



ETC PRESENTS THE "DESTINATION EUROPE 2020" INITIATIVE AT FITUR

- *The European Commission and UNWTO expressed their support and stressed the need of collaboration between public and private sector*
- *FITUR is a global meeting point for tourism professionals and the leading trade fair for inbound and outbound Ibero-American markets in Europe*

Brussels, February 2013 - The European Travel Commission (ETC) presented the "Destination Europe 2020" initiative to European and Latin-American media and stakeholders during a press conference at FITUR in Madrid (Spain). "Destination Europe 2020" is a joint initiative of ETC and the European Commission that aims to design a long-term strategy to promote Europe as a tourist destination in long-haul markets.

Manuel Butler, Director General of the Spanish Tourism Organisation (Turespaña), welcomed Peter De Wilde, ad-interim President of ETC, Pedro Ortún, Director of the Tourism Unit of DG Enterprise and Industry of the European Commission, Sandra Carvão, Chief of Communication of World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and Eduardo Santander, Executive Director of ETC. Manuel Butler stressed the importance of tourism as a key to Europe's economic recovery and the valuable work of ETC and the European Commission to boost Destination Europe in emerging markets. Sandra Carvão expressed the willingness of UNWTO to cooperate with initiatives aimed to promote Europe in Asia and America and emphasized that international tourism organisations should join their efforts in order to obtain a better understanding of these emerging markets. She believes this is the first step towards a deeper inter-regional integration that will improve competitiveness of tourist destinations. Thus, she recalled that Europe still remains world's top tourist destination with more than 530 million international arrivals in 2012 and an estimated growth of 2-3% during 2013.

In his speech, Peter De Wilde introduced ETC's objectives and activities to develop a strategy to position Destination Europe in long-haul markets. "ETC's activities focus on markets such as China and Brazil through initiatives like Destination Europe 2020 to inspire tourists to visit Europe by identifying the key aspects affecting the choice of their next holidays destination", said De Wilde and concluded "This is not just a marketing strategy, it is an economic growth strategy at European level "

Eduardo Santander, Executive Director of ETC, presented the ongoing actions of the "Destination Europe 2020" initiative in Brazil, Canada, China and USA and highlighted the "real and optimistic message" that emerges from ETC's joint activities with the European Commission and UNWTO.

This 18-month plan includes online, video and social media campaigns, as well as a consultation process which will involve both the public and private sectors in a series of high-level conferences to be held in Sao Paolo, New York and Beijing. The conclusions drawn from these meetings will determinate the way in which Europe is promoted and marketed in the long distance markets.

Finally, Peter Ortún set the objective of improving cooperation to promote Europe among the major outbound travel markets. According Ortún, the best tool to achieve this goal is to work together, with greater involvement of the European tourism industry, especially of small and medium enterprises. It has also been recognized that policies facilitating tourism flows to Europe are essential to consolidate Europe as the world's number one destination in terms of sustainability, quality and diversity.

The XXIII edition of FITUR took place in Madrid (Spain) between 30th January and 3rd February. This trade exhibition is a global meeting point for tourism professionals and the leading trade fair for inbound and outbound Ibero-American markets in Europe. In 2013, a total of 167 countries and regions exhibited at FITUR, which received more than 200.000 visitors.

Note to editors:

The European Travel Commission is an association of National Tourism Organisations (NTOs). It was created in 1948 to promote Europe as a tourism destination to the long-haul markets outside Europe, originally in the USA and later in Canada, Latin America and Asia. It currently has 33 member NTOs, including 9 from outside the European Union. ETC is an independent body which is financed entirely by annual membership contributions and partnership funding.

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Press Releases: <http://www.etc-corporate.org/press/current-press-releases.html>

For further information: ETC's corporate website www.etc-corporate.org is aimed at industry, government and educational personnel interested in tourism to Europe.

Tourists seeking travel-specific information and ideas are directed to ETC's consumer portal www.visiteurope.com