



**COUNCIL OF
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“I” ITEM NOTE

From:	Working Party on Tourism
To:	Permanent Representatives Committee (Part 1)
Subject:	Draft guidelines for the fourth T20 Tourism Ministers meeting, 14-16 May 2012 in Mérida (Yucatán), México

1. On 28 March 2012, the Presidency submitted the Draft guidelines referred to in the heading to the Working Party on Tourism.
2. Following a written procedure that was concluded on 20 April 2012, the Draft guidelines were approved by the Working Party.
3. The Permanent Representatives Committee (Part 1) is requested to endorse the Draft guidelines as set out in the Annex to the present Note.

This note sets out the priorities for the EU and its Member States at the fourth T20 Tourism Ministers meeting in Mexico. This document is for internal use of the EU delegation.

**Draft guidelines for the fourth T20 Tourism Ministers meeting,
14-16 May 2012 in Mérida (Yucatán), México**

Tourism has an important potential for sustainable growth enhancement and job creation. However, its potential can be further tapped into by appropriate measures. Travel facilitation is closely interlinked with tourism development and can be a tool to foster increased demand. This objective is of particular relevance in a moment where most economies look to stimulate their exports and economic growth.

In spite of the great strides made in recent decades to facilitate tourist travel in many regions of the world, there is still room for considerable progress, amongst others by considering the possibilities to maximize the use of information and communication technologies in improving visa procedures.

In this context, Mexico intends to focus the fourth T20 Tourism Ministers meeting on identifying the impact that the facilitation and simplification of visa regimes of member countries of the T20 could have in the generation of jobs and economic growth within these nations.

Ministers will discuss and propose a joint message to be presented to the President of Mexico, Felipe Calderón, as an effective lever to reactivate the generation of jobs and strengthen the development of tourism at the global level.

The cooperation between Mexico, the World Tourism Organisation and World Travel and Tourism Council in the preparation of the high-level meeting is a guarantee for its higher interest and success. Other international organisations, such as the World Economic Forum and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, the International Labour Organisation, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the International Trade Centre and the International Civil Aviation Organization will also provide a valuable input to the ministerial discussion.

Interventions on behalf of the EU will not go beyond those areas where the EU has already adopted rules.

In this context, these policy guidelines should be followed at the fourth T20 Tourism Ministers meeting:

- Acknowledge the significant economic and social potential that tourism has for the global economy, employment and sustainable development;
- Underline that the tourism sector can contribute to restore growth and job-rich recovery at national and global level, thereby contributing to strong, sustainable and balanced growth;
- Emphasise that the tourism sector plays a key role in tackling youth unemployment, often providing young people with their first professional experience;
- Emphasise that, against the background of rising rates of unemployment that the global economy is witnessing, the travel and tourism sector can provide creative ways to help solving the employment challenge.

The EU recalls the conclusions adopted by the Competitiveness Council on 12 October 2010 relating to the Commission's Communication “Europe, the world’s No 1 tourist destination — a new political framework for tourism in Europe”¹, and acknowledges that tourism policy, given its transversal nature, is influenced by other Treaty provisions, notably in the area of transport, competition, the internal market, taxation, consumer protection, public health, the environment, employment and training, maritime policy, home affairs, external relations, culture, and regional and rural development policy. Furthermore it is recalled that the facilitation of tourist travel, related to new emerging markets, can represent a major contributor to the development of the tourism sector.

¹ Doc. 14944/10 of 13 October 2010.