development process there must be a focus on the special access requirements of people with disabilities;

36. Welcomes the EU legislation on passenger rights, particularly with regard to passengers with reduced mobility, and asks the Commission to put forward, in the short term, an ambitious and consistent legislative framework with a set of common rules covering all transport modes combined with specific rules to take account of the particularities of each one;
37. Calls on the Commission to assess the feasibility of a Charter of tourists' rights and responsibilities comprising principles with regard to accessibility, provision of information, transparent pricing, compensation, etc.; calls on Member States to set up an independent arbitration system so that consumers can also genuinely secure respect for these rights;

### ***Sustainable and diversified tourism***

38. Underlines that tourism policy must consistently incorporate sustainable development: the social, economic and environmental needs of the present generations must be met without losing sight of the interests of future generations;
39. Welcomes the Commission's readiness to diversify the types of tourism available, which would help offset the effects of seasonality; stresses, in particular, the importance of the collaboration already underway with the Council of Europe to promote cultural, historical, religious, environmental and landscape tourism by means of themed routes/itineraries which not only exploit our continent's historical and cultural roots, but also contribute to the development of an alternative style of tourism that is sustainable and accessible to all; believes that the use of sustainable means of transport, including cycling and sailing, should be encouraged in connection with a number of routes;
40. Takes the view that in order to differentiate European tourism from that of other countries or continents, it is crucial to link the traditional tourism sector with what the territory has to offer in terms of products and services and tangible and intangible assets;
41. Believes that the Commission and the Council of Europe, in close cooperation with the Member States and regional and local authorities, should continue to support, including by financial means, the development of new 'European Routes' and the maintenance of existing ones, including on islands and in coastal, mountainous and outermost regions; takes the view that these circuits should highlight the European identity, through the promotion and linkage of symbolic sites, such as cathedrals, castles, universities, archaeological sites and industrial settlements, as well as symbolic European figures and advocates; urges the Commission and the Member States to take all appropriate measures to safeguard Europe's heritage and assets for future generations;
42. Encourages the Commission to facilitate networking and cooperation between EU regions in order to link up existing regional, national and European cycle routes and increase sustainable, energy-efficient and environmentally friendly cycling tourism in the EU;

43. Stresses the importance of networks such as NECSTouR and EDEN in regard to the exchange of good practice between European regions and the promotion of sustainable destinations; insists furthermore on the need to create, in close collaboration with the Tourism Sustainability Group (TSG) and local and regional authorities, a system of common indicators for the sustainable management of tourist destinations;
44. Takes the view that, given the history of the European continent, the Commission should promote more vigorously Europe's industrial heritage, whose potential has not been sufficiently recognised; emphasises that the development of Europe's industrial heritage, as a major area of cultural interest, could also benefit secondary destinations and contribute to achieving a more sustainable, diversified and evenly spread tourism sector in Europe, through the preservation, transformation and rehabilitation of the industrial sites;
45. Takes the view that rural tourism and agritourism should be properly supported, being sectors that improve the quality of life, bring economic and income-source diversity to rural areas, create jobs in these regions, keep people there and thus prevent depopulation and establish a direct link with the promotion of traditional, ecological and natural food products; observes, in this respect, the importance of ensuring full access to the transport network and to the Internet and IT infrastructure in these areas; believes that this will help to achieve the objective of promoting new forms of tourism, extending the tourist seasons and redistributing tourism activities between areas of high tourism concentration and areas with strong but insufficiently exploited tourism potential;
46. Considers that there is a need to improve farmers' marketing capacity and their access to local markets, thus enabling companies in the catering sector to buy the local produce they need more easily;
47. Highlights the way in which nature tourism contributes to the sector's sustainable development; considers concentrating on natural resorts and protected areas in order to make them more accessible for tourists, including through the development of transnational circuits that respect the environmental heritage and local biodiversity, to be important;
48. Points out that the development of new inland waterways can contribute to the sustainable development of cultural tourism, nature tourism and recreational tourism;
49. Recalls that culture, education, youth and sports-related travel is becoming increasingly popular, and therefore calls on the Member States and local and regional authorities to support such forms of tourism by being more flexible and adapting to new types of consumer resulting from demographic change and in order to take into account new forms of tourism geared to the expectations voiced by consumers; draws attention to the major role which sport plays in promoting tourism, with both spectators and participants travelling to events, and calls for the introduction of specific policies to promote and support sports tourism;
50. Calls on the Commission to promote a cross-cutting Community initiative on the environmental impact of tourism, with particular reference to European biodiversity, the waste cycle, energy and water saving, a healthy diet and the use of land and natural resources, in order to distribute information and useful materials, raise public awareness

and reduce the impact of tourism on the environment;

51. Welcomes voluntary industry efforts to understand and reduce the impact of tourism on the environment and on destinations, such as the partly EU-funded Travelife Sustainability System, an innovative scheme which helps consumers to make sustainable choices and industry to understand and manage its impacts in the supply chain;
52. Encourages the Commission to support innovative initiatives of tourism SMEs and preserve and improve the wealth of biodiversity by promoting ecotourism;
53. Calls on the Commission to examine the possibility of designating a European day of responsible and sustainable tourism, by organising in all Member States information meetings to promote forms of viable tourism and responsible behaviour by tourists;
54. Underlines the great impact of climate change on Europe's tourist areas, especially the most vulnerable ones, notably coastal regions, islands and mountain regions; considers that strategies should be drawn up to prevent and counteract this, among other things by encouraging innovation and diversification in tourism services, enhancing natural risk prevention and mitigation policies, adapting infrastructures, anticipating the impact of water shortage and safeguarding the sustainability of the fauna, flora and landscape of the areas concerned;
55. Points out that coastal regions represent the principal tourist destination in Europe and that it is therefore important to give due consideration to spatial planning methods in coastal areas, the risks of extensive urbanisation, the need to maintain the quality and sustainability of coastal areas, their heritage and tourist service infrastructure; stresses that adequate funds need to be invested in a coastal, island and marine tourism strategy in order to protect the European coastline from erosion, safeguard its environmental and animal heritage and improve water quality, all with the aim of developing sustainable and good-quality beach and underwater tourism; in this respect, welcomes the Commission initiative to develop a strategy for sustainable coastal and marine tourism, and calls for the development of similar specific strategies for the islands, mountain regions and other vulnerable areas;
56. Reasserts the importance of beach tourism as a feature of some European coastal regions; calls on the Commission to examine whether the Directive 2006/123/EC is having a negative impact on SMEs in this sector and, if deemed necessary, to propose measures to alleviate this impact and ensure that the specific characteristics of this professional category are taken into account in the application of the Directive; calls, moreover, on the Member States to examine, in cooperation with the competent authorities, the introduction of compensatory measures to alleviate the damage inflicted on tourist operators by the introduction of new legislation resulting in the loss of acquired rights and losses linked to unamortized investments in refurbishing facilities or ensuring they conformed with the legislation previously in force; takes the view that these actions are required in order to safeguard investments made by operators and to improve the quality of customer services;
57. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to support, under an integrated maritime policy, the development of port infrastructure, both with a view to adapting port terminals to the needs of persons with reduced mobility and in order to ensure interconnections with

other modes of transport and links with tourist services in the hinterland, which are essential factors in maritime passenger transport, cruise ship tourism and recreational craft tourism; within this framework, calls on Member States to lift any restrictions they might have;

58. Takes note of the fact that demographic developments in Europe will give rise to continuing growth in health tourism and in spa tourism in particular; calls on the Commission, in view of the fact that there are a variety of Community rules covering spa-tourism issues, to consider the possibility of tabling a single legislative proposal on spa tourism in order to give the sector a controlled organic structure, encouraging its competitiveness and specifying immediately that spa companies operating in the Member States, as providers of health services, are excluded from the scope of Directive 2006/123/EC; stresses the relevance of the new legislation on cross-border healthcare and considers that these must be enforced in strict compliance with the criteria and conditions imposed by the new legislative framework, in order to ensure fully satisfactory implementation;
59. Emphasises the economic importance of ‘shopping tourism’; stresses that, for a large number of tourists, this form of tourism is one of the main reasons for holidaying in the EU, which is home to world-leading companies and brands in the luxury sector; notes that while this sector is growing rapidly, the EU faces strong competition from other international tourist destinations which offer, for example, facilities for tax-free shopping or reimbursement of VAT; recommends, therefore, in cooperation with the luxury sector and tourism professionals, working on new measures and services to enable the EU to retain its attractiveness and competitiveness;
60. Stresses the need to promote European business tourism in the EU and the world, given its economic importance for certain places in Europe and the number of services linked to hosting and organising trade fairs, exhibitions, conferences and other business events (hotel and catering, shops, transport, communication and event-management agencies, etc.);
61. Recalls that ethically responsible tourism is an objective that cannot be ignored; welcomes the code of ethics produced by the World Tourism Organization (WTO) and trusts that this will soon be adopted by the Commission and the Member States; is delighted in this regard to see the proposal by the Commission to extend the national jurisdiction of Member States to cover the sexual abuse of minors abroad, thereby punishing sexual tourism;

### ***Tourism for all***

62. Emphasises that the inherently seasonal nature of tourism can give rise to precarity in terms of employment and working conditions; calls, in that connection, for the development of a specific policy to assist seasonal workers, involving, in particular, measures to extend tourist seasons by diversifying tourist activities;
63. Calls on the Commission to draw up a plan to foster a progressive reduction in the seasonal nature of tourism; in this context, encourages the Commission to build on the results, so far positive, of the preparatory action ‘Calypso’ and invites the Commission

and the Member States to continue with this action, allowing disadvantaged people, such as the elderly, people with disabilities, young people and low-income families to have easier access to holidays, particularly during the low season and when travelling across national borders; calls, in this connection, for physical accessibility, adequate services and reliable information to be further planned for and incorporated into tourism products; considers that inspiration can be drawn from numerous existing good practices which stress easy accessibility and empowerment;

64. Stresses the importance of ensuring, under a new EU strategy on disability, access for people with disabilities, not just with regard to transport but also with regard to accommodation, catering, information accessible to everyone and tourist services in general; stresses that clear information should subsequently be provided about the measures taken; calls on the Commission to make sure that accessibility for all is guaranteed with regard to all products and services related to tourism;
65. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to encourage the implementation of programmes restoring, preserving and protecting sites of cultural, historical or environmental interest with a view to improving their accessibility to tourists; encourages young people to volunteer for these programmes in 2011, the European Year of Volunteering, and beyond;
66. Calls on the Commission to promote also so-called VFR tourism (Visiting Friends and Relatives) as an important way of enhancing integration in European culture;

#### *Tourism and resources*

67. Calls on the Commission to coordinate, extend and raise the profile of financial instruments managed by various directorates-general and intended to boost the competitiveness of tourism, and to check they are being correctly used, particularly with reference to the ERDF, the EAFRD, the ESF and the EFF; considers that in a context of budgetary restrictions it is essential to build synergies between the various existing financial instruments, which must be adapted to the changes in tourism and clientele, the diversification of tourism-related activities and the needs of local development; moreover, asks the Commission to develop clear signposting for the financial support available for tourism-related projects, as well as to set up a readily accessible inter-DG database to raise awareness and information about tourism projects co-financed by the EU;
68. Emphasises that tourism should continue to play an important role in cohesion policy within the framework of the 2014-2020 financial perspective; calls for the next financial perspectives and Structural Fund regulations to include among their priorities the rehabilitation of tourist areas that have fallen into decline in order to guarantee their competitiveness and sustainability;
69. Encourages, furthermore, the Member States and local and regional bodies to take full advantage of the vocational training tools offered by the ESF and other Community, national, regional and local funds; believes it essential that the Member States and other bodies know they should develop calls specifically for tourism based on the priorities set out in the Structural Funds;

70. Asks that a specific tourism programme, targeting in particular micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises, be established in the 2014-2020 financial perspectives, encouraging partnerships between firms and public-private partnerships on pan-European tourism projects, and at the same time encourages SMEs to invest in that sector;
71. Insists on the need to ensure that pilot projects in the tourism sector continue to be supported post 2011, and if necessary to evaluate new ones to assist in the realisation of the new strategy;

***Other important issues for the tourist sector***

72. Observes that tourism businesses need comparable, high-quality statistical data for purposes of long-term planning of supply and demand structures and in order to develop tourist destinations; calls therefore on the Commission, insofar as it lies within its power, to ensure that these data are available for the whole of Europe; deplors the fact that no official statistics are kept on rural and farm tourism, and that the only information available is based on estimates; welcomes the measures being contemplated to consolidate the social and economic knowledge base in the field of tourism, in respect of which additional financial outlay and red tape should be eschewed insofar as possible;
73. Requests that the Commission table by September 2011 a legislative proposal revising the Package Travel Directive 90/314/EEC, in order to ensure that consumers and firms in the sector have a clear legal framework both for standard situations and for exceptional situations caused, for example, by certain climatic and natural phenomena, or by political troubles; stresses that the whole concept of package travel is long since outdated and urges the Commission, during its revision, to make the same legislation applicable to all parties offering tourism services; stresses that the quality of a service provided to a consumer and fair competition should be prime factors in this context;
74. Highlights the opportunity this presents for a reduced VAT rate on tourism to be progressively harmonised across the Member States as a necessary condition for transparent competition among tourist companies within the EU and with non-EU countries; welcomes in this respect the discussion that started with the publication of the Green Paper on the future of VAT;
75. Calls on the Member States to bear in mind the adverse effects of the growing tendency to subject tourists travelling to the EU or within the Member States to higher rates of taxes, such as fuel tax, security charges and airport, city and port taxes, in particular during the low season; underlines that if an additional tax on tourism is to be applied, it will have to be duly publicised in order to increase the level of awareness for tourists and operators;
76. Calls on the Council of the European Union to speed up adoption of the proposal for a directive on modernisation of the special TOMS VAT scheme, providing for an opt-in mechanism able to wipe out the competitive distortion between various categories of operators in the sector, as disparities in national laws currently have serious consequences;
77. Stresses the need for an active competition policy monitoring any trend towards concentration of the sector or abuse of a dominant position;



78. Calls on the Commission to submit an integrated tourism strategy by the end of 2012, in line with and in addition to the current strategy and its implementation plan;
79. Considers that a technical task force specifically for tourism should be set up in Parliament in order to follow closely the implementation of actions proposed by the Commission and of Parliament proposals;
80. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and the Commission.

## EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

Tourism is the EU's third largest socioeconomic activity, accounting for 10 % of GDP and 12 % of total employment figures. It is a crucially important sector since, in addition to furthering the integration and development of less developed regions, it manages to combine growth with ethical and sustainable development in the EU's Member States. It is, moreover, a vital tool in boosting, spreading and promoting our global image.

Tourism has always been included in Community policies. Since December 2009 in particular, the EU institutions have begun to take a new course in response to the new prerogatives granted by the Lisbon Treaty, under which the EU is competent to complement and coordinate actions by the Member States in the tourism sector. In the Madrid Declaration of April 2010 the Member States declared their readiness to implement specific measures, and also to promote values such as ethical tourism, protection of the environment and culture and the economic sustainability of the sector; the Commission's Communication of June 2010 laid down 21 actions; in the Conclusions of the Competitiveness Council of October 2010 Member States acknowledged the importance of tourism in the economy and undertook to develop the sector; at the European Tourism Forum in Malta in November 2010 the Commission presented a draft implementation plan and held a panel discussion to set priorities from among the 21 actions proposed in its Communication; and finally in this list there is Parliament's own-initiative report.

### ***Communication of the European Commission***

The Commission, through its June 2010 Communication and through the new priorities outlined in the Europe 2020 strategy, wishes to encourage a coordinated approach and set out a framework for action in order to promote competitiveness and sustainable growth capacity in the tourism sector (see Article 195 TFEU).

A framework for action comprising four pillars can be seen: firstly, the Commission considers it essential for the sector to be made more competitive by promoting diversification in supply, backing innovation, improving professional skills, and lastly encouraging a longer tourist season. Secondly, the EU has committed itself to promoting sustainable, responsible and good quality tourism and to facilitating sound management of firms through the creation of European labels (European label, Ecolabel, Quality tourism label) or by promoting projects such as EDEN or networks such as NECSTouR. On the other hand, there is a desire to see the EU's image consolidated at international level as a set of individual and coordinated tourist destinations. To conclude, in view of the fact that tourism policy is defined by its cross-cutting nature, maximum use should be made of the potential offered by the policies and the financial instruments provided to support competitiveness in the sector.

### ***Own-initiative report - rapporteur's position***

The rapporteur considers that the debate on Parliament's own-initiative report must fulfil a dual purpose: firstly, to analyse carefully the 21 actions proposed by the Commission and the implementation plan for these submitted in Malta, with attention focused on identifying priority actions and on their actual implementation; secondly, to urge the Commission and the Member States to bring effective solutions to bear within a set timeframe on other issues that

remain unanswered and whose resolution is fundamental to Europe maintaining its role as the world's No 1 tourist destination.

Out of the actions proposed by the Commission, the rapporteur believes that priority should be given to those that reflect particularly the outlook in Europe 2020:

### ***Training***

The rapporteur agrees with the stress placed on **training and professional development**. Investing in human capital and training, not just of professionals in direct contact with customers but above all of new managers, administrators and entrepreneurs is precisely what is needed to meet the challenge of achieving an effective tourist industry policy. Exploiting and promoting the experience of already existing vocational and university training is fundamental, as is networking this experience and further developing it in close contact with the business world. The rapporteur considers that a map of existing skills in the sector need to be drawn up in order to understand what practical action should be taken in the tourism training sector. Programmes such as 'Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs' are also essential if young people are to develop new professional skills – skills and qualifications that the different Member States must recognise.

### ***Innovation and ICT***

The rapporteur is convinced that there must be heavy investment in **innovation and ICT**, as they are vital factors in increasing the competitiveness of our tourism firms and in responding not just to a customer base that is more and more oriented towards use of the Internet and new technologies, but also to the world of the tourism firms themselves which nowadays are more and more the first beneficiaries of online tourism products. For this reason, the proposal that a European platform be developed is a challenge that must not be lost to sight. Another important aspect is ensuring that full Internet access is available across the whole of the European Union, including in poorer countries. The rapporteur proposes that the Commission should launch a pilot project to encourage micro-enterprises and SMEs to join the digital supply chain, so that they can increase their competitiveness by accessing new advanced technologies.

### ***Tourist visits***

Visits, particularly with reference to the BRIC countries and to the millions of potential new visitors from countries outside the EU, are a key issue for tourism in Europe. The rapporteur hopes that Europe's legitimate right/duty to control access to its own territory will not further penalise our tourist destination's capacity to attract and considers that the institutions and the Member States should be aware of the need to coordinate and simplify tourist visa procedures, and should consider whether it would be possible to establish common consular desks to reduce the differences in bureaucratic procedures and the administrative costs.

### ***European labels***

On the question of **labels**, the rapporteur considers that, firstly, a reasonable balance needs to be struck between apparently opposing demands, and secondly, an excessive proliferation of labels that would simply confuse consumers must be avoided.

In the case of the 'Europe brand' it is important that promoting Europe as one single destination is firmly linked to the aim of promoting specific features in the various countries. In the case of the 'European heritage label' a constructive dialogue needs to be started with other international organisations, such as UNESCO, to avoid heritage labels being duplicated.

With the ‘[quality label](#)’ however, here the problems is the need to introduce common minimum quality criteria on the one hand, in order to support our firms’ competitiveness, while on the other hand this objective has to be met in a single market that is not yet fully harmonised, and where tax systems and rules still differ greatly one from another. The rapporteur supports the idea of an umbrella label that is complementary to national and regional labels and recognised on an opt-in basis. Moreover, the rapporteur is convinced that, to prevent consumers being confused, a long-term goal should be to move towards the ‘European quality label’ and the ‘Ecolabel for tourist accommodation service’ being gradually merged into one label

As for the [accommodation classification systems](#), the rapporteur considers that gradual harmonisation is called for here, through common minimum criteria which should be established in close cooperation with the sector’s operators and the standardisation bodies.

### ***Tourism and transport***

The rapporteur stresses the importance of transport for tourist mobility and hopes to see the infrastructure modernised, a more sustainable use of means of transport, connections to less accessible destinations and legislation on passengers rights in particular.

### ***Europe’s visibility***

The rapporteur also develops further the subject of sustainability by including it in several important themes, such as doing away with a seasonal structure that is too rigid, making tourism more diverse, sustainable and accessible to all, stepping up experience on the cultural and religious tourism routes and in networks such as NECsTOUR and EDEN, and using major European events as occasions to promote ‘Europe as a destination’. The rapporteur is convinced that, if the [www.visiteurope.com](http://www.visiteurope.com) portal, promoted by the ‘European Travel Commission’, were to be improved and made more interactive, including by having information there in all the EU’s official languages and the main non-EU languages and by using formats that people with sensory disabilities can access, it could become a genuine tourism platform networking national, regional and local tourism platforms, and would enable Europe to be promoted both to EU tourists and to tourists from non-EU countries. The portal could be linked to tourist routes and package holidays to make them more attractive and accessible to potential visitors.

The rapporteur highlights the importance of several kinds of tourism, such as rural tourism and agritourism, nature tourism, beach and coastal tourism, cruise ship tourism, spa and health tourism and ethical tourism.

### ***Tourism for all***

The rapporteur stresses that action has to be taken against the growing tendency for tourism to be very seasonal and considers that the preparatory action Calypso could be one solution. Calypso has shown positive results so far and the Commission should now develop this further by giving it a cross-border perspective, allowing some categories of people, the young, the elderly, the disabled and poor families to enjoy a holiday, including and particularly during the low season.

The rapporteur is likewise convinced that the potential of young people for the development of tourism is considerable and calls for full use to be made of 2011 the European Year of Volunteering in encouraging young people to volunteer for programmes restoring, preserving

and protecting sites of historical or environmental interest with a view to improving their accessibility to tourists.

### ***Tourism and resources***

The rapporteur is convinced that for a new and ambitious tourism policy to happen there has to be adequate funding and human resources. This is a delicate subject, particularly at this stage in the EU's history, but one that cannot be neglected.

The rapporteur considers that a twin-track approach should be taken here: on the one hand, already existing funding lines managed by different directorates-general under the structural funds need to be better coordinated and made more visible, while national, regional and local authorities must know that they should develop calls specifically for tourism based on the guidelines set out in the various funds; on the other hand, a specific tourism programme must be included in the 2014-2020 financial perspectives, with its own budget lines and with particular reference made to SMEs and the creation of partnerships between firms to carry out pan-European projects in the sector. The rapporteur also believes that, in view of the new competences granted by the Lisbon Treaty and the subsequent need for human resources, competences should be reorganised and the Commission's structure for tourism strengthened.

### ***Other priority issues***

The rapporteur considers that there needs to be a debate on several important issues for the tourism sector that need targeted actions.

He considers one priority in particular to be revising the 'package travel' directive, which dates back to 1990 and no longer reflects consumer behaviour in a changing society. The rapporteur would like to see the Commission table a legislative proposal for the directive's revision by September 2011, so as to ensure consumers and firms in the sector have a clearer legal framework.

VAT in the tourism sector is another central theme for the rapporteur, who considers progressive harmonisation of VAT on tourism to be a necessary condition for transparent competition between tourist companies, placing them on an equal footing. The agreement reached by the Ecofin Council in March 2009 on the wording of Directive 2009/47/EC established that individual Member States may permanently apply a reduced rate of VAT for a series of 'labour-intensive' services, including catering: this was a very important step forward, but there are still too many differences distorting competition between the various Member States.

Modernisation of the special VAT scheme for travel agencies and tour operators (TOMS) is another issue that deserves special attention. The rapporteur asks the Council to speed up adoption of this directive, providing for the inclusion of an 'opt-in' mechanism able to wipe out the competitive distortion between various categories of tour operators, as disparities in national laws currently have serious consequences.

Finally, the rapporteur is convinced of the importance of closely monitoring actions proposed by the Commission and proposals put forward by Parliament and of regularly checking the actual implementation of said proposals. With this in mind, he puts forward the idea of establishing a task force within the EP, with experts from the tourism sector, which would ensure continuity in proposed actions and enable the new European Union's new tourism

strategy to be put into action.

1.3.2011

## **OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE INTERNAL MARKET AND CONSUMER PROTECTION**

for the Committee on Transport and Tourism

on Europe, the world's No 1 tourist destination: a new political framework for tourism in Europe  
(2010/2206(INI))

Rapporteur: Jürgen Creutzmann

### **SUGGESTIONS**

The Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection calls on the Committee on Transport and Tourism, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions in its motion for a resolution:

- A. whereas, when all multiplier effects are taken into consideration, the tourist industry accounts for more than 10% of EU GDP,
- B. having regard to the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty, which for the first time assigns to the European Union powers to coordinate and supplement the action of the Member States in the field of tourism, with due regard for the subsidiarity principle,
- C. whereas the majority of operators in tourism are SMEs and whereas, by virtue of their structures and the seasonality of their activities, they are more directly affected by fluctuations in the economy and by natural factors,
- D. whereas tourism must be recognised much more clearly as a cross-cutting sector and its links with other policy areas and sectors of the economy must be strengthened,
- E. whereas a new tourism policy should take into account the ageing of the population, climate change and new information and communication technologies,
- F. whereas there are clear signs of under-exploitation of non-seasonal sectors and of the need to increase and maintain the supply of skilled staff and trainees in the tourist industry,
- G. whereas Europe's tourism must continue to target internal tourism as well as tourism by

third-country nationals,

- H. whereas a strong internal market is essential for a truly European tourism industry; whereas e-commerce is of growing importance, in tourism as in other fields,
1. Calls on Member States to facilitate and promote training and apprenticeships for tourism activity organisers, to lend support to the diversification and specialisation of European tourism and, together with the Commission, to encourage tourism organisations to exchange good practices; calls for improvements in the mutual recognition of professional qualifications in the tourist industry in order to make it easier for both skilled workers and people changing careers to find work in the industry year-round; strongly supports the Commission's efforts to introduce a professional card that could improve the mobility and employability of quality workers in this sector, considers that the first such professional card to be introduced could be for tour guides;
  2. Maintains that the proper implementation of the Services Directive would help to significantly reduce the legal, administrative and bureaucratic obstacles and bottlenecks being experienced by consumers and businesses in the tourism sector; this being the case, invites the Commission and Member States to ensure that the Services Directive is effectively applied, which will greatly enhance the benefits to all stakeholders involved in this industry;
  3. Calls on the EU to adopt a more integrated approach to tourism, particularly in the field of services and consumer protection, and underlines the importance of the upcoming revision of the 90/314/EEC Package Travel Directive, which is now completely out of step with developments in tourism and new travelling habits, especially in terms of increased use of the internet and e-commerce and its impact on the future development of the tourism sector;
  4. Asks the Commission to step up its efforts to improve the quality and content of information being provided to tourists, which should be easily accessible and reliable and should include the pricing structures of the different components which make up the Travel Package;
  5. Considers a harmonised classification of hotels throughout the EU to be a key element in the development of tourism, and therefore calls on the Commission to support the proposal by the hotel industry to harmonise the classification of hotels and quality standards and to take legislative action if such harmonisation cannot be achieved throughout the EU;
  6. Observes that tourism businesses need comparable, high-quality statistical data for purposes of long-term planning of supply and demand structures and in order to develop tourist destinations; calls therefore on the Commission, insofar as it lies within its power, to ensure that these data are available for the whole of Europe;
  7. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to ensure that the tourism sector is complying with existing rules on the safety of tourist amenities, especially those concerning fire safety, emergency planning, child equipment safety, staff training and the needs of people with disabilities and to draw up European standards where this is deemed



necessary;

8. Calls on the Commission to support the drawing up of a white list of tour operators in order to support businesses which offer quality services and to improve consumer protection;
9. Calls on the Commission to maximise the dissemination of its own tourism initiatives by making full use of all the disposable media and to find innovative ways of making such initiatives self-financing;
10. Stresses the need to develop a European 'Quality Tourism' label based on national experience to date with the purpose of boosting consumer confidence and security regarding tourist products and, at the same time, rewarding entrepreneurs in this sector and enterprises which help improve services and satisfy customers; maintains that, in principle, the initiative to have a consolidated 'European Brand' is very positive; notes, however, that we must ensure that the diversity of the cultural and natural heritage found in the various Member States is not undermined;
11. Encourages the Commission to work more closely with private enterprise through public-private partnerships when spearheading tourism initiatives; recognises that intelligent involvement of the private sector in such initiatives will lead to greater efficiency, as well as self-sustainability, of the initiatives;
12. Approves of the Commission's determination to integrate the objectives of tourism policy into its various other policies which have a direct or an indirect impact on the tourism sector;
13. Notes the importance of tourism as a source of income for the economies of islands, mountainous and sparsely populated regions; calls on the Commission to devise targeted measures to support the tourist industry in regions which suffer from severe and permanent natural or demographic handicaps, such as island, mountainous and sparsely populated regions;
14. Calls on the Commission to support barrier-free and age-adapted tourism and tourism for people with disabilities via promotional and awareness-raising campaigns and the introduction of a European quality label covering, inter alia, tourist destinations which make barrier-free travel and stays possible for people with disabilities and people with reduced mobility, including the elderly and children; calls in particular on the hotel industry, by drafting and adopting a code of good practice, to facilitate access to its facilities for people with disabilities and reduced mobility in accordance with the principles set out in the Commission Communication of 15 November 2010 on the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020 (COM(2010)0636); notes that with this aim in mind the Calypso programme should be assessed, in conjunction with stakeholders, and, if appropriate, continued; in doing this, however, care should also be taken to ensure that these programmes are self-financing in the long term;
15. Welcomes the launch by the Commission in 2009 of the Calypso programme, whose aim is both social (to enable categories of person who would be unlikely to go on holiday nonetheless to do so) and economic (aid to tourism by encouraging people to go on

holiday during the ‘low season’); considers that it should be continued, subject to an assessment – in which stakeholders should participate – of the results achieved; calls on the Commission and Member States, in their tourism strategies, to devote particular attention to cross-border regional and local tourism;

16. Calls on the Commission to ensure that passengers are better informed about their rights on all forms of public transport, so as to ensure that European citizens feel legal certainty while travelling within the European Union;
17. Calls on the Commission to consider simplifying visa application procedures in particular for ‘groups of tourists’, this without jeopardising in any way the security and customs aspects for third-country nationals;
18. Calls on the Commission to devise and promote intelligent ways of combining private and public funding to sustain Europe’s cultural heritage, for example by promoting best-practice models; calls on the Member States to cooperate as part of the exchange of best practices, in order to boost European tourism and promote alternative forms of tourism;
19. Urges Member States to encourage alternative forms of tourism, such as agritourism; takes the view that these forms of development will boost the activities of SMEs, particularly family-type hotel units, in the tourist sector; stresses that these enterprises should be classified differently; calls on the Member States to work more closely with the Commission to find new and better ways of developing and promoting European tours;
20. Calls on the Commission to assess each new measure in the field of tourism thoroughly so as to ensure that it is efficient and can be administered and financed;
21. Calls on the Commission to support more environmentally friendly projects, taking into account the environmental and climate impacts of the tourism industry and the importance of preserving the natural and cultural heritage of the Member States;
22. Supports the Commission initiatives to promote tourism within the EU, such as the EDEN (European Destinations of Excellence) project, which each year singles out in each participating country, in accordance with a specific theme, European tourist destinations which prioritise a sustainable development model; calls on the Commission to launch information campaigns in order to highlight such initiatives;
23. Takes the view that the common European heritage should be promoted more, for example in the form of European cultural routes; takes the view that cooperation with other institutions, such as the Council of Europe, should also be sought here.

## RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

<b>Date adopted</b>	28.2.2011
<b>Result of final vote</b>	+: 26 -: 2 0: 0
<b>Members present for the final vote</b>	Pablo Arias Echeverría, Cristian Silviu Buşoi, Anna Maria Corazza Bildt, António Fernando Correia De Campos, Jürgen Creutzmann, Christian Engström, Evelyne Gebhardt, Louis Grech, Małgorzata Handzlik, Philippe Juvin, Eija-Riitta Korhola, Mitro Repo, Robert Rochefort, Zuzana Roithová, Heide Rühle, Christel Schaldemose, Andreas Schwab, Catherine Stihler, Kyriacos Triantaphyllides, Bernadette Vergnaud
<b>Substitute(s) present for the final vote</b>	Damien Abad, Cornelis de Jong, Constance Le Grip, Emma McClarkin, Antonyia Parvanova, Konstantinos Poupakis, Olga Sehnalová, Wim van de Camp

2.3.2011

## **OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON INDUSTRY, RESEARCH AND ENERGY**

for the Committee on Transport and Tourism

on Europe, the world's No 1 tourist destination – a new political framework for tourism in Europe  
(2010/2206(INI))

Rapporteur: Jorgo Chatzimarkakis

### **SUGGESTIONS**

The Committee on Industry, Research and Energy calls on the Committee on Transport and Tourism, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions in its motion for a resolution:

1. Notes that the competitiveness of the European tourism industry will only be guaranteed by using the best technologies available; calls on the Member States and the Commission to encourage the tourist sector to adopt strategies on energy efficiency and the introduction of renewables; welcomes the launch of an 'ICT and tourism' platform by the Commission, which could serve as an accelerator for tourism enterprises, especially SMEs, when developing new and innovative tools and services; believes that a single market for online services will increase the competitiveness of the tourism industry in Europe and that ICT should contribute to sustainable management, also bearing in mind the EU climate strategy and respecting the special needs of rural, mountainous and coastal regions; believes that better coordination of all tourism activities via ICT should be enhanced under the auspices of the Commission, since tourists book more and more travel services through electronic platforms and non-European web search engines; believes that the Commission should secure fair and legal competition in this area;
2. Believes that skills, experiences and best practices in the tourism sector should be shared, and therefore encourages a 'smart specialisation approach', whereby regions focus on their relative strengths in which they can achieve excellence; calls on the Commission and the Member States to further promote and extend the Commission's exchange programmes, such as Leonardo, which are adapted to the needs and demands of the sector; underlines the importance of a highly skilled work force and calls for more vocational training in tourism; invites the Commission to set up a special tourism development unit

in order to put forward specialised university and training programmes on sustainable European tourism; underlines the importance of swift processing of mutual recognition of diplomas and qualifications in the tourism sector across Europe in accordance with European and national rules and standards;

3. Believes that a better use of innovative products and services in the tourism sector will result in benefits for its sustainability; calls for inclusion of innovative and environmentally green tourism as a horizontal issue in the Competitiveness and Innovation Programme (CIP); underlines the major need to turn European tourism more and more towards responsibility and sustainability in order to respect the environment, local cultures and populations; encourages, therefore, the Commission's initiatives in the area of sustainability, such as the development of sustainable management indicators, a charter for sustainable and responsible tourism, taking into account the political recommendations of the International Taskforce for Sustainable Tourism Development (GTI-DTD) within the Marrakech process, synergies of actions with the Global Partnership for Sustainable Tourism, and a strategy for sustainable coastal and marine tourism, emphasising that more sustainability means more quality and increased customer satisfaction; calls for a more holistic approach in this area and, in particular, notes the possible negative impact of speculative real estate developments on the environment in tourism regions;
4. Highlights the fact that, for there to be greater confidence in the digital environment and for the European tourism sector to be able to benefit from all the opportunities this offers, all Europeans must be informed of their basic digital rights and obligations through a European Charter on citizens' and users' rights in the digital environment, which duly consolidates and updates the Community acquis; believes that this Charter should consolidate the Community acquis and include, in particular, users' rights in regard to privacy protection, vulnerable users and digital content;
5. Believes that better coordination of R&D in the field of tourism will result in benefits for the sustainability of the tourism sector; urges the Commission, therefore, to create a Virtual Tourism Monitoring Centre that links up not just research institutions, but also enterprises and public authorities, with the aim of driving forward market research through use of competitive intelligence systems, providing enterprises and public bodies with forward-looking information on the development of supply and demand, and creating the conditions for improved strategic positioning of enterprises and the public sector;
6. Notes that the tourism sector is extremely dependent on the climate, which determines the length and quality of tourism seasons, while simultaneously contributing to climate change through greenhouse gas emissions produced in the main by transport and tourist accommodation; points out that the sector can play an important role in achieving the Union's objectives through an energy policy focused on buildings; calls on the Member States and the Commission to encourage the tourist sector to adopt strategies on energy efficiency and the introduction of renewables;
7. Stresses that sustainably developed tourism-related activities must offer local economies (especially in disadvantaged regions) a long-term source of revenue, must help to promote stable employment with entitlements and must support other economic activities (both

upstream and downstream), yet must at the same time safeguard and enhance the cultural, historical, landscape and environmental heritage;

8. Takes the view that the tourism sector should contribute to the development of related regional industry, generating economic development and employment at regional level, and stresses the need for a horizontal approach to the sector in terms of Community policies and funds, for example via the creation of a specific Community programme, complementing the Member States' actions, to promote the sector and encourage synergies between the various social and economic players involved;
9. Highlights the need to diversify the portfolio of tourism services in Europe, and emphasises seasonal adjustment as a determinant of the competitiveness of the European tourism sector; calls for enhanced cooperation between Member States when promoting the EU as a tourism destination, but also underlines the role of local authorities; calls for a European communication strategy and a campaign in the EU and worldwide to keep Europe the world's No 1 tourist destination, based on its rich natural, cultural, historical and ethnic heritage; takes the view that red tape and the administrative burden for services in the tourism sector should be reduced both for customers and companies, acknowledging that high quality comes at a price;
10. Recognises the long distances within the EU, especially between the remote Member States in the north and south, and underlines therefore the importance of air traffic for tourism inside the EU, as well as from third countries; calls on the Commission, therefore, to refrain from laying excessive legislative burdens on European airlines that add to their difficulties in the context of global competition;
11. Notes that because of climate change in the next few years, major environmental changes are expected, such as rising sea levels, increasing temperatures and more widespread drought, while tourism will be the main area that will suffer from climate change in the Mediterranean;
12. Notes the necessity to pay more attention to diversification of tourism and the growing importance of specialised tourism such as business tourism, shopping tourism, heritage tourism, social tourism, ecotourism and sports tourism, and calls for more supportive measures for promotion of European tourism in those areas in a context of global competition;
13. Recalls the extraordinary impact of the Eyjafjallajökull volcano incident in April 2010 on airline services and industry, which suffered tremendous losses over weeks, and highlights the importance of rapid decisions on the part of the EU and air traffic management (ATM) in similar situations in order to secure proper, fluid air traffic;
14. Believes, in view of ageing society, that health and wellness tourism has the biggest potential to undergo a significant growth in the future; believes that a European certified system of quality standards and controls in this field such as a 'blue cross system' for medical or wellness facilities, e.g. in hotels offering health treatments such as health checks, would significantly improve the competitiveness of European health tourism; proposes in this context that spa activities be developed in order to make this area a European speciality;

15. Stresses that the role of local authorities and enterprises, in particular SMEs, should be widely recognised when developing tourism policy in Europe; believes that the legislative and fiscal framework should be more friendly to these enterprises and take into account specific needs of enterprises and workers in the tourism industry such as flexible working time arrangements in line with workers' rights;
16. Stresses that, thanks to their geographical situation, the outermost regions (ORs) and overseas countries and territories (OCTs) are the European Union's windows on the world and that they respond perfectly to some of the options proposed by the Commission, in particular the development of out-of-season tourism for EU citizens; points out that the ORs also offer nearby countries such as the United States, Canada and the BRIC group of countries, particularly Brazil, the opportunity to discover the specific features of tourism on European territory, which combines safe travel, health infrastructure and quality hotel and catering facilities;
17. Recalls that this sector generates more than 5% of the EU's GDP, for which reason greater analysis of the impact Community legislation has on the tourism industries is seen as essential;
18. Believes that rules on classification of accommodation should be harmonised in line with common Europe-wide standards and assessment criteria;
19. Calls for the Commission to introduce a European legislative framework for the safety and accessibility of tourism services; notes the strong links between tourism development and transport infrastructure; notes that one third of consumer complaints in the SOLVIT system concern passenger rights, and therefore urges the Commission to improve the enforcement of consumers and passengers rights; laments in particular the fact that road accidents are the most frequent cause of death among travellers; calls, therefore, for harmonised traffic regulations and safety standards, e.g. harmonised traffic rules for roundabout traffic;
20. Suggests considering the creation of a Euro-Mediterranean organisation for tourism cooperation and development to make the Mediterranean a single statistical area, produce analyses as a guide for business and public authorities in their decision making, promote destinations, and create a network linking centres offering training in tourism-related jobs;
21. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to make efficient use of the European funds allocated to tourism in order both to guarantee the creation of new jobs and to boost the competitiveness of SMEs in the tourism sector.

## RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

<b>Date adopted</b>	28.2.2011
<b>Result of final vote</b>	+:           32 -:           1 0:           2
<b>Members present for the final vote</b>	Jean-Pierre Audy, Ivo Belet, Bendt Bendtsen, Jan Březina, Maria Da Graça Carvalho, Giles Chichester, Pilar del Castillo Vera, Fiona Hall, Jacky Hélin, Edit Herczog, Romana Jordan Cizelj, Arturs Krišjānis Kariņš, Lena Kolarska-Bobińska, Philippe Lamberts, Marisa Matias, Judith A. Merkies, Angelika Niebler, Jaroslav Paška, Herbert Reul, Paul Rübig, Amalia Sartori, Konrad Szymański, Patrizia Toia, Ioannis A. Tsoukalas, Marita Ulvskog, Vladimir Urutchev, Kathleen Van Brempt, Alejo Vidal-Quadras
<b>Substitute(s) present for the final vote</b>	Antonio Cancian, Francesco De Angelis, Françoise Grossetête, Jolanta Emilia Hibner, Gunnar Hökmark, Mario Pirillo, Catherine Trautmann



10.3.2011

## **OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

for the Committee on Transport and Tourism

on Europe, the world's No. 1 tourist destination – a new political framework for tourism in Europe  
(2010/2206(INI))

Rapporteur: Salvatore Caronna

### **SUGGESTIONS**

The Committee on Regional Development calls on the Committee on Transport and Tourism, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions in its motion for a resolution:

1. Points out that the Article 195 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union grants new powers to the EU with regard to tourism, particularly by complementing the action taken by Member States in respect of the principle of subsidiarity, with a view to enhancing that sector's competitiveness and capacity for dynamic and sustainable growth; stresses the importance of developing the tourism sector in order to strengthen the regional dimension within the EU and consolidate a sense of European citizenship;
2. Points out that Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006 on the European Regional Development Fund numbers among its priorities the protection and enhancement of natural and cultural heritage as offering potential for the development of sustainable, high-quality tourism with a view to added value, stressing the importance of an integrated and coherent approach, thereby promoting economic growth and the creation of new jobs and helping to promote Europe as a favourite destination for visitors from both inside and outside the EU, highlighting its extraordinary cultural wealth, exemplified by UNESCO World Heritage Sites, and the exuberant natural beauty found in Natura 2000 sites across the EU; calls, in this context, for a clear commitment to increasing the promotion of tourism through the cohesion policy in the next programming period;
3. Emphasises that tourism has a tangible impact on economic, social and territorial cohesion in all the Member States; stresses also that tourism represents, or could represent, the main

resource of some EU regions - e.g. islands, mountainous regions, remote border towns, sparsely populated regions, rural areas and outermost regions - which are lagging behind economically, and that it has a direct impact on growth in other sectors, and accordingly stresses the importance of not separating tourism from cohesion policy; stresses that in this context tourism could offer an opportunity for economic recovery, especially in regions affected by demographic decline or depopulation, and that there is a need to consider their accessibility, principally through extension of the trans-European transport network objectives to these regions;

4. Stresses the need for an active competition policy to monitor the trend towards concentration of the sector or any abuse of a dominant position;
5. Recalls that Europe's cultural heritage and regional and linguistic diversity represent a significant comparative advantage in the global tourism marketplace; calls for these factors to be given due recognition in economic analyses of the tourism sector, especially in the context of allocating resources to maintaining and upgrading destinations of cultural significance;
6. Stresses that social, economic and environmental sustainability are a prerequisite for developing and maintaining all tourism activity; urges the Commission to develop, if appropriate, after the launch of a public consultation and an impact assessment, and taking into account the best practices from Member States, a 'European label', in order to create a profile for products and services of excellence and at the same time to enhance Europe's image worldwide, while coordinating this initiative with the 'European Heritage Label' and the UNESCO sites;
7. Calls on the Commission to support the inclusion on the World Heritage List of popular traditions within the Member States, including culinary traditions, with a view to preserving them for future generations and establishing a European strategy for the promotion of popular traditions at European and international level;
8. Reiterates that the development of sustainable and socially responsible forms of tourism would provide local economies with a lasting source of income and a means of promoting stable employment, while at the same time making it possible to safeguard and enhance the landscape and the cultural, artisanal, historical and social heritage of every region, also taking into account the opportunities provided by Natura 2000; supports, therefore, the exploitation of synergies between the promotion of tourism and all the regional specificities which can contribute to revitalising local and regional economies; welcomes the Commission's initiative to plan a strategy for sustainable coastal and marine tourism, and hopes that specific strategies will also be undertaken with regard to islands, mountainous regions and other sensitive areas;
9. Considers that the sustainable development of tourism should be organised in such a way that its natural, cultural and heritage assets are in equal measure appreciated at the present time and preserved for future generations;
10. Emphasises the key role which the ERDF and the EAFRD can play in developing the tourism potential of the rural environment and diversifying its economic activities;

11. Highlights the role of sport in promoting tourism and welcomes initiatives such as the 'Watersports in the Atlantic Area' project; recalls that sport is a cultural as well as an activity-based pursuit, which can attract tourists to peripheral regions of Europe;
12. Welcomes the Commission proposal to group actions promoting tourism under four priorities; considers, however, that the development of a new political framework for tourism in Europe requires an integrated approach that is closely related to the specific nature of each region and efficient coordination of Community, national, regional and local policies which enables the synergies created amongst different areas of activity with a direct or indirect impact on tourism to be used to advantage, in keeping with the principle of subsidiarity; urges the Member States to involve relevant regional and local authorities from the very early stages of negotiations;
13. Calls on the Commission, the Member States and the local and regional authorities to encourage and support the development of integrated tourist networks and projects encompassing all infrastructural aspects, so as to avoid uncoordinated development, and to encourage the creation of partnerships for the exchange of best practice; calls for active participation by regional and local bodies, in accordance with the principles of subsidiarity and partnership; underlines the need for concrete initiatives to be undertaken in support of innovation and the development of new information technologies and communication channels; calls for initiatives designed to make appropriate use of financial engineering systems, to promote e-commerce and to eliminate the remaining barriers to the internal market; calls for a simplification of the rules in order to facilitate access to the relevant financial instruments, especially microloans, for stakeholders in the tourist industry, particularly for small and medium-sized enterprises, the self-employed and the cultural and creative industries;
14. Considers it necessary to introduce a European policy for protection of the rights of tourists and their safety;
15. Stresses the need to protect and enhance the diversity of the tourist services that Europe offers on the basis of economic, social, environmental and territorial cohesion criteria;
16. Emphasises the particular vulnerability of coastal regions, islands, outermost regions and mountainous regions, whose economy often depends on tourism, to the environmental effects of tourism and to the global challenge of climate change, which should also be taken into account in the new tourism framework; stresses, therefore, the need for the investments made in these regions to be sustainable;
17. Considers it necessary to counterbalance the effects of seasonal tourism by diversifying and specialising tourism, and supporting all forms of all-year-sustainable tourism, tourist routes, eco- and socially-responsible tourism, in particular those aimed at schoolchildren, young people, people with reduced mobility and the elderly, who constitute a market with huge growth potential; welcomes the positive results achieved by the CALYPSO preparatory action and calls on the Commission to continue to work for its future development and to support the introduction of a mechanism promoting off-season tourist exchanges between the Member States for senior citizens, young people, people with disabilities and other disadvantaged groups;

18. Calls on the Commission to develop a strategic plan to attract tourists from the emerging countries, especially the BRIC countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China), through cooperation agreements, tourist promotion initiatives and more flexible tourist visa arrangements; takes the view that EU tourism promotion initiatives should portray Europe as a global destination, complement initiatives by the Member States and regional and local authorities, and avoid favouring any European destinations over others;
19. Welcomes the Commission's consideration of the socio-economic and environmental implications of the tourist sector, and encourages efforts to achieve a higher level of competitiveness combined with responsible management of resources (energy, water, raw materials, etc.);
20. Points to the importance of ensuring regional mobility and connectivity, particularly in the regions with poorest access, in order to ensure that tourism policies genuinely succeed in all the EU's regions;
21. Calls for greater emphasis to be placed on quality of employment in the tourism sector, with a focus on specialist training with a high language and technology content, on support for SMEs and entrepreneurship, especially among women and young people, on labour force mobility and decent pay, and on combating undeclared work and preventing exploitation; encourages the Member States and the regional and local authorities to make use of the vocational training tools offered by the European Social Fund and by other Community and national instruments; stresses the importance of taking measures to prevent imbalances in the regional employment market as a result of seasonal tourist activities;
22. Emphasises that the tourism sector should make better use of the full potential of cross-border investments in competitive clusters at both the internal and the external borders of the European Union;
23. Calls on the Member States to simplify the rules and reduce the administrative burden in order to make optimum use of the European financial instruments available for the current financial programming period, and to develop the competitiveness of the tourism sector and of tourist destinations; urges that, as part of the cohesion policy review and in light of the new Treaty competence for tourism, the role of tourism as a means of redressing the social, economic and territorial balance be upgraded; hopes that every form of funding that the EU provides for tourism will be tied to the provision of competitive services of an excellent standard and quality, and to sustainability; calls for the next financial perspectives and Structural Fund regulations to include among their priorities the rehabilitation of tourist areas that have fallen into decline in order to guarantee their competitiveness and sustainability;
24. Considers that better coordination among all stakeholders, including European, national, regional and local authorities, as well as greater complementarity of the actions and financial resources provided by the Structural Funds and the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development will encourage more integrated and sustainable development of the tourism sector and will help unlock its full potential;
25. Stresses the importance for the tourist sector of adequate infrastructures, and calls

accordingly for progress to be made in developing the Trans-European Transport Networks, especially the Motorways of the Sea;

26. Calls on regions with undeveloped tourist potential to take note of examples of good practice regarding tourism both inside and outside the EU that have led to the development of significant tourist activity over the last ten years;
27. Recommends the creation of an EU online tourism platform to promote local and regional tourist potential as effectively as possible.

## RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

<b>Date adopted</b>	28.2.2011
<b>Result of final vote</b>	+:            32 -:            1 0:            1
<b>Members present for the final vote</b>	François Alfonsi, Luís Paulo Alves, Charalampos Angourakis, Jean-Paul Basset, Alain Cadec, Salvatore Caronna, Rosa Estaràs Ferragut, Danuta Maria Hübner, Seán Kelly, Evgeni Kirilov, Constanze Angela Krehl, Ramona Nicole Mănescu, Riikka Manner, Iosif Matula, Erminia Mazzoni, Lambert van Nistelrooij, Jan Olbrycht, Wojciech Michał Olejniczak, Markus Pieper, Tomasz Piotr Poręba, Monika Smolková, Georgios Stavrakakis, Nuno Teixeira, Michail Tremopoulos, Oldřich Vlasák, Kerstin Westphal, Hermann Winkler
<b>Substitute(s) present for the final vote</b>	Karima Delli, Karin Kadenbach, Andrey Kovatchev, Marie-Thérèse Sanchez-Schmid, Patrice Tirolien, Derek Vaughan
<b>Substitute(s) under Rule 187(2) present for the final vote</b>	Stanimir Ilchev

1.3.2011

## **OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

for the Committee on Transport and Tourism

on Europe, the world's No 1 tourist destination – a new political framework for tourism in Europe  
(2009 - 2014(INI))

Rapporteur: Rareș-Lucian Niculescu

### **SUGGESTIONS**

The Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development calls on the Committee on Transport and Tourism, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions in its motion for a resolution:

1. Welcomes the fact that the Commission recognises the value of the EAFRD's contribution to the development of rural tourism in Europe and stresses the need to continue the measures supported through that fund in the context of the CAP post-2013 at a sufficient level of financing in keeping with the ambitions stated; reiterates its call for the CAP to be simplified and for a reduction of the red tape surrounding that policy, of which the EAFRD is an integral part;
2. Points out that future measures in support of rural and farm tourism must be fully attuned to the future objectives, strategies and instruments of the CAP in the field of rural development, and especially to those relating to the provision of public goods, such as land maintenance, landscape conservation, biodiversity and forestry, and the conservation and development of rural heritage;
3. Draws attention to the impact of climate change on Europe's regions and its consequences for the tourism-based economy; suggests, in this regard, that a quality charter be introduced as a means of promoting sustainable tourism in areas at risk, with a view to encouraging best practice in relation to infrastructure and tourist services;
4. Asserts that financing the development of rural and farm tourism in the EU is fully

justified, since these sectors comprise more than 500 000 accommodation establishments and around 6 500 000 beds, 15-20% of which are in farm tourism areas; points out that supply and demand in these sectors have grown on average by 10-15% over the past 10-15 years, in circumstances where the average overall growth rate in tourism has been 4-5%;

5. Believes that future rural and regional development programmes should effectively support the tourism sector and that special attention should be paid to promoting knowledge transfer and cross-border exchanges of best practice, building on the work of existing European networks such as NECSTouR;
6. Emphasises the fact that rural and farm tourism – given that they entirely complement traditional primary-sector activities and indeed, in the case of farm tourism, reinforce them and thus help, through job creation, to arrest rural depopulation – make a vital contribution to improving the quality of life in rural areas, to diversification of the rural economy and to balanced regional development because they generate new opportunities, especially for young people and women; points out that they also contribute to preserving, and increasing awareness of, cultural identities, traditions and traditional food products; also calls for more emphasis on the quality of jobs in the sector;
7. Emphasises that tourism activities must always respect the landscape and the environment, and that the objective – as stated in the European Landscape Convention – should be a balanced and harmonious relationship between social needs, economic activity and the environment;
8. Points out that rural tourism and farm tourism make up a non-polluting sector of the economy which is not liable to relocation and whose special characteristics render it, unlike other forms of tourism in Europe such as beach tourism, less dependent on seasonal factors, and that a commitment to developing this sector is therefore also a commitment to creating new sources of permanent high-quality jobs;
9. Emphasises that rural tourism and farm tourism are important means of countering seasonal bias in tourism, especially in the more remote regions; to this end, considers it essential to address the question of access to such regions and investigate the potential for extending the European transport networks;
10. Emphasises also that rural and farm tourism require particular attention as they are more vulnerable in specific respects than other tourism sectors, including with regard to the need for infrastructure improvement in rural areas and for better public-transport links to cities, the restricted access to credit for developing farm tourism activities, and organisational shortcomings on the supply side, with poor connections to the market;
11. Stresses the need to promote training and innovation, which are crucial to developing the competitiveness of rural and farm tourism; points out that most companies active in this sector are micro-businesses which have a key role to play in job creation for women and young people; therefore supports creating instruments for improving skills levels which can be transferred to other activities in the countryside;
12. Stresses the major role that rural and farm tourism play in creating a direct link with the supply chain for local food products and other products of specific quality (organically



grown, protected designation of origin (PDO) and protected geographical indication (PGI) products, for example), thus creating a system which ensures the production, processing and marketing of products locally;

13. Considers that there is a need to improve farmers' marketing capacity and their access to local markets, thus enabling companies in the catering sector to buy the local produce they need more easily;
14. Stresses how important it is to raise awareness among the public, in both the EU and third countries, of what farm tourism has to offer, enhancing its profile on the European portal [visiteurope.com](http://visiteurope.com); also proposes improving the link between what tourism providers offer and the Nature 2000 network, so as to raise the profile of protection and conservation efforts in the areas concerned and to further promote their development;
15. Calls on the Commission to encourage the introduction of training measures aimed at developing the professional skills of farmers involved in tourism, with a view to promoting economic diversification in rural areas;
16. Points out that one in six people in the EU have a disability, and therefore considers it vital to promote forms of rural and farm tourism that are tailored for and accessible to those with disabilities or reduced mobility;
17. Recognises the importance of the 'ICT and tourism' platform proposed by the Commission but believes that an all-out effort is needed to equip rural areas with up-to-date IT infrastructure (e.g. broadband internet connection services), so that all information necessary for exchanges of best practice can be made available and inter-linked, to provide training in how to use such infrastructure, and to develop multilingual IT resources, e.g. in the framework of the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP), which could facilitate international tourism;
18. Deplores the fact that no official statistics are kept on rural and farm tourism, and that the only information available is based on estimates; welcomes the measures being contemplated to consolidate the social and economic knowledge base in the field of tourism, in respect of which additional financial outlay and red tape should be eschewed insofar as possible;
19. Encourages the Commission to develop year-round rural and farm tourism; suggests therefore that the CALYPSO initiative be prolonged until after 2011 and that more attention be paid, in the programmes developed, to rural and farm tourism, creating positive synergies with other types of tourism that exist close to rural areas (e.g. sporting tourism, resort tourism, cultural and religious tourism, etc.); calls on the Commission to direct particular attention to rural and farm tourism in the context of any EU macro-regional strategies – for example, the Strategy for the Danube Region, which includes the poorest areas in the Union;
20. Proposes to the Commission the establishment of uniform criteria for introducing quality indicators for rural and farm tourism, as already exist in the traditional hotel industry, where the various labels are awarded on the basis of a strict set of criteria, thus ensuring that they are not devalued;

21. Proposes, in view of the success of the ‘European capitals of culture’ and the ‘European heritage label’ initiatives, that a similar initiative be developed to introduce a European label for rural areas of tourist interest; emphasises that a European label must be awarded on the basis of objective evaluation criteria, that current national quality labels must continue to exist and that the requisite level of transparency must be ensured for consumers; calls for use of the new label to be voluntary.

## RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

<b>Date adopted</b>	28.2.2011
<b>Result of final vote</b>	+: 29 -: 1 0: 0
<b>Members present for the final vote</b>	John Stuart Agnew, José Bové, Luis Manuel Capoulas Santos, Michel Dantin, Paolo De Castro, Albert Deß, Herbert Dorfmann, Béla Glattfelder, Martin Häusling, Peter Jahr, Elisabeth Jeggle, Jarosław Kalinowski, Elisabeth Köstinger, Agnès Le Brun, George Lyon, Krisztina Morvai, Mariya Nedelcheva, Rareş-Lucian Niculescu, Wojciech Michał Olejniczak, Georgios Papastamkos, Marit Paulsen, Britta Reimers, Ulrike Rodust, Alfreds Rubiks, Giancarlo Scottà, Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris, Alyn Smith, Csaba Sándor Tabajdi, Marc Tarabella
<b>Substitute(s) present for the final vote</b>	Giovanni La Via

3.2.2011

## **OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON CULTURE AND EDUCATION**

for the Committee on Transport and Tourism

on Europe, the world's No 1 tourist destination – a new political framework for tourism in Europe  
(2010/2206(INI))

Rapporteur: Hella Ranner

### **SUGGESTIONS**

The Committee on Culture and Education calls on the Committee on Transport and Tourism, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions in its motion for a resolution:

1. Recalls that culture, education, youth and sports-related travel is becoming increasingly popular, therefore calls on the Member States, local and regional authorities to support such forms of tourism by being more flexible and adapting to new types of consumers due to demographic change and in order to take into account new forms of tourism geared to the expectations voiced by consumers;
2. Points out that cultural tourism is the largest segment of the European tourist industry and that over recent years it has undergone significant change and now focuses not just on major historic cities and tourist resorts or major events and exhibitions but also on smaller towns and historic, cultural and nature routes, which attract people in search of knowledge, intercultural dialogue, nature and culture;
3. Considers that particular attention should be devoted to improving access for disabled people by means of adapting premises and training staff;
4. Stresses the importance of fair and sustainable tourism schemes as a means of using leisure activities to foster fair trade, solidarity and eco-development;
5. Accordingly, calls on the Commission, in line with the new competences resulting from the Lisbon Treaty, to highlight the cultural dimension of European tourism, with a view to

ensuring economic, social, territorial, landscape and environmental sustainability;

6. Points to the important role played by public bodies, particularly territorial authorities and associations, in providing the broadest possible access to leisure activities, including for disadvantaged population groups and young people (holiday camps and leisure centres, sporting and cultural activities, etc.), taking care to ensure a broad social mix at all times;
7. Underlines the importance of enhancing the quality of education through the use of Lifelong Learning programmes which emphasise actions aimed at mobility (e.g. Leonardo da Vinci mobility actions and preparatory pilot projects such as Erasmus for Entrepreneurs, and Grundtvig); also considers it essential to improve the training, knowledge, skills, capabilities and professional prospects of the staff of tourism businesses through Lifelong Learning programmes;
8. Underlines the need to boost European and international student mobility within vocational and/or higher education institutions in the field of tourism so that students can learn and exchange from best practice and gain practical knowledge while improving language skills;
9. Voices its concern at the growing standardisation of culture and language; stresses, therefore, the importance of cultural, linguistic and heritage diversity;
10. Points out the merits of a 'dual' education system in the tourism sector and the importance of combining practical experience with learning at vocational and/or higher education institutions, thereby enhancing both theoretical and practical skills;
11. Recalls that Europe's cultural heritage and linguistic diversity represent a significant comparative advantage in the global tourism marketplace and calls for these factors to be given due recognition in economic analyses of the tourism sector, especially in the context of allocating resources to maintain and upgrade destinations of cultural significance;
12. Considers European Union initiatives such as the 'European Capital of Culture', the 'European Heritage Label' and the 'Iron Curtain Trail' which need to have significant synergies with projects from the Council of Europe's Cultural Routes programme (such as the 'Way of St James', the Via Francigena or one of the other recognised routes) and the European Institute of Cultural Routes to be necessary in promoting European heritage, contemporary creativity and sustainability in cultural tourism, approaching new consumers and supporting remote and lesser-known regions; calls in this context for closer links with traditional regional cultures and for measures to preserve traditional urban and rural landscapes; welcomes programmes such as EDEN and NECSTouR due to their potential for boosting sustainable economic development;
13. Highlights the cultural and touristic value of the European Cultural Routes in promoting a common European cultural heritage and calls on the Commission to step up cooperation with the Council of Europe in this field and to foresee the necessary funding for it;
14. Calls on the Commission to assess the impact that the EU's European Capitals of Culture programme is having on tourism and to report to Parliament on whether governance approaches, funding arrangements and procedures for involving cultural bodies and

associations should be reviewed, with a view to investing in durable and sustainable processes and partnerships;

15. Draws attention to the major role which sport plays in promoting tourism, with both spectators and participants travelling to events, and calls for the introduction of specific policies to promote and support sports tourism;
16. Draws attention to the role played by European routes, such as the Council of Europe's Cultural Routes, which focus on specific themes or historic trails, offer both mainstream and non-mainstream cultural content and promote debate and a creative and personalised approach; takes the view that such routes may, of themselves, be deemed cultural goods which play an effective role in establishing networks of operators and associations from more than one Member State who work together on promotional and management schemes seeking to promote Europe's cultures, mutual understanding and peaceful coexistence, tourism, mobility of operators, walkers and artists, familiarity with local traditions and potential, and intercultural and interfaith dialogue;
17. At the same time, calls for efficient follow-up, management and interlinking of existing EU programmes, enabling them to reach their full potential by providing sufficient resources, and for support for an integrated approach to tourism;
18. Points out that cultural tourism can make a significant contribution towards overcoming the current economic and employment crisis because it makes good use of skills and territorial potential and boosts rural and small-town development by spreading demand for tourist accommodation over the year and over the various segments, as well as promoting cultural and landscape heritage and mobility, giving a boost to traditional local foods and wines and creating high-quality routes;
19. Highlights the role of sport in promoting tourism and welcomes initiatives such as the 'Watersports in the Atlantic Area' project; recalls that sport is a cultural as well as an activity-based pursuit which can attract tourists to peripheral regions of Europe;
20. Considers that the organisation of artistic and cultural activities and of sports events encourages mobility and acts as a tourist attraction;
21. Calls for intercultural dialogue to be seen as a means of fostering socio-cultural development in both urban and non-urban areas and emphasises the creative potential of cultural diversity and the programmes focusing on it (for example, the joint Commission and Council of Europe 'Intercultural Cities' programme) as a driving force for enterprise and innovation, not least in the tourist industry;
22. Recalls that [www.visiteurope.com](http://www.visiteurope.com) is a platform to be further developed so as to enhance the visibility of Europe and its heritage by providing information designed to meet tourists' needs in the largest possible number of EU languages as well as major world languages; emphasises that it should be one of the core platforms linking together other programmes and applications;
23. Underlines the structural problem of seasonality in the European tourism sector; highlights the role of cultural and educational tourism in lengthening tourist seasons and diminishing

the negative socio-economic effects of seasonality; welcomes to that effect the Commission's Calypso Preparatory Action in promoting social tourism and diminishing seasonality;

24. Calls on the Commission to ask the Member States to ensure that traditional and new skills in the tourism, accommodation and territorial promotion sectors are recognised within the European Qualifications Framework (EQF);
25. Stresses the need for specific population groups – such as the elderly, young people and families – to be clearly identified in order that they may be offered specially tailored services and activities;
26. Welcomes the proposal for an information exchange mechanism to improve the coordination of school holidays;
27. Calls for more explicit reference to be made in connection with the use of EU Structural Funds in the period 2010-2017 to promoting cultural and tourist routes and linking up the routes in the various Member States as a means of boosting high-quality territorial development;
28. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to promote sports-related tourism and step up investment in routes such as European mountain trails and cycle paths stretching across several European regions or other means of promoting mobility, physical activity and a healthy lifestyle;
29. Points out that holding and properly promoting cultural events, music festivals, art exhibitions and similar events fosters cultural tourism, which is of fundamental importance if Europe is to continue to be the world's No 1 tourist destination;
30. Calls for schemes focusing on areas such as food, photography, theatre and cinema to be explored and supported as new means of promoting cultural tourism;
31. Takes the view that the new European External Action Service can play a major part in promoting and consolidating Europe's status as the world's No 1 tourist destination.

## RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

<b>Date adopted</b>	25.1.2011
<b>Result of final vote</b>	+:           25 -:           0 0:           0
<b>Members present for the final vote</b>	Magdi Cristiano Allam, Maria Badia i Cutchet, Zoltán Bagó, Malika Benarab-Attou, Lothar Bisky, Piotr Borys, Jean-Marie Cavada, Silvia Costa, Santiago Fisas Aixela, Mary Honeyball, Cătălin Sorin Ivan, Petra Kammerevert, Morten Løkkegaard, Emma McClarkin, Marek Henryk Migalski, Katarína Neveďalová, Doris Pack, Chrysoula Paliadeli, Marie-Thérèse Sanchez-Schmid, Marietje Schaake, Marco Scurria, Joanna Senyszyn, Timo Soini, Emil Stoyanov, Hannu Takkula, László Tőkés, Helga Trüpel, Corneliu Vadim Tudor, Gianni Vattimo, Marie-Christine Vergiat, Sabine Verheyen, Milan Zver
<b>Substitute(s) present for the final vote</b>	Liam Aylward, Dominique Baudis, Ivo Belet, Luigi Berlinguer, Rita Borsellino, Nessa Childers, Knut Fleckenstein, Nadja Hirsch, Stephen Hughes, Oriol Junqueras Vies, Seán Kelly, Timothy Kirkhope, Ryszard Antoni Legutko, Ramona Nicole Mănescu, Hans-Peter Martin, Iosif Matula, Jean-Luc Mélenchon, Francisco José Millán Mon, Elisabeth Morin-Chartier, Paul Nuttall, Georgios Papanikolaou, Bernd Posselt, Hella Ranner, Mitro Repo, Robert Rochefort, Olga Sehnalová, Joanna Katarzyna Skrzydlewska, Alyn Smith, Monika Smolková, Rui Tavares, Róza Gräfin von Thun und Hohenstein, Iva Zanicchi



## RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

<b>Date adopted</b>	21.6.2011
<b>Result of final vote</b>	+:                36 -:                5 0:                 0
<b>Members present for the final vote</b>	Georges Bach, Izaskun Bilbao Barandica, Antonio Cancian, Michael Cramer, Luis de Grandes Pascual, Saïd El Khadraoui, Ismail Ertug, Carlo Fidanza, Knut Fleckenstein, Jacqueline Foster, Jim Higgins, Dieter-Lebrecht Koch, Georgios Koumoutsakos, Werner Kuhn, Jörg Leichtfried, Bogusław Liberadzki, Marian-Jean Marinescu, Gesine Meissner, Mike Nattrass, Hubert Pirker, David-Maria Sassoli, Vilja Savisaar-Toomast, Olga Sehnalová, Brian Simpson, Keith Taylor, Silvia-Adriana Țicău, Giommaria Uggias, Thomas Ulmer, Peter van Dalen, Dominique Vlasto, Artur Zasada, Roberts Zīle
<b>Substitute(s) present for the final vote</b>	Philip Bradbourn, Frieda Brepoels, Spyros Danellis, Rosa Estaràs Ferragut, Tanja Fajon, Markus Ferber, Dominique Riquet, Laurence J.A.J. Stassen, Ramon Tremosa i Balcells