



EU tourism policy priorities, sustainable tourism and funding opportunities

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Strategic importance of the EU tourism sector, facts & figures

- > a cross-cutting sector, **the 3rd largest economic activity in the EU** (after Distribution and Construction)
- > involves a big diversity of services and professions
- > mainly **dominated by SMEs** (3.4 million)

Socio-economic importance of tourism

- **5 % the EU GDP** (direct contribution)
- 5.2% of the total labour force (12 million jobs), one of the main entry point to the labour market (20% of the employees aged below 25).
- In 2014, tourism with related sectors contributed by nearly 1.6 trillion EUR to the economy, which makes up 9.3% of the total European DGP.





Legal Framework – EU Tourism competences

- EU competence (after the Lisbon Treaty art. 195):
Complement, support and coordinate the action of the Member States in the tourism sector

How? By:

- **Encouraging the creation of a favorable environment** for the development of undertakings in this sector
- **Promoting cooperation** between the Member States, particularly by the exchange of good practice
- **No harmonization** of the laws and regulations of the Member States





Policy Framework

Communication COM(2010)352 :

« Europe, the world's No 1 tourist destination - a new political framework for tourism in Europe »

- 1) **Stimulating competitiveness** of the sector
- 2) **Promoting the development of a sustainable, responsible, and high quality tourism**
- 3) **Consolidating image and profile of Europe**
- 4) **Maximising the potential of EU policies and financial instruments for developing tourism**

In line with the **Blue Growth strategy** to support sustainable growth in the maritime and marine sectors:

Communication COM(2014)86

"A European Strategy for more Growth and jobs in coastal and maritime tourism"

Stimulate competitiveness, promoting skills and innovation, strengthening sustainability of tourism, diversify tourism offer,...

Europe N° 1 tourist destination in the world with 431 million international tourist arrivals in 2013

thanks to:

- cultural and historical heritage
- natural assets
- diversity
- quality services
- good connectivity

Challenge: growing competition,
Europe's share in the travel
world's market is decreasing.





Priority actions for EU tourism policy in next **years**, to strengthen the competitiveness of the tourism sector

- 1) Attracting **investment** and **improving the business environment** (ensuring well functioning Single Market for services, access to finance, reduce unnecessary burden...)
- 2) **Joint promotion**, particularly towards key third-countries and **internalisation of tourism SMEs** (increase number of travellers from third countries)
- 3) Exploiting all the opportunities of the **digitalisation**
- 4) Improving **skills** and competences to provide the industry with the skills they need and to improve the quality of jobs





Actions promoting sustainable tourism:

Balanced approach to economic, environmental and socio-cultural aspects

- **European Charter for a sustainable and responsible tourism**
set of general principles and guidelines to encourage sustainable/responsible practices

- **European Tourism Indicator System (ETIS) for Sustainable Management of Tourist Destinations.** A comprehensive and simple to use system, aiming at helping destinations to monitor, manage, measure and enhance their sustainability performances.

Toolkit, guidance, surveys etc. currently under revision after the two testing phases - new version presented at a conference on 31 March in Brussels

http://ec.europa.eu/growth/sectors/tourism/offer/sustainable/indicators/index_en.htm

Conference 28 January 2016, Brussels "Managing and promoting sustainable and accessible tourism destinations"

<https://etis-jointconference2016.teamwork.fr/en/programme>



Actions promoting sustainable tourism:

- **Supporting diversification of tourism offer/products capitalising on Europe's rich cultural and natural heritage**
- Raising awareness about non-traditional tourist destinations:
EDEN – European Destinations of Excellence initiative (140 winners, several hundred of runners –up, network)
- Support to transnational projects aiming at developing and promoting **sustainable and cultural transnational thematic tourism products** : (itineraries, routes, tourism offer), European Cultural routes (cooperation with Council of Europe, UNESCO)





Supporting sustainable transnational tourism products



Objectives :

- **Supporting transnational projects (involving at least 4 countries) which develop and promote transnational tourism trails, itineraries, routes and sustainable tourism development:** environmentally friendly tourism, cycling or hiking routes, trails, sports or wellbeing tourism, rural and gastronomic tourism, routes based on common cultural or industrial heritage.
- **Co-funding of projects for development and promotion of transnational tourism offer,** but no investments in infrastructure
- **Clear trans-national dimension /** European added-value
- Focus on SMEs, **supporting public – private partnerships**



Examples of co-financed projects:

- EuroVelo, Iron Curtain Trail, EV 8, EV 3
- Greenways, Greenways Outdoor
- Hiking trail along Danube
- Via Francigena and the Pilgrimage Ways
- CERA-DEST European Route of Ceramics
- Venetian Routes
- ProWell- rural wellbeing tourism
- European Equestrian routes
- SURFINGEUROPE
- Tastes of Abbeys

http://ec.europa.eu/growth/sectors/tourism/offer/sustainable/transnational-products/index_en.htm



Concrete deliverables of the EU support to cycle tourism:

Numerous transnational projects directly supported to promote cycle tourism (websites, observatories, maps, promotion events, fairs, tourists packages, action plans, strengthening of partnerships...)

EuroVelo network www.eurovelo.com

European Greenways

<http://www.greenwayseurope.org/>)

Cycling activity integrated in many other co-financed projects e.g.: Tastes of Abbeys

<http://www.tastesofabbeyes.com/>

Secret Wine Tours

<http://secretwinetours.com/>





In general, we aim at supporting projects which:

- concentrate on **delivering results** and achieve **concrete impact on tourism development** /increasing tourism flows
- build **strong partnerships, networks** among different stakeholders and **create new opportunities for businesses**
- **explore synergies between tourism and other sectors** (e.g.: gastronomy, culture, art, fashion, sports,...) involving local communities
- make **good promotion/visibility of activities** (involvement of SMEs, regional (local), national tourism organisations, public authorities, media).
- use **digital tools** for promoting tourism offer
- **sustainability of results** (the initiative should not end with the end of co-financing – this should be the beginning...)



Tourism under COSME (programme for the Competitiveness of Enterprises and Small and Medium-sized Enterprises) Budget

- Budget depending on decision of the COSME Committee (2015: 9 million EUR, 2016: 4,5 million EUR)
- 2015 COSME Call for proposals on 3 THEMES (1: Low season tourism exchanges for seniors and youth, 2: **Sustainable transnational tourism products** and 3: Accessible itineraries). Total budget 5.8 mln EUR. **10 new projects** under theme 2 (103 applications) linked to culture, industrial heritage, sport, wellbeing and natural heritage will be co-financed.



Tourism under COSME

COSME 2016

- No specific call for proposals to support transnational tourism products.
- Call for tender : Increasing Europe's visibility as a tourist destination and internalisation of SMEs. Supporting tourism related businesses to find international business partners in third countries target markets. Participation in fairs (China, India, Brazil, USA etc...), B2B meetings, promotion of transnational products.

Communication campaign (to be launched around March) to encourage Europeans to spend their holidays in Europe, inform about EU co-financed successful initiatives, attractive to potential tourists

COSME 2017 : if budget for tourism actions increased, possible direct support (call for proposals) to co-finance transnational tourism products





EU funding programmes available for tourism related investment:

- **Horizon 2020 (R&D), the Civitas initiative – cycling in cities, Erasmus+, Creative Europe....**
- **European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF)** including European Regional Development Fund, European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development, European Social Fund...

Guidance fiche for possible tourism investments under ESIF:

http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/informat/2014/guidance_tourism.pdf

Managing authorities of ESIF in Member States:

http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/atlas/managing-authorities/

Acces to finance, financial instruments available under different EU funds

http://europa.eu/youreurope/business/funding-grants/access-to-finance/index_en.htm





Guide on EU funding for the Tourism sector

- The guide covers the most important EU programmes for the tourism sector
- It focuses on (in)direct funding opportunities

<http://ec.europa.eu/growth/tourism-funding-guide>

The Investment Plan for Europe and a new European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI)

http://ec.europa.eu/priorities/jobs-growth-investment/plan/index_en.htm

http://ec.europa.eu/priorities/jobs-growth-investment/plan/efsi/index_en.htm



Major EU tourism events 2016

High-level Conference "Attracting investment in Tourism"

5 April, Brussels

European Tourism Forum (Presidency Event), Bratislava,
10-11 October

European Tourism Day, Brussels, second half of the year





Other available tools, useful websites for searching information, partners, promotion...:

Tourism Business Portal:

http://ec.europa.eu/growth/tools-databases/tourism-business-portal/index_en.htm

Enterprise Europe Network:

<http://een.ec.europa.eu/>

Virtual Tourism Observatory:

<https://ec.europa.eu/growth/tools-databases/vto/>

Tasting Europe:

<http://www.tastingeurope.eu/>



Contact details

**European Commission, Tourism
website:**

http://ec.europa.eu/growth/sectors/tourism/index_en.htm

Calls for proposals:

http://ec.europa.eu/growth/contracts-grants/index_en.htm?tpa=1057

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*Thank you for
your attention*