

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

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2009

Committee on Transport and Tourism

2008/2132(INI)

4.11.2008

OPINION

of the Committee on Transport and Tourism

for the Committee on Regional Development

on the regional development aspects of the impact of tourism in coastal regions
(2008/2132(INI))

Rapporteur: Francesco Ferrari

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SUGGESTIONS

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

- A. whereas the economies of most of the Member States with highly developed coastal and island regions depend to a great extent on revenues from activities connected with the sea or estuary and delta areas, such as tourism, fisheries, transport, etc. and whereas the marine and coastal environment are coming under increasing pressure from the various different purposes for which they are exploited; whereas, in particular, competition for space often generates conflict between the various activities and interests involved (tourism, fisheries, services, agriculture, protection of natural ecosystems), and it is therefore essential to ensure suitable forms of territorial management for administering the various activities directly or indirectly related to coastal development,
- B. whereas, in regions where short, intense tourist seasons alternate with economically inactive periods, levels of employment in the sector concerned and in the transport sector are subject to strong fluctuations, which often makes it difficult to provide services on a stable basis and with a suitable level of quality,
- C. whereas tourism plays a role as a driver of economic growth, employment and new communication technologies,
- D. whereas coastal regions' tourism activities can only be accessible by means of modern and efficient transport infrastructures;
- E. whereas coastal regions are extremely important for the European Union, since a significant percentage of economic activity is concentrated in them,
 - 1. Considers that it is necessary to strengthen policies designed to reduce seasonality and encourage sustainable development, from the social, economic and environmental point of view, and product diversification and innovation, especially by means of 'business tourism', the creation of permanent jobs, continuing education, the improvement of qualifications and the diversification of services; considers, in particular, that it would be helpful to encourage, through the Structural Funds as well as by other means, the development of institutions, coordination between different levels of government, capacity strengthening and the principle of partnership when planning and developing projects such as exchange schemes for older tourists, health tourism, residential tourism and conference tourism;
 - 2. Stresses the need, when developing and carrying out tourism and transport infrastructure projects, to respect the interests of nature conservation and the cultural heritage and hence of sustainable tourism;
 - 3. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to take more active measures to meet the needs of the private sector in small coastal municipalities and island regions, in particular, by promoting examples of best practice in relation to the planning, development and

management of specific projects and initiatives and exchanges of information about the relevant European rules, strategies and funds, including in particular funds to support sustainable tourism;

4. Urges the Commission, the Member States and the regions to promote sustainable mobility chains involving local public transport, cycle tracks and footpaths, in particular along cross-border stretches of coastline, and to support the exchange of good practices;
5. Urges the Member States, the island regions and the coastal regions to encourage the transition from investing in physical infrastructure to activities designed to 'create a space' for territorial marketing and the diversification of products and services by activities which 'redefine' the relevant space; this objective could be achieved by:
 - supplementing traditional pursuits and services with other sea-oriented recreational activities;
 - integrating the existing transport means and the various tourist activities;
 - promoting the cultural and natural heritage, for example by devising itineraries and 'themed' routes to introduce visitors to the regional heritage of the coastal hinterland (including the local gastronomy);
 - transforming towns and villages with an industrial past into tourist destinations by promoting their specific architectural and cultural features;
 - investing in projects' visibility, image and results;
 - adopting a global approach to the tourist market, to counter increasing competition from low-cost destinations outside Europe and promote programmes including, inter alia, those geared to new users in the EU, such as tourism for families or for older people;
 - combining the development of tourist infrastructures with environmental protection and maritime safety measures, in particular savings and efficiency in the use of resources and sound, sustainable planning;
 - setting up education and training schemes in the tourist sector, at all levels and in all fields (service provision, economics and administration), with a view to creating a core of qualified workers;
 - promoting social tourism between European Union regions in the low season, as social or accessible tourism makes it possible for people with reduced mobility and disabilities to travel within the European Union as tourists, is an effective instrument for increasing the well-being of our European citizens and has an economic impact, since it generates and maintains jobs in the tourism sector throughout the year;
 - analysing and promoting where appropriate actions for diversifying the supply of tourism services via the development of a specific mix, such as cultural tourism,

sporting tourism, beach tourism, etc;

6. Calls on the Member States and regional authorities to make efforts with a view to the provision of more viable and stable services; calls on the Commission to study ways of countering the insufficient development of labour, capital and services resulting from the seasonal nature of employment in the tourism sector of coastal regions and in the associated transport sector;
7. Calls on the Member States to devise appropriate urban development and planning policies that are compatible with the coastal landscape;
8. Calls for incentives to be provided for sustainable development, so as to safeguard the cultural and natural heritage and the social fabric in coastal regions;
9. Points to the impact of climate change on coastal tourism; therefore calls on the Commission on the one hand consistently to integrate the EU targets for reducing CO₂ emissions into transport and tourism policy, and on the other hand to promote measures to protect sustainable coastal tourism from the impact of climate change;
10. Calls on the Member States and regional authorities to promote the upgrading of ports and airports in coastal and island regions in order to meet the needs of tourism, taking due account of the existing environmental possibilities and respect for aesthetic considerations and the natural surroundings;
11. Reiterates its call for incentives so that alterations can be made to ports in many coastal regions enabling access for pleasure vessels and cruise liners, as well as work that will significantly improve the environment, including work to cope with climate change.

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

Date adopted	4.11.2008
Result of final vote	+: 31 -: 0 0: 1
Members present for the final vote	Etelka Barsi-Pataky, Michael Cramer, Luis de Grandes Pascual, Arūnas Degutis, Petr Duchoň, Saïd El Khadraoui, Emanuel Jardim Fernandes, Francesco Ferrari, Brigitte Fouré, Georg Jarzembowski, Stanisław Jałowiecki, Dieter-Lebrecht Koch, Sepp Kusstatscher, Jörg Leichtfried, Bogusław Liberadzki, Eva Lichtenberger, Luís Queiró, Reinhard Rack, Ulrike Rodust, Brian Simpson, Dirk Sterckx, Silvia-Adriana Țicău, Yannick Vaugrenard, Armando Veneto, Lars Wohlin, Roberts Zīle
Substitute(s) present for the final vote	Philip Bradbourn, Lily Jacobs, Anne E. Jensen, Antonio López-Istúriz White, Vural Öger, Willem Schuth