

European Travel Commission

The European Travel Commission (ETC) was founded in Norway in 1948. Nowadays 33 members compose it with the same aim: an international promotion of Europe as tourist destination.

The beginnings

Between World War I and World War II, Europe became aware of the importance of tourism.

1925

The establishment of National Tourist Offices (NTOs) rapidly led to the creation of the "International Union of Official Tourist Publicity Organisations": its first mission was the launch of a joint publicity campaign named "Europe Calling".

1947

This union became the International Union of Official Travel Organisations (IUOTO), which is today known as the World Tourism Organization, WTO.

1948



In its first General Assembly, the IUOTO adopted the principle of Regional Commissions: 19 European countries were represented and those countries decided to establish the first such Commission.

Since its creation, ETC, has been a results-oriented organisation working closely with government agencies and all segments of the industry to achieve practical objectives.

First priority was given to making governments aware of the importance of tourism in their national economies, which had been deeply disturbed by World War II.

That is why ETC has always supported an international co-operation, a collective action and the building of a European solidarity.

ETC delegation in the White House with President Eisenhower in 1954

Constitution

Henri Ingrand (France), the first chairman of the ETC had settled the basic principles for its operations. The second one, **Arthur Haulot** (Belgium) drafted in 1958, its official statutes in accordance with the Belgium law. When the Commission was transferred to Dublin in 1965 with **Timothy O'Driscoll** as chairman, these statutes remained the only "legal" constitution of the ETC. New statutes were drafted in 1987 when the headquarters were transferred to Paris under the chairmanship of **Walter Leu** (Switzerland). In 1996, when the ETC moved to Brussels a new version was adopted to the Belgian legislation under the chairman **Walter Leu** (Switzerland). Constitution was modified and adopted at the General Meeting n°66 following the 2002 law under the chairmanship of **Jaime-Axel Ruiz** (Spain).

Membership

In 1948, the original membership of the European Travel Commission was 19 countries. At that time Eastern European countries, members of IUOTO were invited to participate. None of these countries accepted, apparently due to political reasons. Germany, Yugoslavia, Malta and Cyprus joined the Commission a few years later.

Presently, the European Travel Commission is composed by 33 National Tourism Organisation: Austria, Belgium, Britain, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Holland, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Norway, Portugal, Romania, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and Turkey.



Policy and principles

The ETC is a voluntary organisation for European NTO's with two main principles: It should increase the level of tourism from other parts of the world to Europe as a result of its marketing activities, It should provide a forum for individual members to exchange ideas and experiences for the benefit of each member and the whole group.

Strategy

In terms of strategy, the ETC has a unique role: It is the only organisation, which provides marketing support for Europe.

It can undertake market research or launch promotional programmes that can be of invaluable support to NTO's in their task of marketing individual countries.

The ETC has also proved that it can influence the marketing efforts of the industry and find considerable funds for the promotion of Europe.

ETC Declaration presented to US President Eisenhower

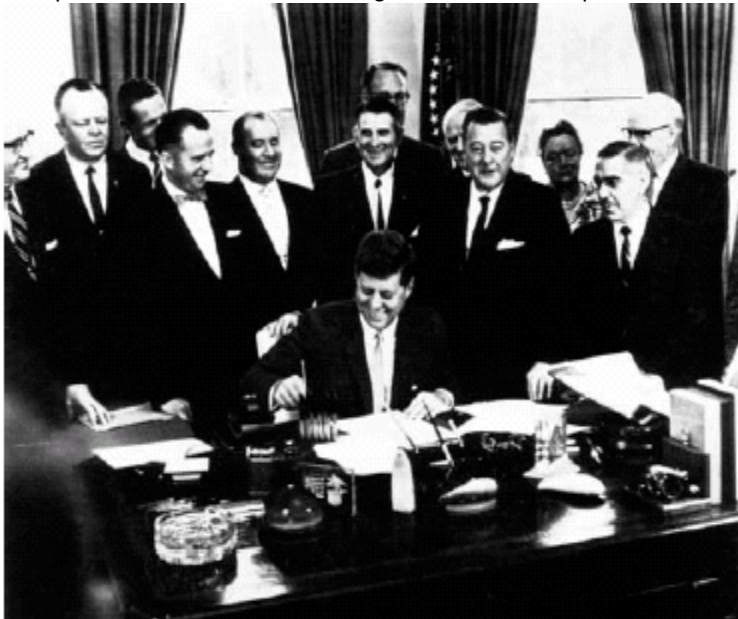
Market operations groups

These operations groups are composed by representatives of the member countries maintaining offices in each area of ETC's operations. They elect their own chairman and they draft an annual marketing programme, which is developed taking into account the changing trends and reflecting current problems and opportunities. These operations groups can also be considered as an important contribution to the marketing of Europe through the exchange of intelligence, ideas and joint public relations

United States

From the beginning to now, the US market has been the main target of the European Travel Commission's activity.

Over the years, the European Travel Commission has used all forms of promotion the message "Visit Europe" was communicated using advertisements, public relations, print production, editorial publicity, travel shows, radio and television.



This operation group provides a focal point for joint trade action by sponsoring for example workshops and trade shows, participating in meetings of the American Society of Travel Agents (ASTA), and other industry groups and publishing or encouraging the publication of tour manuals for travel agents.

ETC is represented by its US Chairman, Mrs Manolita T. Doelge at the White House signing of a new US tourist bill, standing behind President Kennedy.

Once done, the European Travel Commission brings together airline companies, hotels, tour operators, car hire firms and other suppliers of the European travel products, in joint consumer promotions in order to make the consumer visit Europe.

Japan

A joint promotional effort was launched in Japan in 1974. This coincided with the end of restrictions on travel abroad by nationals.

Between 1974 and 1988, to show its conviction that Japan was a high potential area, the European Travel Commission multiplied the budget dedicated to promotion by 15 times—promotion done through advertising, exhibitions in key cities, seminars for travel agents, public relations, etc.

In most activities, the operation group has directly worked with tour operators and airlines. A particularly good relation has been established with the Japan Association of Travel Agent (JATA) and the European Travel Commission.

Canada

A specific campaign of promotion in Canada was considered in 1976. A major market research was carried out in conjunction with the two largest airline operators, and the joint promotional campaign was finally launched in 1978 through advertising, public relations and a few years later through supermarkets.

Latin America

The Latin America operation group was set up in 1977. Their operations aimed two markets: the Brazilian

market and the Argentinean one. Since then, ETC representatives had been located in either one country or the other and they co-operate closely. They elect a common chairman, presidency alternating every two years between both countries, and vice-presidency going to the other one.

The most important co-operative activity consists in workshops, trade shows and travel conventions in several countries. Press conferences, posters and exhibitions are also on the programmes in several capitals cities.

Relations

• Tourism Industry

Since its establishment, the European Travel Commission has implemented the principle of “closest cooperation and consulting” with many sectors of the tourism industry. In the earliest years, there were coordinating committees in Europe and in the United States in charge of the first promotional campaigns; mainly advertising. The Committee in Europe became the European Travel Conference, coinciding its meetings with meetings of the Commission. To make this liaison even better was agreed in 1971 to replace the Conference by a permanent liaison with the representative bodies, through small groups or through the Executive Unit.

In the eighties, the European Travel Commission created the European Tourism Action Group (ETAG), to improve the technical liaison between the different sectors of the industry. ETAG had two main objectives: on one hand, encourage technical liaison between governments and national tourist agencies and the tourism interests in the public and private sectors and on the other hand, promote the development of Europe’s tourism and, in particular, help eliminate restraints on the growth of tourism.

• Governmental organisations

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

A few months after the establishment of the European Travel Commission, a Tourism Technical Committee was created inside the Organisation for European Economic Co-operation (OEEC). The inclusion of the ETC campaign in the programme of the OEEC ensured the financing of the campaign but also required the approval of the Tourism Committee of the campaign programmes.

In 1962, the OEEC became the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). The essential difference was the admission of United States, Canada, Japan, Australia and New Zealand as members, which modified the main objectives of the Tourism Committee. This view met with some opposition in ETC itself on what may now be termed “rather legalistic” grounds. The

situation was finally resolved positively because the usefulness and importance of the ETC had been established.

However, the European Travel Commission decided to continue to work as an independent entity without links to OECD.

World Tourism Organisation

The relationship that existed between ETC and the International Union of Official Travel Organisations (UIOOT) did not stop when it became in 1975 the World Tourism Organisation (WTO). For many years, ETC meetings were coincided with the WTO Regional Commission for Europe. Even if this practice has now ended, liaison with WTO is still maintained, as the ETC is an Affiliated Member of the organisation.

European Union

In 1973, a working group made of European Economic Community (EEC) members of ETC, proposed to the EEC Permanent Representatives a Tourism Unit in the Brussels secretariat. It took over 12 years and by 1985, the EEC established a Tourism Unit within its organisation: the Working Group took on a new character. Closer links were established between ETC and EEC.

ETC has been glad to co-operate with the EEC in technical studies and to join in the discussions arranged by the EEC Working Group of national tourist organisations, which was afforded consultative status by the EEC.

Full support was given to the Community in developing its tourism policy notably in steps to remove constraints on international travel in Europe but the ETC strongly urged that if the EEC wished to enter the promotional, marketing or information fields in tourism, complementary activity to that already carried out by the ETC would better be done through the ETC marketing organisation.

The EEC accepted this and a special advertising campaign to promote travel from United States to EEC countries was undertaken. This set a headline for more extensive co-operative promotion in the future.

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