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Committee on Culture and Education

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OPINION

of the Committee on Culture and Education

for the Committee on Transport and Tourism

on new perspectives and challenges for sustainable tourism in Europe
(2004/2229(INI))

Draftsman: Zdzisław Zbigniew Podkański

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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. Endorses the opinion that economic growth and commercial development strengthen tourism as a sustainable branch of the EU economy;
2. Shares the view that focus is needed on sustainable tourism in its various aspects, including economic, cultural, nature and social; draws attention to the importance of seasonal tourism;
3. Insists that the development of tourism should go hand in hand with the need to protect national, regional and local culture as well as the natural environment;
4. Notes that EU enlargement has broadened the scope for the tourist market, economic development, new investment and the creation of jobs, according to the social standards of the place concerned, with new possibilities in the fields of rural tourism, agritourism and ecotourism, as well as the conservation of traditional handicrafts and creative skills; hopes that this fact will be an important factor in ensuring appreciation of the rich natural environment, sites of outstanding natural beauty, parks and varied cultural heritage of the EU as a whole;
5. Recalls that, since enlargement in May 2004, the EU has enjoyed a wealth of new environment-friendly possibilities for nature, cultural and social tourism;
6. Hopes that, through transport which is user-friendly, in particular for disabled people (promotions and cheap youth, school and family fares, etc.), and by offering a healthy climate and food, new interest will be generated in tourism which will serve to protect individual physical and mental health;
7. Believes that the EU must look after its own economy and tourist resources, particularly in the new Member States, in order to prevent the destruction of its landscapes, natural environment, urban structures, architectural heritage, historical and cultural values and social bonds;
8. Believes that the International Cultural Tourism Charter needs to be effectively propagated;
9. Calls attention to the fact that education and promotion play a very important role in the development of tourism; believes that the future of tourism depends to a large extent on educating younger generations, stimulating and satisfying a healthy interest in their heritage in the field of nature, culture, sport, science and active leisure;
10. Notes the inclusion in the text of the Treaty Establishing a Constitution for Europe of a legal basis relating to tourism and calls on the Commission to take this into account in programming the future financial perspective and to anticipate it by establishing an appropriate and sufficient budget heading, given the importance of tourism to the European economy.

