



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

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Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection

2010/2206(INI)

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

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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

Date adopted	28.2.2011
Result of final vote	+: 26 -: 2 0: 0
Members present for the final vote	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
Substitute(s) present for the final vote	Damien Abad, Cornelis de Jong, Constance Le Grip, Emma McClarkin, Antonyia Parvanova, Konstantinos Poupakis, Olga Sehnalová, Wim van de Camp