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NOTE

From:	Presidency
To:	Delegations
No. prev. doc.:	6951/21
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 23 April 2021.

Changes compared to document 6951/21 are indicated in **bold underlined** for additions and in ~~strikethrough~~ for deletions.

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 Union, as well as the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality,
- Recalling the importance of the principle of the free movement of persons and services, as established in the Treaties,

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 2010¹ and the Council conclusions of October 2010 on this communication²;
- 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 2019³;
- The communications from the Commission on "The European Green Deal" of 11 December 2019⁴ and on "Sustainable Europe Investment Plan - European Green Deal Investment Plan" of 14 January 2020⁵;

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 of which is the tourism ecosystem, and its update of [~~... March~~/April 2021], as well as "Europe's moment: Repair and Prepare for the Next Generation" of 27 May 2020 and "A European strategy for data" of 19 February 2020 and the European Skills Agenda for sustainable competitiveness, social fairness and resilience of 1 July 2020;
- The Communication from the Commission on "Tourism and transport in 2020 and beyond"⁶ and the related Tourism and Transport package⁷, of 13 May 2020⁷; the "European Parliament resolution on transport and tourism in 2020 and beyond" of 19 June 2020⁷, **the "European Parliament resolution on establishing an EU strategy for sustainable tourism" of 25 March 2021**⁸ 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 2020⁹;
- **The communication from the Commission "2030 Digital Compass: the European way for the Digital Decade" of 9 March 2021**¹⁰;
- **The Council conclusions on how to deepen the EU single market for a strong recovery and a competitive, sustainable Europe of 21 September 2020**¹¹;
- **The Council conclusions on "A recovery advancing the transition towards a more dynamic, resilient and competitive European industry" of 16 November 2020**¹²;

⁶ 6874/20

⁷ https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2020-0169_EN.html

⁸ **https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2021-0109_EN.pdf**

⁹ 8711/20

¹⁰ **6974/1/21**

¹¹ **10698/20**

¹² **13004/20**

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

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT that:

- a) tourism is a cross-cutting economic and social activity with a wide-ranging impact on regions' economic growth, employment and social and **environmental** sustainable development, which contributes to ~~upholding~~ **the preservation** and ~~projecting~~ **promotion of** European's values;
- 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;]¹³
- c) [due to the COVID-19 crisis, the tourism ecosystem has the highest investment needs among the 14 industrial ecosystems defined by the European Commission and the lowest confidence indicator¹⁴];
- d) ~~¶~~the value chains in the tourism ecosystem are complex; ~~¶~~Tourism is essentially a horizontal activity that depends on **and influences** several sectors and the success of the tourism industry lies in the **synergies and sound interaction** ~~degree of mutual influence~~ between them. Disruptions along the value chains may lead to significant losses for **all** stakeholders ~~upstream and downstream~~;

¹³ *Nota bene: figures to be updated in accordance with latest data.*

¹⁴ Commission Staff Working Document, Identifying Europe's recovery needs, SWD(2020) 98, https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/economy-finance/assessment_of_economic_and_investment_needs.pdf

- e) the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic ~~may provides~~ an occasion for the EU to exchange good practices and reinforce cooperation and coordination in the framework of a European Agenda for Tourism;
- f) ~~T~~tourism and travel needs transparent information and clear criteria on conditions and **cross-border mobility as well as appropriate digital and interoperable tools to facilitate free mobility** ~~entry requirements~~ so that travellers can make informed choices, ~~and~~ **allowing** the industry to adapt and implement compliant ~~travel~~ measures, in particular during health crises;
- f1)** stakeholders and all relevant players of the tourism ecosystem at all levels should be committed to accelerating and implementing the measures and actions that make the ecosystem more sustainable and reduce its environmental impact;
- g) following the COVID-19 pandemic, consumers, as well as future generations, may have a different approach to travel and tourism experience and the supply side **could act as driver of the anticipated changes in consumption and actively push the demand side in the direction of more responsible behaviour** ~~must adapt and change its offer, promoting sustainable production and consumption patterns across the sector's value chain;~~

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

1. HIGHLIGHTS the importance of ~~[~~**permanent**~~]~~ cooperation and exchanges of best practices between Member States on sustainable and responsible tourism policies. This is of particular relevance to build resilience and ensure agility in the context of future crisis management.
2. STRESSES the positive contribution of sustainable and responsible tourism, ~~with-respecting~~**ing** ~~to local,~~ natural, social and cultural resources and the well-being of local communities, particularly those in less developed areas, ~~areas~~ **those** undergoing structural changes ~~or~~ **and** remote areas such as the EU outermost regions.

3. URGES the EU and its Member States to move towards a collective and well-coordinated **response to the current pandemic response to and** possible future crises (pandemic or otherwise) ~~in the tourism ecosystem~~, with a common cohesive approach, deepened cooperation and coordination, **including in the implementation of a harmonized framework on health and safety protocols for tourism services and establishments**;
4. STRESSES the importance of addressing the needs and potential of tourism SMEs and micro-enterprises as drivers for social and economic convergence contributing to a balanced regional development and job creation, ~~in particular in regions where tourism represents a particularly high share of employment and revenues~~.
5. HIGHLIGHTS the importance of quality education and skills development, with a focus on young people and **equality between women and men**~~gender equality~~, without neglecting lifelong learning processes and resources; encourages student and professional exchanges as well as 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 pursued through public-private partnerships.
6. IDENTIFIES tourism as one of the ~~key~~ industrial ecosystem where further measures are needed ~~to contribute to~~:
 - a) ~~improving to~~ the quality of life and the **development, improvement and promotion of tourism products and services with due regard to all three dimensions of sustainability: economic, social and environmental. Those include the transition towards climate neutrality by improving resource efficiency, waste and water management to minimize the environmental impact, new employment opportunities, sustainable construction and modernisation of tourism and public infrastructure, transport, digital transformation, telecommunication, as well as innovative financial products and services.**

~~quality and sustainability of products and services offered at tourism destinations (such as new employment opportunities, sustainable construction and modernisation of tourism and public infrastructure, waste management, transport, digital transformation, telecommunication, financial, etc.), and~~

~~b) the development and the promotion of innovative and sustainable tourism products and services that take into account climate change, the transition towards climate neutrality and the growing expectations of tourists, improve resource efficiency in the tourism sector and contribute to reducing the environmental impact.~~

7. RECOGNISES that city tourism, business travel, the events sector and the industry of Meetings, Incentives, Conventions, and Exhibitions (MICE) are an increasingly important part of the tourism ecosystem; that their successful functioning depends on strong collaboration between travel, hospitality, and leisure sectors that provide products and services for the tourism industry; and that there is a need to re-design strategies for the future of these sectors.
8. ENCOURAGES Member States to develop sustainable, responsible and resilient tourism policies and strategies, based on sound evidence and on the monitoring of the impact on global, national and regional levels, including on:
 - a) driving towards a sustainable and responsible tourism and business conduct;
 - b) improving connectivity and multi-modal sustainable travel, taking into account cross-border, rural, peripheral and depopulated areas , as well as outermost regions;

- c) promoting new technologies, digitalisation, ICT and data-sharing to enhance the performance of tourism businesses, the value of tourism destinations, understand and meet growing and emerging needs **of** tourism consumers and adapt to their uses and practices, enrich the end-to-end tourist experience, ~~satisfy growing and changing 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.
9. RECOMMENDS that Member States share their vision, ideas and potential projects on how the tourism ecosystem can contribute to achieving the European Green Deal objectives, in line with **the** 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, more resource efficiency and promotion of circular economy in tourism.
10. EMPHASIZES the importance of the digital transformation of tourism and ~~proposes~~ that tourism can play a relevant role 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 **and a common European data space for cultural heritage** aligned with the EU data strategy, and ensuring that the European Digital Innovation Hubs network serves the digitalisation needs of **tourism related** SMEs.
11. ENSURES that the EU **identifies and** allocates ~~and identifies~~ within the existing **Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF), the Next Generation EU and state aid rules,** the 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.

12. INVITES the Commission and the Member States to design a European Agenda for Tourism 2030/2050, underpinned by shared priorities and ~~an~~ action plans, **recognising the differences between Member States, to foresight and address the key strategic challenges** to drive the green and digital transitions of the tourism ecosystem and strengthen its competitiveness, resilience, and sustainability, **and, for this propose, a joint Member States' and Commission expert group should be set up with relevant stakeholders with a view to presenting a first outline of the Agenda by the end of 2021.**
13. INVITES the Commission to:
- i) ~~mainstream~~ **reflect** tourism into ~~wider~~ **relevant** EU policies and ensure ~~that~~ they are coherent and encourage sustainable and responsible tourism in respect of the Sustainable Development Goals, natural and cultural resources and local communities, thus contributing to the quality of life and to regional **added** value-~~added~~;
 - ii) launch as soon as possible, and at the latest by September 2021, a comprehensive overview of current funding sources for tourism in the MFF 2021-2027 and the ~~New~~ **xt** Generation EU to facilitate access to information to ~~enterprises and~~ **the** public authorities **and stakeholders**;
 - iii) apply its industrial ecosystem approach to tourism and develop together with Member States a specific approach within the existing framework that supports the tourism ecosystem, in particular SMEs, and destinations in their green and digital transitions;
 - iv) in order to maintain Europe as the world's leading tourist destination in terms of value, quality, sustainability and innovation, 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 visitors needs and dynamic** ~~on~~ monitoring tools and indicators;

- 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. **The Scoreboard is intended as a tool to help determine future goals and objectives and to promote destinations within the EU. For this purpose, INVITES the Commission to work with Member States' experts to present a first outline** by the end of 2021;
- vi) [call for a detailed approach to the chapter dedicated to the Tourism ecosystem by the end of Q1 2022, with actions and financing tools, following the presentation of the European Industrial Strategy review that took place on [XX of XX¹⁵].]
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¹⁵ *Nota bene: figures to be updated in accordance with latest data.*