Basic information

2010/2206(INI) INI - Own-initiative procedure	Procedure completed
Europe, the world's No 1 tourist destination – a new political framework for tourism in Europe **Subject** 4.50 Tourism	

Key players

European Parliament

Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
TRAN Transport and Tourism	FIDANZA Carlo (PPE)	08/09/2010
	Shadow rapporteur DANELLIS Spyros (S&D) UGGIAS Giommaria (ALDE) BREPOELS Frieda (Verts /ALE) VLASÁK Oldřich (ECR) KOHLÍČEK Jaromír (GUE /NGL)	

Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
EMPL Employment and Social Affairs	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
ENVI Environment, Public Health and Food Safety	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
ITRE Industry, Research and Energy	CHATZIMARKAKIS Jorgo (ALDE)	29/09/2010
IMCO Internal Market and Consumer Protection	CREUTZMANN Jürgen (ALDE)	07/10/2010
REGI Regional Development	CARONNA Salvatore (S&D)	28/09/2010
AGRI Agriculture and Rural Development	NICULESCU Rareș-Lucian (PPE)	29/09/2010

	CULT Culture and Education	RANNER Hella (PPE)	13/07/2010

European Commission	Commission DG	Commissioner
	Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs	TAJANI Antonio

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
30/06/2010	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(2010)0352	Summary
23/09/2010	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
21/06/2011	Vote in committee		Summary
13/07/2011	Committee report tabled for plenary	A7-0265/2011	
26/09/2011	Debate in Parliament		
27/09/2011	Decision by Parliament	T7-0407/2011	Summary
27/09/2011	Results of vote in Parliament		
27/09/2011	End of procedure in Parliament		

Technical information

Procedure reference	2010/2206(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Procedure subtype	Initiative
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 55
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	TRAN/7/03812

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee draft report		PE450.742	02/02/2011	
Committee opinion	CULT	PE450.607	03/02/2011	
Committee opinion	AGRI	PE452.908	01/03/2011	

Committee opinion	IMCO	PE454.711	01/03/2011	
Committee opinion	ITRE	PE454.422	02/03/2011	
Committee opinion	REGI	PE454.749	10/03/2011	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE458.571	31/03/2011	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A7-0265/2011	13/07/2011	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T7-0407/2011	27/09/2011	Summary

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Non-legislative basic document	COM(2010)0352	30/06/2010	Summary

National parliaments

Document type	Parliament /Chamber	Reference	Date	Summary
Contribution	AT_BUNDESRAT	COM(2010)0352	22/12/2010	

Europe, the world's No 1 tourist destination – a new political framework for tourism in Europe

2010/2206(INI) - 27/09/2011 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution on Europe, the world's No 1 tourist destination – a new political framework for tourism in Europe.

Parliament recalls that the tourism sector accounts for 10% of GDP and 12% of total employment, making it the third most substantial socio-economic activity in the EU and that it plays a key role in the economic development and economic, social and regional cohesion of the EU and in achieving the goals of the EU 2020 strategy. The EU is the world's No 1 tourist destination in terms of international arrivals but it faces many challenges: the global economic crisis, the competitiveness of other destinations outside the EU and the diversity of tourist attractions on offer, the effects of climate change and seasonal fluctuations in tourist activity, demographic developments in Europe, the growing impact of information and communications technologies, etc.

Members recall that tourism has become a new competence of the EU, which gives it more effectiveness and visibility. On the basis of this new competence, an EU strategy with clear and ambitious goals needs to be drawn up, in full compliance with the principle of subsidiarity. Parliament welcomes the policy strategy presented by the Commission, which sets out 21 specific actions to reinvigorate the sector and provides a solid basis from which to develop an EU policy on competitive, modern, high-quality, sustainable tourism that is accessible to all.

It deplores, however, **the lack of coherence within the Commission with regard to tourism policy,** and calls for a coordinating and integrating approach. It calls on the Commission to submit **an integrated tourism strategy by the end of 2012**, in line with and in addition to the current strategy and its implementation plan.

Members stress the need for close cooperation between the EU, international, national, regional and local authorities on the one hand and between the institutions as a whole and stakeholders on the other. The Commission is asked to consider introducing two new principles for tourism: 'interregionality' and 'complementarity', in order to promote joint planning and cooperation between tourist services within a single geographical area, i.e. either between neighbouring regions belonging to different Member States or at a specific thematic level between regions linked by common elements.

Competitive, modern and good quality tourism: tourism should be regarded as part and parcel of the EU's industrial policy and innovation policy and asserts the importance of micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Parliament agrees with the Commission's proposal that **a 'Europe Brand'** should be developed in conjunction with the Member States, and local and regional authorities and national tourism agencies, in order to promote Europe as a whole worldwide as a tourist destination. It also welcomes the 'European heritage label' initiative as a tool giving prominence to some of the important sites in the history of European integration. Members call on the Commission to support the inclusion on the World Heritage List of popular traditions within the Member States, including culinary traditions.

In order to promote European tourism, Parliament stresses particularly the need for **a long-term strategy for more coordinated and simplified visa procedures,** and calls on the Commission to consider the possibility of deploying the EU delegation offices in the world in order to issue tourist visas in collaboration with the national embassies of the Member States and to explore additional ways of simplifying the issue of tourist visas, such as 'group tourist visas' for organised groups. Furthermore, in view of various emergency situations that place tourists abroad in danger, the European External Action Service (EEAS) could be asked to consider whether it would be appropriate to codify a uniform procedure for issuing notices advising against travel, creating a **single European code** for the seriousness of the situations concerned. Parliament calls on the Commission to draw conclusions from recent emergencies, such as the volcanic eruption, and to draw up specific scenarios for EU crisis management, so that coordination and uniform action in all Member States with regard to information and the measures to be taken become the rule.

The resolution suggests other measures for the promotion of tourism: (i) measures to foster innovation and technological development in micro-enterprises and SMEs; (ii) creation of a Virtual Tourism Monitoring Centre that links up not just research institutions, but also enterprises and public authorities, with the aim of driving forward market research; (iii) the development of innovative actions to promote ad hoc European holiday packages during major historic, cultural and sporting events such as the Olympic Games, and the Universal Expositions; (iv) develop the potential of the European Travel Commission's (ETC) web portal www.visiteurope.com to maximise its availability and full accessibility and make it a genuine European tourism platform; (v) the creation of a 'European Tourism Card' for the purpose of encouraging tourists from within and outside the EU who travel in Europe to do so regularly; (vi) assess the feasibility of a 'European quality tourism label', identifying common quality criteria, whilst **avoiding a proliferation of labels**. The number of labels must be reduced, to prevent possible confusion on the part of consumer. Members call for an assessment of whether the 'European quality label' and the 'Eco-label for tourist accommodation service' could be gradually merged under the heading of one label; (vii) harmonise gradually the accommodation classification systems (hotels, guesthouses, rented rooms, etc.) through the identification of common minimum criteria, starting from the positive experiences of industry associations (ex. Hotelstars Union); (viii) prepare a map of existing professional skills (Tourism Skill Competence Framework) as a starting point from which practical steps to match employment market supply and demand in the tourism sector in Europe can be developed; (ix) encourage mobility and promote lifelong learning, vocational and university training schemes and apprenticeships in the tourism sector.

At the same time, Members ask for improved mutual recognition by the Member States of professional qualifications in the tourist industry, in order to allow those already working in the sector and those planning to do so to find the best job opportunities. They ask the Commission and e Member States to modernise infrastructure for the different modes of transport, with a particular focus on the progress and timely implementation of Trans-European Transport Networks projects and on the completion of the **Single European Sky** and integrated electronic ticket sales systems for the various means of transport. Parliament calls on the Commission to assess the feasibility of a Charter of tourists' rights and responsibilities comprising principles with regard to accessibility, provision of information, transparent pricing, compensation, etc.

Sustainable and diversified tourism: Members welcome the Commission's readiness to diversify the types of tourism available, which would help offset the effects of seasonality. They take the view that in order to differentiate European tourism from that of other countries or continents, it is crucial to link the traditional tourism sector with what the territory has to offer in terms of products and services and tangible and intangible assets. They stress the need for close cooperation with the Council of Europe in this context, as well as with networks such as NECSTouR and EDEN in order to exchange good practice.

Parliament notes the fact that demographic developments in Europe will give rise to continuing growth in health tourism and in spa tourism in particular. It calls on the Commission, in view of the fact that there are a variety of Community rules covering spa-tourism issues, to consider the possibility of tabling a **single legislative proposal on spa tourism** in order to give the sector a controlled organic structure, encouraging its competitiveness and specifying immediately that spa companies operating in the Member States, as providers of health services, are excluded from the scope of Directive 2006/123/EC.

Members insist particularly that, given the history of the European continent, the Commission should promote more vigorously Europe's industrial heritage, whose potential has not been sufficiently recognised, and that rural tourism and agritourism should be properly supported. They also stress the benefits of nature tourism as well tourism related to sports or health. Parliament emphasises the economic importance of 'shopping tourism'. It calls on the Commission to examine the possibility of designating a European day of responsible and sustainable tourism.

With regard to **the environment**, Parliament asks the Commission to promote a cross-cutting Community initiative on the **environmental impact of tourism**, with particular reference to European biodiversity, the waste cycle, energy and water saving, a healthy diet and the use of land and natural resources. It underlines the great impact of climate change on Europe's tourist areas, notably coastal regions, islands and mountain regions, and consider that strategies should be drawn up to counteract this, by enhancing natural risk prevention and mitigation policies, and safeguarding the sustainability of the fauna, flora and landscape of the areas concerned.

With regard to beach tourism, Members call for compensatory measures to alleviate the damage inflicted on tourist operators by the introduction of new legislation resulting in the loss of acquired rights and losses linked to unamortized investments in refurbishing facilities or ensuring they conformed to the legislation previously in force.

Tourism for all: emphasising that the inherently seasonal nature of tourism, Parliament calls on the Commission to draw up a plan to foster a progressive reduction in the seasonal nature of tourism, continuing with action allowing disadvantaged people, such as the elderly, people with disabilities, young people and low-income families to have easier access to holidays, particularly during the low season. It stresses the importance of ensuring, under a new EU strategy on disability, access for people with disabilities, not just with regard to transport but also with regard to accommodation, catering, information accessible to everyone and tourist services in general. Members also call on the Commission to promote also so-called VFR tourism (Visiting Friends and Relatives) as an important way of enhancing integration in European culture.

Tourism and resources: Parliament calls on the Commission to coordinate, extend and raise the profile of financial instruments managed by various directorates-general and intended to boost the competitiveness of tourism, and to check they are being correctly used, particularly with reference to the ERDF, the EAFRD, the ESF and the EFF. In a context of budgetary restrictions, it considers it is essential to build synergies between the various existing financial instruments. Members emphasise that **tourism should continue to play an important role in cohesion policy within the framework of the 2014-2020 financial perspective**. The next financial perspectives and Structural Fund regulations must include among their priorities the rehabilitation

of tourist areas that have fallen into decline. Members ask that a specific tourism programme, targeting in particular micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises, be established, encouraging partnerships between firms and public-private partnerships on pan-European tourism projects.

Other important issues for the tourist sector: amongst other factors which could help tourism, Members request that the Commission table by September 2011 a legislative proposal revising the Package Travel Directive 90/314/EEC, in order to ensure that consumers and firms in the sector have a clear legal framework both for standard situations and for exceptional situations caused, for example, by certain climatic and natural phenomena, or by political troubles. They also highlight the opportunity this presents for **a reduced VAT rate on tourism to be progressively harmonised across the Member States** as a necessary condition for transparent competition among tourist companies within the EU and with non-EU countries.

Lastly, Parliament stresses the need for an active competition policy monitoring any trend towards concentration of the sector or abuse of a dominant position.

Europe, the world's No 1 tourist destination – a new political framework for tourism in Europe

2010/2206(INI) - 30/06/2010 - Non-legislative basic document

PURPOSE: Communication presenting a new political framework for tourism in Europe.

CONTENT: tourism is an economic activity capable of generating growth and employment in the EU. With some 1.8 million businesses, primarily SMEs, employing approximately 5.2 % of the total workforce, the European tourism industrygenerates over 5 % of EU GDP, a figure which is steadily rising.Tourism therefore represents the third largest socioeconomic activity in the EU after the trade and distribution and construction sectors. Taking into account the sectors linked to it,tourism's contribution to GDP is even greater; it is estimated to generate over 10 % of the EU's GDP and provide approximately 12 % of all jobs. In this regard, observing the trend over the last ten years, growth in employment in the tourism sector has almost always been more pronounced than in the rest of the economy. In addition, the EU remains the world's favourite tourist destination, with 370 million international tourist arrivals in 2008, or 40 % of arrivals around the world.

However, European tourism has faced difficult times. Firstly, the economic and financial crisis affecting all economies since 2008 has had a considerable effect on demand for tourism services. Tourist activity in Europe fell by approximately 5.6 % in 2009. The difficulties have been aggravated by the eruption of the Eyjafjöll volcano. The interruption of air traffic during April and May 2010 due to the presence of volcanic ash clouds had a major effect on travel in Europe, causing significant disruption to airlines, travel agencies and tour operators as well as tourists themselves.

This difficult background for the tourism industry has highlighted a number of challenges which the European tourism sector must face. It is essential that all operators in the sector combine their efforts and work within a consolidated political framework that takes account of the new EU priorities set out in the 'Europe 2020' strategy: Europe must remain the world's No 1 destination, able to capitalise on its territorial wealth and diversity.

With this Communication, the Commission intends to **encourage a coordinated approach for initiatives linked to tourism and define a new framework for action** to increase its competitiveness and its capacity for sustainable growth. It therefore proposes a number of European or multinational initiatives aimed at achieving these objectives, drawing in full on the Union's competence in the field of tourism as introduced by the Lisbon Treaty.

The actions planned are as follows:

- develop a coherent strategy for diversifying the promotion of tourist services and capitalise on Europe's common heritage, particularly by creating a European heritage label, alongside actions such as European Heritage Days or the European Union Prize for Cultural Heritage;
- encourage the integration into tourism strategies of 'natural' heritage, which will also benefit from labelling initiatives;
- the Commission will launch an 'ICT and tourism' platform for stakeholders to facilitate the adaptation of the tourism sector and its businesses to market developments in new information technologies and improve their competitiveness by making the maximum use of possible synergies between the two sectors;
- in preparing its forthcoming communication on electronic commerce in the internal market, which will assess the implementation of the electronic commerce Directive, the Commission will examine the possibilities for strengthening the integration of the tourism sector in this context;
- in order to support training in the tourism sector, the Commission will endeavour to promote the opportunities offered by various EU programmes such as Leonardo or the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP) with its 'Erasmus for young entrepreneurs' and 'E-skills for innovation' strands;
- provide a voluntary tourism exchange mechanism between Member States, enabling in particular certain key groups such as young or elderly people, people with reduced mobility and low-income families to travel, particularly during the low season;
- develop a voluntary online information exchange mechanism to improve the coordination of school holidays in the Member States, without prejudice to their cultural traditions;
- in its annual communication, 'Consumer Markets Scoreboard', the Commission will monitor the market by measuring European consumer satisfaction with various tourism services (transport, hire, accommodation, travel, package tours);
- in the short term, the Commission will develop a pilot project aimed at networking research institutes, universities, public and private monitoring units, regional and national authorities and national tourism offices;
- in the medium term, based on the results of the pilot project, the Commission will promote the implementation of a 'virtual tourism observatory' to support and coordinate research activities by the various national research institutes and provide socioeconomic data on tourism at European level;
- develop, on the basis of NECSTouR or EDEN, a system of indicators for the sustainable management of destinations. Based on this system, the Commission will develop a label for promoting tourist destinations;

- organise awareness-raising campaigns for European tourists concerning the choice of destinations and means of transport, relationships with the local population in the destinations visited, and combating the exploitation of woman and children;
- develop a European 'Qualité Tourisme' brand, based on existing national experience, to increase consumer security and confidence in tourism products and reward rigorous efforts by tourism professionals whose aim is quality of tourism service for customer satisfaction;
- facilitate identification by the European tourism industry of risks linked to climate change in order to avoid loss-making investments, and explore opportunities for developing and supplying alternative tourism services;
- propose a charter for sustainable and responsible tourism and establish a European prize for tourism businesses and destinations respecting the values set out in the charter;
- propose a strategy for sustainable coastal and marine tourism;
- establish or strengthen cooperation between the EU and the main emerging countries (China, Russia, India, Brazil) and Mediterranean countries to promote sustainable and responsible tourism development models and the exchange of best practice;
- create a true 'Europe brand' in cooperation with the Member States to complement promotional efforts at national and regional level and enable European destinations to distinguish themselves from other international destinations;
- promote the visiteurope.com website in order to increase the attractiveness of Europe as a collection of sustainable and high-quality tourist destinations, particularly among emerging countries;
- encourage joint promotional actions at major international events or large-scale tourism fairs and exhibitions;
- strengthen EU participation in international bodies, particularly within the context of the World Tourism Organisation, the OECD, T20 and Euro-Med;

This Communication notes that consolidated framework is a first step. The Commission will continue to discuss tourism initiatives between now and the European Forum on tourism in November 2010, when a more detailed action plan may be discussed with the Member States and with public and private European tourism operators. In the medium term, it will then take stock of the strategy in order to assess its success and move forward.