



THE EUROPEAN TRAVEL AGENTS'
AND TOUR OPERATORS' ASSOCIATIONS

PRESS RELEASE

Tour operators want European legislation to match with reality

The travel agency and tour operating representatives met in Brussels to draw lessons from the COVID pandemic and the past crises to help overcoming current uncertain times and presented suggestions to improve the European legislating governing this sector.

Brussels. 26 October 2022. On the evening of 25 October, the European travel industry met for an event in Brussels at the invitation of ECTAA, the European Travel Agents' and Tour Operators Association and DRV, Deutscher Reiseverband. In a period where uncertainty prevails, the travel sector has to be prepared for major challenges. Taking stock of the problems faced and the solutions that were elaborated during the COVID-pandemic is certainly essential today.

István Ujhelyi, Member of European Parliament and Vice Chair of the transport and Tourism Committee, and Dr Ute Dallmayer, CEO of Lufthansa City Center Niederrhein presented with Frank Oostdam, President of ECTAA and Dirk Inger, Managing Director of DRV, their viewpoints on various issues such as the absence of refunds, the sudden changes of travel advices as well as the practical incoherence of some legal obligations. They also exchanged with the audience on the best ways to improve the existing Package Travel Directive, which is of utmost importance for travel companies and consumers alike.

Said Frank Oostdam, President of ECTAA "broader, more accessible insolvency protection applied on services providers, improved B2B refunds, flexible scope and crisis specific measures are all issues which deserved to be addressed quickly. However, a revision of the PTD alone would be meaningless and harmful toward SMEs without a reform of passenger regulations in parallel." He further underlined "When the Commission raises the issue of prepayment, it has to look at all the aspects of the question: for example, if the customers do not make any prepayment in full, suppliers can't be paid in full by the tour operators before the service is provided".

Said Dirk Inger, Managing Director of DRV "above all, it is also about fair competition. Package holidays are not only in competition with each other. Customers also compare them with individual services, which are subject to significantly lower consumer protection requirements" he added "consumer protection requirements should not be further increased in the already very consumer-friendly package travel market." Otherwise, he said, there is a great danger that less consumer protection will emerge in the end. And that is precisely when price-sensitive customers increasingly turn to the less protected individual services. "This must not be the result of a revision".

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Note the editors:

ECTAA regroups the national associations of travel agents and tour operators of 30 European countries and represents some 123.000 enterprises.

For more information, please contact:

Eric Drésin, Secretary General

ECTAA - Group of National Travel Agents' and Tour Operators' Associations within the EU

Rue Dautzenberg 36, B-1050 Brussels

Tel: +32 2 644 34 50 - e-mail: secretariat@ectaa.org, www.ectaa.org

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ECTAA, AISBL, Rue Dautzenberg 36, B - 1050 Bruxelles, Tel : +32 (0)2 644 34 50
E-mail : secretariat@ectaa.eu / www.ectaa.eu