



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

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NOTE

From: Presidency
To: Delegations
Subject: 11th European Tourism Forum - 25 and 26 October 2012
- Information from the Presidency

Delegations will find, in annex, a note from the Presidency on the above-mentioned topic with a view to AOB item 10 c) at the Competitiveness council on 11 October 2012.

11th European Tourism Forum
25 and 26 October 2012

The Cyprus Presidency, Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Tourism, in cooperation with the European Commission are organising the European Tourism Forum in Nicosia on the 25th and 26th of October 2012.

The Forum will be organised in two main panels, preceded by one introductory and respectively followed by one closing session. The topics which will be discussed, stem from the Commission Communication “Europe, the world’s no.1 tourist destination – a new political framework for tourism in Europe”, which was adopted on the 30th of June 2010. Maintaining the leadership in the world tourist map is a challenging and ambitious target. To achieve this goal, Europe needs to strengthen its image and unfold the diversity and commonalities of the various tourist destinations that it is comprised of and at the same time find smart and flexible solutions for facilitating travel from non –EU markets.

The panel devoted on the “Consolidation of the image and profile of Europe as a collection of sustainable and high-quality destinations” will address the question of how the cooperation between stakeholders at different levels i.e. Member States, National Tourism Offices, the Commission, the European Travel Commission, the Private Sector and others, be streamlined to better promote Europe. It is important to strengthen the image of Europe, so as to persuade potential clientele, that it is a mature, high quality tourism destination, modern and adaptable to new trends, offering high level of services, tourist products and activities, at all levels. A horizontal spread - member states, regional and local level, enterprises of all sizes (particularly small and medium) - of the benefits and results of these actions should be pursued.

The facilitation of tourism flows from third countries, which is an issue that highlights the transverse nature of tourism and demonstrates the impact that other European policies have on tourism, will be the topic of the second panel. Best practices will be presented and the discussion will focus on ways and practices which could be adopted in order to facilitate tourism flows from third countries. The first experience that visitors have of coming to Europe, is getting their visas. It is therefore important that ways should be found to make the process friendly, easy and efficient while preserving safety and security.
