

The revised Package Travel Directive receives final approval from the Council

Brussels, 30 March 2026. ECTAA, the European Travel Agents' and Tour Operators' Associations, welcomes today's formal adoption of the revised Package Travel Directive by the European Council. This marks the conclusion of an important legislative process and delivers a clearer, more workable framework for organised travel in Europe.

The new text introduces a number of useful clarifications and improvements while maintaining a high level of protection for travellers. ECTAA particularly welcomes the simplified definition of package travel and the removal of linked travel arrangements, a concept that had added complexity without delivering clear benefits to either travellers or businesses. ECTAA also notes with satisfaction that some of the most problematic proposals discussed during the review, such as limits on advance payments and the overly broad "3-hour package" concept, were not retained in the final text.

ECTAA considers this outcome a positive step forward for the travel distribution sector and a significant improvement to the legal framework governing organised travel in the European Union. Clearer and more proportionate rules are essential to support legal certainty, fair competition and consistent application across the internal market.

"While the revised Directive brings a clearer and more proportionate framework, which is good news for both travel businesses and travellers, it does not go far enough in addressing the realities of crisis situations," said Eric Drésin, Secretary General of ECTAA. "The European Commission initially set out to draw lessons from past disruptions and strengthen the framework for the future. Unfortunately, that ambition has only been partially delivered."

The revised Directive does not fully meet the original objective of creating a framework better suited to major crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic and large-scale travel disruption. In light of recent and ongoing geopolitical instability in the Middle East, and the operational consequences it carries for tour operators, travel agents and travellers alike, it is clear that the sector still needs rules that are more effective and more workable in exceptional circumstances.

Moving forward, ECTAA will continue to engage constructively with European institutions and Member States. We remain committed to supporting the effective implementation of the new Directive and actively participating in future policy discussions, always aiming to promote rules that are clear, proportionate, resilient during disruptions, and consistent across the travel market.

NB: The text is expected to be published in the Official Journal of the European Union within the next two months. Over the subsequent 28 months, ECTAA and its member organisations will work closely together to ensure a qualitative transposition of the text into national laws.

- END -

ECTAA

ECTAA represents the interests of 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.

Press contact: Eric Drésin: edresin@ectaa.eu – +32 2 644 34 50 | @ECTAAEurope (LinkedIn)