



INDUSTRY LEADERS DISCUSS HOW TO RE-ENERGISE TOURISM TO EUROPE

Structural and legal handicaps, insufficient promotional funds and increasing competition threaten Europe's position as no. 1 tourist destination

London, 4th November 2014. A panel of tourism leaders from the public and private sector, meeting at the World Travel Market, today discussed what Europe needs to do to stem its declining share of world tourism, as growth in emerging markets outpaces the 'old continent'.

Eduardo Santander, CEO of the European Travel Commission (ETC), reported that Europe reached a record 563.8 million international tourist arrivals in 2013, representing a market share of almost 52%, while tourism receipts totalled €368.5 billion, corresponding to a share of around 42% of global tourism expenditure. European destinations are expected to grow by 2.1% a year on average in the coming years, 0.3% slower than previously, whereas worldwide international arrivals will grow much faster by 3.5%. *"It is essential to increase funds to promote Europe as a unique destination, especially in third country markets, where there is growing demand",* said Santander. *"If not, Europe's share of international tourism will decline even more rapidly".*

In fact, half of all international arrivals to Europe are currently generated by only 8 markets, mainly intra-regional, with modest growth rates. This statistic points on the one hand to risks of a growth slowdown, but on the other, to the potential to attract more visitors from a larger portfolio of markets, especially in the fast growing economies overseas.

"Some emerging origin markets such as Russia and China have become much more important recently, with strong growth in household wealth and spending power. However, these two markets combined still only represented 7% of tourism arrivals in 2013", pointed out Martin Craigs, CEO of the Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA). *"China remains of strategic importance for destinations in Europe in the medium to long term for its immense growth potential".*

However, the current highly complex regulatory framework, separate visa policies, air passenger duty and a lack of a clear brand image are still creating hassle and expense, and *"prevent these people from visiting",* said Tom Jenkins, CEO of the European Tourism Association, ETOA. *"These are priority areas that need to be address urgently by all the relevant authorities".* Tom Jenkins also presented some *"alarming home truths"* such as the loss of attention on the US as an origin market considering that outbound tourism from the USA still dwarfs that of emerging markets by an order of magnitude, and the need for a surge in inbound tourism to reverse poor export performance in some European countries.

Pedro Ortún, Director Tourism of the European Commission, stated that tourism can be a powerful tool to fight against the short and long-term structural challenges that Europe has recently faced, such as aging populations, the euro crisis and growing (youth) unemployment. *"Tourism contributes to 9% of GDP and 10% of the workforce in the EU",* said Ortún. *"Since 95% of enterprises in tourism are SMEs, tourism encourages the entrepreneurial spirit and ensures jobs for Europeans instead of*

creating outsourced jobs to other countries. It is the Commission's aim to ensure Europe's visibility as a unique destination and we are implementing several initiatives to support tourism growth". One of those initiatives is 'Destination Europe 2020', a joint program with the ETC, to promote Europe, based on market intelligence, industry consultation and a greater use of technology.

The leaders' debate was followed by the unveiling of the new VisitEurope.com portal, built by ETC's technology partner Amadeus in conjunction with the international travel marketing alliance Travel Consul. The new website guides potential travellers on a journey, beginning with inspiration about a European holiday to planning the trip and sharing ideas. *"The visiteurope.com portal is a state of the art platform that will engage a new generation of digitally sophisticated travellers and drive them to action"*, said ETC's Marketing Manager Miguel Gallego. He explained that the new portal is the result of nearly 20 years of online experience and extensive research conducted over the past two years.

Robert Patterson, Vice President of Content and Social Strategy at Travel Consul's MMGY, explained how the new site was developed. *"Our storytelling provides momentum for travellers seeking a pan-European experience that goes beyond the mere recitation of historical facts"*, he said. Making use of full width images and a minimal menu structure, the portal offers an immersive, friendly user experience where inspirational imagery does all the talking. With a balanced mix of pictures and small content modules within a grid system, the smart portal design allows users to see a wide range of information, spanning over 30 different countries, within a single page. The user journey is choreographed according to themes, to ensure visitors progressively discover more and more that is of real interest to them.

The new site is optimised for mobile devices and is located at www.visiteurope.com in its beta version in English. Further language versions in French, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish and Japanese will follow before the end of the year.

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 8 from outside the European Union.

Europe is the world's no. 1 tourist destination with 563 million international arrivals and more than 50% of the market share of worldwide tourism

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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.