Tourism sector: the role of the Union. Green Paper

1995/2056(COS) - 13/02/1996 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

In adopting the report by Mr Pavlos SARLIS (PPE, GR) on the Commission's Green Paper, the European Parliament requested the Commission to support the addition of a specific chapter introducing a sustainable common tourism policy to cover the environment, culture, the economy and employment in the regions concerned and provided with a separate legal basis in the EC Treaty when it was revised at the 1996 Intergovernmental Conference. The EP considered that a sustainable common tourism policy should seek to accomplish the following objectives: - ensuring the quality and competitiveness of the Community tourist industry; - creating favourable conditions for the development of Community tourist enterprises, particularly SMUs (e.g. direct market access, access to the 'information society'); - taking initiatives to improve and harmonize working conditions, train workers and boost employment; - promoting cooperation between all those involved in tourist activities to improve exchanges of information and best practice and to encourage protection of the European natural and cultural heritage; - coordinating measures adopted at national level in the field of Community and international tourism; - introducing the possibility of concluding agreements between the Community and third countries on matters relating to international tourism; - financing research, restoration and conservation work and tourist infrastructure projects on the basis of quality criteria. In addition, the EP proposed the protection of specific rights of tourists and, possibly, a European code of conduct for tourists. It called for the introduction of a special rate of VAT for tourism, measures promoting the European Union as a destination for tourists from third countries, initiatives to harmonize study programmes, working conditions and the training of workers, initiatives to facilitate the access to tourism of young people, the elderly and those with limited financial means, and the development of social and associative tourism. The EP called on the Commission to take the appropriate steps to create a European tourism agency.