

To the attention of [Ursula von der Leyen, President-elect of the European Commission](#)

Brussels, 24th October 2019

Open Letter: Creation of European Commission portfolio on “Transport and Tourism”

Dear President-elect,

We, the fifty undersigned European tourism stakeholders, representing all aspects of the EU tourism sector, appeal for greater recognition of tourism in the new European Commission and the creation of a Commission portfolio on “Transport and Tourism”.

Uniting the responsibilities for transport and tourism under a single portfolio would also provide a basis for efficient legislative cooperation with the European Parliament, which deals with both policies within the Committee on Transport and Tourism (TRAN).

The continued success of the European tourism sector should not be taken for granted. A holistic European approach is needed to promote the competitiveness of the tourism sector and to create a favourable environment for its growth and development. Important policy decisions will have to be made in the years to come on topics including sustainability, accessibility, safety and security, visa processing, digitalisation and economic competitiveness, both within Europe and globally.

Tourism is an essential driver of economic and social development. It is the biggest employer in the EU, supporting more than 27.3 million jobs, predominantly in SMEs with high female and youth employment ratios. The sector generates (directly and indirectly) 10.3% of total EU-28 GDP. Last year the EU received over 538 million international arrivals, generating visitor exports for more than 400 billion EUR. The visitor economy brings a plethora of social benefits to Europe, often providing the first job opportunity for youngsters, helping to fight racism and regional disparities, connecting people and promoting awareness of a common European identity. It is a catalyst for cross-border collaboration and product development.

Transport and its infrastructure are essential to all aspects of tourism, and serves both visitors and residents, as well as all mobility-dependent industries. Given Europe’s increasing urbanisation, how we share our cities and develop their accessibility is one of the key strategic challenges facing the EU’s 2030 carbon-emission reduction target of 40%. Adequate connectivity for rural communities is essential in order for them to benefit from efforts to diversify tourism. These challenges are inextricable from tourism’s development, and require a cross-sectoral, holistic approach.

Any policy action in the transport sector has direct impacts on tourism and vice-versa. Tourism thrives the most where efficient transport links exist while the visitor economy provides revenues to fund facilities and infrastructure. The tourism sector influences travel flows and can support the development of more sustainable transport practices including capacity optimisation and emissions reduction.

While we trust that tourism will remain one of the priorities of the next European Commission 2019-2024, we observe that it is not stated in any of the mission letters of the proposed College of Commissioners. This appears to us to be a serious omission. Therefore, we respectfully make this collective appeal, and look forward to your response.

List of signing organisations:

- **ACI EUROPE** (Airports Council International)
- **A4E** (Airlines for Europe)
- **Amadeus** (Multinational IT Provider for the Global Travel and Tourism Industry)
- **CLIA EUROPE** (Cruise Lines International Association)
- **Confturismo Confcommercio** (Unified Grouping of Italian National Organisations Representing Enterprises and Professions in Tourism)
- **EAAM** (European Association for Aquatic Mammals)
- **EARTH** (European Alliance for Responsible Tourism and Hospitality)
- **ECF** (European Cyclists' Federation)
- **ECTAA** (The European Travel Agents' and Tour Operators' Association)
- **ECTN** (European Cultural Tourism Network)
- **EDEN** (European Destinations of Excellence)
- **EFA** (European Festivals Association)
- **EFCO & HPA** (European Federation of Campingsite Organisations and Holiday Park Associations)
- **EFFAT** (European Federation of Food, Agriculture and Tourism Trade Unions)
- **EGWA** (European Greenways Association)
- **EHTTA** (European Historic Thermal Towns Association)
- **ENAT** (European Network for Accessible Tourism)
- **ERA** (European Ramblers' Association)
- **ERF** (European Road Union Federation)
- **ERRIN** (European Regions Research and Innovation Network)
- **ESPA** (European Spas Association)
- **ETC** (European Travel Commission)
- **ETF** (European Transport Workers' Federation)
- **ETLC** (European Trade Union Liaison Committee on Tourism)
- **ETOA** (European Tourism Association)
- **ETTSA** (European Technology and Travel Services Association)

- **EUFED** (European Union Federation of Youth Hostel Associations)
- **Eurail BV** (The Organization Marketing and Managing the Eurail Pass)
- **EuroGites** (European Federation of Rural Tourism)
- **Europa Nostra** (The Voice of Cultural Heritage in Europe)
- **European Boating Industry** (The voice of the recreational boating industry in Europe)
- **Federturismo Confindustria** (National Travel and Tourism Federation)
- **FEG** (European Federation of Tourist Guide Associations)
- **FEST** (Foundation for European Sustainable Tourism)
- **Global Blue** (Tourism Shopping Tax Refund Company)
- **HOTREC** (Hotels, Restaurants and Cafés in Europe)
- **IAAPA** (International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions)
- **IGCAT** (International Institute of Gastronomy, Culture, Arts and Tourism)
- **IRU** (International Road Transport Union)
- **ISTO** (International Social Tourism Organisation)
- **Mad'in Europe** (The European portal of Craftsmen and Cultural Heritage Restorers)
- **Mirabilia Network** (Association of European UNESCO Sites)
- **OTIE** (Observatory on Tourism in the European Islands)
- **Pearle*-Live Performance Europe** (European federation in the Performing Arts and Music Sector)
- **spiritsEUROPE** (represents Spirits Producers)
- **Startup Turismo** (Italian Tourism Startup Association)
- **TUI GROUP** (The world's leading tourism group)
- **Tourism Society Europa** (Membership Body for People Working in all Sectors of the Visitor Economy)
- **Travelport** (Technology Company)
- **UNI Europa** (European Trade Union Federation for Service Workers)

List of supporting Members of the European Parliament:

- Izaskun BILBAO BARANDICA (Renew Europe) (EAJ-PNV) Spain
- Josianne CUTAJAR (S&D) Malta
- Johan DANIELSSON (S&D) Sweden
- Ismail ERTUG (S&D) Germany
- Giuseppe FERRANDINO (S&D) Italy
- Isabel GARCIA MUNOZ (S&D) Spain
- Maria GRAPINI (S&D) Romania
- Katerina KONECNA (GUE) Czech Republic
- Elena KOUNTOURA (GUE) Greece
- Ondrej KOVARIK (Renew Europe) Czech Republic
- Claudia MONTEIRO DE AGUIAR (EPP) Portugal
- Vera TAX (S&D) Netherlands
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- Elissavet VOZEMBERG-VRIONIDI (EPP) Greece