

PRESS RELEASE

The Association of Incoming Tour Operators of Ukraine officially part of the European travel agents' and tour operators' associations

ECTAA and AITO decide to work together to prepare the industry for Ukraine's accession to the EU and help rebuild tourism after the war.

Brussels, 13 June 2023. ECTAA was very pleased and honoured to welcome Marina Antonyuk and Olena Kazmina, President and Vice-President of AITO respectively as well as Natalya Vasylenko, Head of Tourism Development Department of the State Agency for Tourism Development of Ukraine, to the ECTAA semi-annual meeting, which took place on 8-12 June in Riga.

Destinations at the border of Russia are safe to travel to, as the meeting in Riga showed. The current war in Ukraine is indeed concentrated on the Eastern part of the Ukraine. But the war has a huge impact on travel and tourism in Ukraine and many touristic and cultural sites are destroyed.

ECTAA and AITO exchanged on ways European travel organisations could help rebuild travel and tourism in Ukraine after the war. As a first step, AITO was invited to integrate the European association as Full Member. This will allow the organisations to exchange knowledge, share experiences and build connections. As a second step, ECTAA and AITO will explore specific joint projects that aim to support the Ukrainian tourism industry.

The move is also part of a wider push for Ukraine's integration into the EU, as the country moves towards becoming a full Member State, which requires adjustment to the European laws and regulations and offers opportunities for joint projects and initiatives.

Said Frank Oostdam, President of ECTAA: "The tourism sector can serve as the backbone of Ukraine's recovery when the war is over. We are confident that this partnership will be valuable to build back a strong and resilient travel and tourism industry in Ukraine." Referring to ECTAA's statement issued in March 2022 condemning Russia's aggression of Ukraine, he added: "We stand united with our Ukrainian colleagues in these hard times."

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About ECTAA

ECTAA represents some 80,000 travel agents and tour operators in Europe, which provide consultancy and sell transport, accommodation, leisure and other tourism services as well as combined products to leisure and business customers.

For more information, please contact:

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