**Council of the
European Union**

**Brussels, 14 January 2021
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**COMPET 24
TOUR 1**

NOTE

From:	Presidency
To:	Delegations
Subject:	Draft Council conclusions on tourism in Europe for the next decade: sustainable, resilient, digital, global and social

Delegations will find attached a Presidency proposal for draft Council conclusions on tourism in Europe for the next decade: sustainable, resilient, digital, global and social, with a view to the discussion by the Working Party on Competitiveness and Growth (Tourism) at its meeting on 18 January 2021.

DRAFT COUNCIL CONCLUSIONS on TOURISM IN EUROPE FOR THE NEXT DECADE: SUSTAINABLE, RESILIENT, DIGITAL, GLOBAL AND SOCIAL

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

- Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), and in particular Article 195 thereof,

- With due regard to the respective spheres of competence of the Member States and the Commission, as well as the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality,

HAVING IN MIND

- The Communication from the Commission on "Europe, the world's No 1 tourist destination – a new political framework for tourism in Europe" of June 2010[1] and the Council conclusions of October 2010 on this communication[2];

- The Council conclusions on "The competitiveness of the tourism sector as a driver for sustainable growth, jobs and social cohesion in the EU for the next decade" of 27 May 2019[3];

- The Communications from the Commission on "The European Green Deal" of 11 December 2019[4] and on "Sustainable Europe Investment Plan European Green Deal Investment Plan" of 14 January 2020[5];

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[1] 11883/10
[2] 14944/10
[3] 9707/19
[4] 15051/19 and 15051/19 ADD1
[5] 5269/20

- The Communications from the Commission on "A New Industrial Strategy for Europe" of 10 March 2020, which introduced the industrial ecosystems approach, one which is the tourism ecosystem, as well as "A European strategy for data" of 19 February 2020;

- The Communication from the Commission on "Tourism and transport in 2020 and beyond"[6] and the related Tourism and Transport package, of 13 May 2020; the European Parliament's resolution on transport and tourism in 2020 and beyond of 19 June 2020[7] and the opinion of the European Economic and Social Committee on tourism and transport in 2020 and beyond;

- The Council conclusions on "Shaping Europe's Digital Future" of 9 June 2020[8];

- The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals adopted by the United Nations General Assembly and the UNFCCC 10 Paris Agreement within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change;

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT that:

a) tourism is a cross-cutting economic activity with a wide-ranging impact on regions' economic growth, employment and social and sustainable development;

b) tourism employs around 11.7 million people in the EU, accounting for 9% of total EU employment in the non-financial business economy, and that in 2019, the latest year before the severe impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the economy, accounted for 9.5% of the EU's GDP, with a 6% value of overall EU exports. With the pandemic the worldwide sector reduced 80% of net value and around 11.5 million jobs in the EU have already been impacted in the travel and tourism sectors in 2020;

c) due to the COVID-19 crisis, tourism has the highest investment needs among the 14 industrial ecosystems and the lowest confidence indicator;

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[6] 6874/20
[7] https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2020-0169_EN.html
[8] 8711/20

d)   the value chains in the tourism ecosystem are complex and are made up of the four key vectors of transport, accommodation, experience and intermediaries, and the success of the tourism industry lies in the degree of influence between them;

e)   the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic may provide an opportunity for the EU to exchange good practices and reinforce its cooperation and coordination in the framework of a European Agenda for Tourism;

f)   essential and non-essential travel needs clear information and transparent criteria so that travellers can make informed choices, allowing the industry to adapt and implement compliant health measures;

g)   the relevant players of the tourism ecosystem are committed to accelerating and implementing measures and actions that make the sector more sustainable and bring it closer to achieving objectives on ecological footprint reduction;

h)   following the COVID-19 pandemic, consumers, as well as future generations, will have a different approach to travel and tourism experience and the supply side must adapt and change its offer,

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

1.   HIGHLIGHTS the importance of cooperation and exchanges of best practices between Member States on sustainable and responsible tourism policies and practices, in order to build resilience and agility in future crisis management;

2.   STRESSES the positive contribution of sustainable and responsible tourism, with respect to local, natural, social and cultural resources and the well-being of local communities, particularly those in less developed areas or areas undergoing structural changes;

3. URGES the EU and its Member States to move towards a collective and well-coordinated response to possible future crises (pandemic or otherwise) in the tourism ecosystem, with a common cohesive approach, deepened cooperation and coordination, under the EU Integrated Political Crisis Response (IPCR), and by developing in the appropriate fora a harmonised framework on health and safety protocols for tourism services and establishments.

4. STRESSES the importance of considering the needs and potential of tourism SMEs and micro- enterprises as drivers for social and economic convergence with a balanced regional development and job creation.

5. HIGHLIGHTS the importance of quality education and skills development, with a focus on young people, without neglecting lifelong learning processes and resources base; encourages the acquisition of training, competences and digital skills by tourism professionals at all levels, where the ongoing work towards a Pact for Skills in tourism should be further exploited.

6. IDENTIFIES tourism as key industrial ecosystem where further measures are needed to contribute to:

    a) improving the quality of life and the quality of services offered at tourism destinations (such as new employment opportunities, sustainable construction and modernisation of sustainable tourism and public infrastructure, transport, digitalisation and ICT, telecommunication, financial, etc.), and

    b) the development of innovative and sustainable tourism products and services that take into account climate change and the growing expectations of tourists, and improve resource efficiency in the tourism sector (such as health, rural tourism, food and wine tourism, ecotourism, nautical, cultural and creative tourism, cycling, hiking and cultural routes, river tourism, amongst others).

7. ENCOURAGES Member States to develop sustainable and responsible tourism principles in their policies and strategies, based on sound evidence and on the monitoring of the positive impact it will have on global, national and regional levels, including on:

a) driving towards a responsible tourism and business conduct;

b) improving connectivity and multi-modal sustainable travel, taking into account rural and peripheral areas;

c) promoting new technologies, digitalisation, ICT and data-sharing to enhance the capacity and performance of tourism businesses, the value of tourism destinations, satisfy growing tourism consumer needs, improve tourism development planning and the smart management of tourism flows, as well as provide seamless travel, easier communication and integrated tourism development.

8. RECOMMENDS that Member States share their vision, ideas and potential projects on how tourism ecosystem can contribute to achieving the European Green Deal objectives, in line with Paris Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals of the Agenda 2030, by implementing innovative instruments to modernise tourism business models and destination management and take further steps on the road to decarbonisation and promotion of the circular economy in tourism.

9. PROPOSES that the digital transformation of tourism is prioritised within the EU Digital Single Market initiatives, namely with regard to Artificial Intelligence and big data issues, promoting a common European Data Space for tourism aligned with the EU data strategy, and ensuring that the Digital Innovation Hubs network serves the digitalisation needs of tourism SMEs.

10. ENSURES that the EU allocates adequate economic and financial tools to support the long-term recovery of the tourism ecosystem and to make it more resilient and support its green and digital transitions.

11. INVITES the Commission and the Member States to:

design a European Agenda for Tourism 2030/2050, underpinned by shared priorities and action plan, to drive the green and digital transition of the tourism ecosystem and strengthen its competitiveness, resilience and sustainability.

12. INVITES the Commission to:

i) ensure that EU policies of relevance to tourism are coherent and encourage sustainable and responsible tourism in respect of the Sustainable Development Goals, local resources and communities;

ii) launch as soon as possible, and at the latest by September 2021, a comprehensive overview of funding sources for tourism in the MFF 2021-2027 to give due support to all the policies measures defined and facilitate access to information for stakeholders;

iii) apply its industrial ecosystem approach to tourism and develop together with Member States dedicated tailored made approach pathways that support tourism industry, in particular SMEs, and destinations in their green and digital transitions;

iv) work with Member States, destinations, industry and stakeholders to launch new tools to encourage European destinations to adopt a more intelligent, informed and sustainable approach to tourism planning and management based on monitoring tools and indicators (e.g. ETIS - European Tourism Indicator System, SA – Tourism Satellite Account);

v) work with the Member States and relevant international organizations to jointly design an EU Tourism Scoreboard, as an EU flagship tool for the tourism ecosystem, by the end of 2021;

vi) present an overview of the results achieved and challenges faced in implementing the Communication on "Europe, the world's No1 tourist destination" by the end of 2021.

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