Basic information

2014/2241(INI) INI - Own-initiative procedure	Procedure completed
New challenges and concepts for the promotion of tourism in Europe **Subject** 4.50 Tourism	

Key players

European Parliament

Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
TRAN Transport and Tourism	DE MONTE Isabella (S&D)	09/12/2014
	Shadow rapporteur MONTEIRO DE AGUIAR Cláudia (PPE) ZŁOTOWSKI Kosma (ECR) RADOŠ Jozo (ALDE) MALTESE Curzio (GUE/NGL) EVANS Jill (Verts/ALE)	

Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
IMCO Internal Market and Consumer Protection	GRAPINI Maria (S&D)	24/09/2014
CULT Culture and Education	MORGANO Luigi (S&D)	16/12/2014

European Commission

Commission DG	Commissioner
Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs	BIEŃKOWSKA Elżbieta

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
15/01/2015	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
15/09/2015	Vote in committee		
22/09/2015	Committee report tabled for plenary	A8-0258/2015	Summary

29/10/2015	Decision by Parliament	T8-0391/2015	Summary
29/10/2015	Results of vote in Parliament		
29/10/2015	Debate in Parliament		
29/10/2015	End of procedure in Parliament		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	2014/2241(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Procedure subtype	Initiative
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 55
Other legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 165
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	TRAN/8/02297

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee draft report		PE557.222	22/05/2015	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE560.840	25/06/2015	
Committee opinion	CULT	PE546.843	20/07/2015	
Committee opinion	IMCO	PE549.324	04/09/2015	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A8-0258/2015	22/09/2015	Summary
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T8-0391/2015	29/10/2015	Summary

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Commission response to text adopted in plenary	SP(2016)67	15/03/2016	

New challenges and concepts for the promotion of tourism in Europe

2014/2241(INI) - 22/09/2015 - Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading

The Committee on Transport and Tourism adopted the own-initiative report by Isabella DE MONTE (S&D, IT) on new challenges and concepts for the promotion of tourism in Europe.

The report recalled that Europe is the world's number one tourist destination with the number of international tourists arriving in the EU forecast to increase by 140 million each year until 2025. However, the tourism industry in Europe faces a number of **new challenges**, among them the digitisation

of distribution channels, the development of the new sharing economy sector, increasing competition from emerging, less expensive third-market destinations, changing consumer behaviour, the transition to an experience economy, the demand for quality client service, the need to attract and retain skilled staff, demographic changes, and seasonality.

The Commission's action framework: Members called on the Commission to report back to Parliament on the implementation of the actions set out in its 2010 communication on Tourism and the use of budget allocations under the Structural Funds and the relevant EU programmes. It also called on it to present a **new strategy for EU tourism** to replace or update the 2010 communication.

Funding: Members strongly encouraged the Commission to examine the possibility of **creating a section within the next multiannual financial framework that is dedicated exclusively to tourism**, instead of being financed from the budgets of other policy areas.

Pan-European and transnational tourism products: efforts should be made to develop new transnational European tourism products. Member States are encouraged to **promote new tourism routes** by regenerating disused areas, streets, railways, deserted paths and outdated routes.

The report highlighted the need for **travel agents and tour operators to promote the 112 European emergency number on relevant websites and e-tickets.**

The potential of **sport tourism**, which could in future become one of the most dynamic sectors in the developing European travel industry has been stressed.

Quality: whilst acknowledging the difference in standards of service quality in the tourism sector, Members are of the opinion that **quality standards** are important as a means of levelling the playing field for operators and increasing transparency for the consumer, thereby helping to strengthen the confidence of all parties. Stakeholders are called upon to take further the discussion of how the EU can promote agreed **quality standards for tourism services**.

Sharing economy: the report recalled that the sharing economy, or collaborative consumption, is a new socio-economic model that has taken off thanks to the technological revolution, with the internet connecting people through **online platforms** on which transactions involving goods and services can be conducted securely and transparently.

The **current legislation is not suited to the sharing economy**, and that for this reason local and national governments have started to analyse such online platforms and are trying to regulate their effects, often applying disproportionate measures which are somewhat disparate within the Union.

Consideration should be given to establishing an **appropriate regulatory framework** within the overarching EU digital single market strategy.

The report emphasised that platforms need to be fully accessible and that consumers using such sites must be correctly informed and not misled, and the privacy of their data protected. The importance of a viable and transparent system of reviews is stressed, and of ensuring that **consumers are not penalised by service providers for leaving negative reviews**.

The Commission is called upon to assess the economic and social impact of the sharing economy and its implications for the tourism industry, consumers, technology companies and public authorities, and to report back to Parliament on the outcome of the initiatives it has undertaken so far.

The power of digitisation: Members called on the Commission to define jointly with industry and tourism associations a **smart roadmap of initiatives** focusing on the wider scope of innovation (process, ICT, research) and on the required skills, in order to encourage travel and tourism companies to adopt digital tools and use them more efficiently.

In this area, the Commission is called upon to:

- present a comprehensive report encompassing an assessment of the current state of play as regards digitisation in the EU tourism market;
- pursue in detail any abuses which may arise in the area of online booking, and to adapt and develop these new ways of booking services;
- refocus funds and programmes in order to better support the digitisation of European tourism companies;
- ensure that service providers are given fair and equal access to relevant data by travel and transport operators in order to facilitate the deployment of digital multimodal information and ticketing service;
- adopt a comprehensive proposal to **end the unjustified geo-blocking of access to goods**, services and the best available rate on the basis of geographical location or country of residence.

Member States are called upon to:

- identify and support EU-wide initiatives that foster the use of digital infrastructure and interoperability among different platforms;
- provide free wi-fi in tourism areas and to abolish roaming charges by 15 June 2017;
- encourage access to high-speed broadband as a priority for remote and outermost tourism areas such as islands and coastal, mountain and rural areas in order to enhance the growth of tourism businesses and to reduce the digital gap in the EU;
- develop effective means to counter the **skills shortage** in all parts of the tourism industry, in particular in the area of digitisation.

New challenges and concepts for the promotion of tourism in Europe

2014/2241(INI) - 29/10/2015 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 485 votes to 120, with 12 abstentions, a resolution on new challenges and concepts for the promotion of tourism in Europe.

Parliament recalled that tourism is a key potential growth area of the European economy, which generates over 10% of the EU's GDP and accounts for at least 12% of jobs in the EU.

Europe is the world's number one tourist destination with the number of international tourists arriving in the EU forecast to increase by 140 million each year until 2025. However, the tourism industry in Europe faces a number of **new challenges**, among them the digitisation of distribution channels, the development of the new sharing economy sector, increasing competition from emerging, less expensive third-market destinations, changing consumer behaviour, the transition to an experience economy, the demand for quality client service, the need to attract and retain skilled staff, demographic changes, and seasonality.

The Commission's action framework: Parliament called on the Commission to report back to Parliament on the implementation of the actions set out in its 2010 communication on Tourism and the use of budget allocations under the Structural Funds and the relevant EU programmes, in particular, the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP) and the Competitiveness of Enterprises and Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (COSME) programme. It also called on the Commission to:

- present a **new strategy for EU tourism** to replace or update the 2010 communication;
- submit an analysis of the advantages and disadvantages of setting up a **European Agency for Tourism**;
- to consider an initiative such as designating a **European Year of Tourism** to promote the diversity of European tourism.

Funding: Parliament invited the Commission to ensure **greater transparency in the use of Structural Funds** which are still the largest source of external financing for activities intended to stimulate the tourism sector in certain Member States. It also recommended making the fullest possible use of the new funding opportunities under the European Funds for Strategic Investments (EFSI).

The Commission was strongly encouraged to examine the possibility of **creating a section within the next multiannual financial framework that is dedicated exclusively to tourism**, instead of being financed from the budgets of other policy areas.

Branding/joint promotion of Europe as a tourist destination: Parliament encouraged the Commission, in cooperation with the European Travel Commission (ETC), to continue and deepen the **promotion of Europe as the world's top tourist destination** under the umbrella of a common European approach. It called in particular for the creation of a **'Destination(s) Europe' brand** and the promotion of this brand as the most family-, child- and generation-friendly holiday region in the world.

Members also considered that the EU should start investing in order to be ready to tap the **potential of third countries** with a large population and emerging economies, particularly countries such as Brazil, Russia, India and China, where the number of outbound tourists is rising. They pointed out the need for initiatives aimed at promoting tourism and for **greater flexibility in respect of tourist visa arrangements** and border crossings.

Pan-European and transnational tourism products: efforts should be made to develop new transnational European tourism products.

Parliament also encouraged international cooperation in the creation of **transnational thematic itineraries** (at the level of a larger number of European countries) in order to amplify experiential elements that motivate visits to certain destinations (defined at the state level).

Member States were encouraged to **promote new tourism routes** by regenerating disused areas, streets, railways, deserted paths and outdated routes. Members also stressed the need to promote and highlight **Europe's rich cultural heritage**, using the UNESCO World Heritage List as a unique selling proposition.

The resolution stressed the potential of **cultural tourism** for poverty alleviation and underlined the potential of **sport tourism**, which could in future become one of the most dynamic sectors in the developing European travel industry.

Quality: whilst acknowledging the difference in standards of service quality in the tourism sector, Parliament is of the opinion that quality standards are important as a means of levelling the playing field for operators and increasing transparency for the consumer, thereby helping to strengthen the confidence of all parties. Stakeholders are called upon to take further the discussion of how the EU can promote agreed **quality standards for tourism services**.

Sharing economy: the sharing economy, or collaborative consumption, is a new socio-economic model that has taken off thanks to the technological revolution, with the internet connecting people through **online platforms** on which transactions involving goods and services can be conducted securely and transparently.

Given that the **current legislation is not suited to the sharing economy**, local and national governments have started to analyse such online platforms and are trying to regulate their effects, often applying disproportionate measures which are somewhat disparate within the Union. Members recommended that consideration be given to **establishing an appropriate regulatory framework** within the overarching EU digital single market strategy.

Parliament also emphasised that platforms need to be fully accessible and that consumers using such sites must be correctly informed and not misled, and the privacy of their data protected. The importance of a viable and transparent system of reviews was stressed, and of ensuring that **consumers are not penalised by service providers for leaving negative reviews**.

The Commission was urged to **assess the economic and social impact of the sharing economy** and its implications for the tourism industry, consumers, technology companies and public authorities, and to report back to Parliament on the outcome of the initiatives it has undertaken so far.

The power of digitisation: the Commission was called on to define jointly with industry and tourism associations a **smart roadmap of initiatives** focusing on the wider scope of innovation (process, ICT, research) and on the required **skills**, in order to encourage travel and tourism companies to adopt digital tools and use them more efficiently.

In this area, the Commission was called upon to:

- present a comprehensive report encompassing an assessment of the current state of play as regards digitisation in the EU tourism market;
- **pursue in detail any abuses** which may arise in the area of online booking, and to adapt and develop these new ways of booking services;
- refocus funds and programmes in order to better support the digitisation of European tourism companies;
- ensure that service providers are given fair and equal access to relevant data by travel and transport operators in order to facilitate the deployment of digital multimodal information and ticketing service;
- adopt a comprehensive proposal to **end the unjustified geo-blocking of access to goods**, services and the best available rate on the basis of geographical location or country of residence.

Member States were called upon to:

- identify and support EU-wide initiatives that foster the use of digital infrastructure and interoperability among different platforms;
- provide free wi-fi in tourism areas and to abolish roaming charges by 15 June 2017;
- encourage access to high-speed broadband as a priority for **remote and outermost tourism areas** such as islands and coastal, mountain and rural areas in order to enhance the growth of tourism businesses and to reduce the digital gap in the EU;
- develop effective means to counter the skills shortage in all parts of the tourism industry, in particular in the area of digitisation.

Sustainable, responsible and social tourism: Parliament called on the Commission to continue to promote sustainable, responsible and ecofriendly tourism by developing new specific products and promoting existing ones. It suggested setting up a Europe-wide, fully accessible web platform that brings together existing information on certified products, new forms of tourism, destinations and routes, and on specific services such as transportation means and tourism guides, in one database with access through the Visiteurope.com portal.