



PRESS RELEASE

Commissioner Tzitzikostas and MEPs Engage with the Travel and Tourism Industry for a Sustainable and Resilient Future

Brussels, 10 December 2024

Today, 10 leading European travel and tourism organisations convened in the European Parliament for a high-level meeting with Apostolos Tzitzikostas, Commissioner for Sustainable Transport and Tourism, MEP Daniel Attard and other Members of the Tourism Task Force, as well as European Commission and EU Member States representatives. This meeting builds on the work initiated in Rhodes earlier this year, continuing efforts to foster collaborative dialogue between industry leaders and policymakers, with a focus on advancing the sector's efforts towards enhanced sustainability, resilience and effective climate change mitigation.

The event follows the landmark [Joint Declaration EU Tourism: Resilience in the Climate Crisis Era](#) signed in April 2024 by the coalition of 10 industry organisations. Launched in Rhodes, the Declaration spells out the industry's commitment to decarbonisation, enhancing cross-sector collaboration and deepening engagement with policymakers to achieve a sustainable and competitive future for the travel and tourism sector.

On this special occasion, Commissioner Tzitzikostas highlighted the critical role of tourism in Europe and pledged to introduce a Sustainable Tourism Strategy as well as appropriate EU funding to help the sector adapt and mitigate the impacts of climate change.

During the discussions, industry representatives detailed their progress towards emission reduction targets. They emphasised the concrete steps being taken to support environmental commitments and drew attention to important challenges for an effective and timely transition.

Travel and tourism leaders stressed the importance of maintaining open dialogue between public and private sectors, with the aim of clarifying and reducing compliance reporting requirements, identifying funding opportunities, and sharing effective best practices across industries.

MEP Daniel Attard (S&D, Malta), Member of the Tourism Task Force Steering Group, stated: "The climate-related legislative packages have been adopted, and now our focus must shift to implementation. Sustainable targets are essential, but we must also safeguard the competitiveness of the industry. Economic growth and sustainability can and must go hand in hand. It is vital that our policies deliver tangible benefits for workers, businesses, and the environment alike."



Alexandros Vassilikos, President of HOTREC, on behalf of the Coalition, commented: “The industry has already demonstrated its commitment to sustainability through substantial investments across multiple areas. From advancing sustainable aviation fuels and developing energy-efficient technologies to creating comprehensive sustainability certifications and robust emissions measurement methodologies, we have laid the groundwork for meaningful change. Yet, we recognise that realising our full potential requires significant policy support, targeted funding, and engagement with policymakers to ensure that our smallest businesses, the true backbone of our sector, can fully participate in this transformative journey.”

Today’s meeting sets the stage for a closer partnership between policymakers and the travel and tourism sector, ensuring that shared goals for a sustainable and resilient future can be achieved together.

–ENDS–

The organisations mentioned below endorsed the Joint Declaration:

- Airlines for Europe ([A4E](#))
- Airports Council International ([ACI EUROPE](#))
- Cruise Lines International Association ([CLIA](#))
- European Travel Agents’ and Tour Operators’ Association ([ECTAA](#))
- European Exhibition Industry Alliance ([EEIA](#))
- European Regions Airline Association ([ERA](#))
- European Association of Hotels, Restaurants and Cafes ([HOTREC](#))
- The Global Association for the Attractions Industry ([IAAPA](#))
- International Road Transport Union ([IRU](#))
- European Federation of Rural Tourism ([RURALTOUR](#))

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