Tourism: first multiannual programme 1997-2000, Philoxenia

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After stressing the importance of tourism in the European economy, the Opinion criticizes the excessive and deleterious development of "mass tourism" which is incompatible with the main objective of PHILOXENIA, namely "sustainable development". The Opinion nonetheless endorses this programme, which constitutes the beginning of an integrated approach and which clearly defines objectives and priorities, even if the resources allocated to the programme are insufficient. It recommends that the programme be extended not only to Cyprus and Malta, but to all the countries which took part in the Euromed Conference in Barcelona (1995). It stresses the need for an external policy on tourism with political, economic, social and ethical aspects, comprising in particular measures to combat sexual tourism. Finally, it emphasises that the PHILOXENIA programme is only part of the measures which influence tourism and that many other European and national policies must be adapted to take account of the impact they have on tourism as a sector of economic activity.