



Brussels, 17 July 2017

Jean-Claude Juncker, President of the European Commission

Frans Timmermans, First Vice-President of the European Commission

CC: Jyrki Katainen, Vice-President of the European Commission

Elżbieta Bieńkowska, Member of the European Commission

Open Letter: European Commission Work Programme 2018 –
Revision of the EU 2010 Tourism Strategy

Dear President,

Dear First Vice-President,

Firstly, let us congratulate you on the recent success regarding roaming charges. This is a real and tangible benefit for citizens travelling across the EU on business and pleasure. Let us clearly say that Europe needs more initiatives like this! If we want to **win back the trust of citizens** we have to truly raise awareness of the benefits Europe brings to their everyday lives.

In this regard, **tourism** is one of the policy areas where the **EU can make a real difference and showcase many of the benefits and rights it has created for its citizens!** Passenger-rights, cross-border consumer rights, the European healthcare regime, the end of roaming charges, the lowering of travel costs and customs free shopping with a single currency in the Eurozone are just some of our great achievements.

As you are aware, the economic and social importance of the tourism sector to the EU cannot be overstated. The sector not only generates **10% of the EU's GDP** and provides **employment for up to 15% of the population** (including a large proportion of young people and women); it also helps **integrate low-skilled Europeans and migrants to the labour market.**

Moreover, tourism often regenerates dilapidated areas and less developed regions, particularly rural ones. Last but not least, tourism contributes positively to creating a sense of pride in European identity and citizenship and **promotes mutual understanding within the EU**. This is particularly important today in view of fighting the rise of Euroscepticism and the populist anti-European movements across the EU.

Furthermore, in order to secure **Europe's position as the world's leading tourist destination** and to continue **creating jobs and sustainable growth** in the EU in line with the EC priorities for 2015-2019 and beyond, we need to considerably **strengthen the millions of SMEs in the tourism sector**. This means providing them with less burdensome regulatory **investment prospects** (cutting red tape), sufficient funding opportunities, developing further the **digital single market** and improving **sustainability and security** in the tourism sector, to mention but a few.

With Commissioner Elżbieta Bieńkowska we have had excellent cooperation when it comes to initiatives for SMEs and tourism and we are very grateful for the good collaboration over the last number of years and would like to further support her wherever possible.

In view of the above, we therefore kindly ask you to **include a European Strategy for Tourism in the European Commission Work Programme for 2018** updating the last communication issued in 2010.

This would allow the Commission to **address tourism-related challenges across all relevant EU policies** and present a multi-annual work programme with clear goals, indicators and measures for tourism. The strategy would provide guidelines for Member States, regions, local authorities and the private sector in developing their tourism strategies.

Also, **in view of the European elections in 2019, it is important to raise awareness of the benefits the EU has created, especially as regards the citizens' rights and travel.**

To this end, we are ready to contribute to this process involving political leaders of all levels, business communities, citizen groups, academics and research centres.

We are convinced that with a clear vision, adequate funds and working together in close partnership, we can remove not only roaming charges but also other obstacles hindering SMEs and tourists per se in Europe's tourism industry.

We must support the tourism sector which is hugely contributing to economic prosperity and the social inclusion of millions of European citizens and as we have said we can better use tourism when it comes to raising awareness of a common European identity and European citizenship.

We are looking forward to your positive reply and remain at your disposal.

Yours sincerely,



Hanspeter Wagner,
Member and rapporteur on
tourism of the European
Committee of the Regions



**Francesca Lluch
Armengol i Sociás**
Chairwoman of the
European Committee of
the Regions' NAT
Commission



Istvan Ujhelyi
Vice-Chair of the
European Parliament's
TRAN Committee and
Chairman of the EP
Tourism Task Force



**Cláudia Monteiro de
Aguiar**
Member of the European
Parliament and Chair of
the Working Group
Tourism of SME Europe



Patrick Torrent
President of NECSTouR



Eduardo Santander
Executive Director of the
European Travel
Commission

ANNEX

Supporting/co-signing partners

Members of the European Parliament:

1. **Ulrike Lunacek** (AT/Greens/EFA), Vice-President of the European Parliament
2. **Alfred Sant** (MT/S&D)
3. **Andrey Novakov** (BG/EPP)
4. **Bart Staes** (BE/Greens/EFA)
5. **Carlos Zorrinho** (PT/S&D)
6. **Claudia Schmidt** (AT/EPP)
7. **Claudia Tapardel** (RO/S&D)
8. **Deirdre Clune** (IE/EPP)
9. **Dieter-Lebrecht Koch** (DE/EPP)
10. **Elissavet Vozemberg** (EL/EPP)
11. **Elżbieta Łukacijewska** (PL/EPP)
12. **Fernando Ruas** (PT/EPP)
13. **Francesc Gambus** (ES/EPP)
14. **Francoise Grossetete** (FR/EPP)
15. **Franck Proust** (FR/EPP)
16. **Georges Bach** (LU/EPP)
17. **Henna Virkkunen** (FI/EPP)
18. **Herbert Dorfmann** (IT/EPP)
19. **Isabella de Monte** (IT/S&D)
20. **Ivan Jakovic** (HR/ALDE)
21. **Ivica Tolic** (HR/EPP)
22. **Izaskun Bilbao Barandica** (ES/ALDE)
23. **José Inácio Faria** (PT/EPP)
24. **Karoline Graswander-Hainz** (AT/S&D)
25. **Lucy Anderson** (UK/S&D)
26. **Luis De Grandes Pascual** (ES/EPP)
27. **Marek Plura** (PL/EPP)
28. **Maria Grapini** (RO/S&D)
29. **Massimiliano Salini** (IT/EPP)
30. **Merja Kyllönen** (FI/GUE)
31. **Miltiades Kyrkos** (EL/S&D)
32. **Monika Vana** (AT/Greens/EFA)
33. **Nuno Melo** (PT/EPP)
34. **Paul Rübiger** (AT/EPP)
35. **Renaud Muselier** (FR/EPP)
36. **Rosa Estarás Ferragut** (ES/EPP)
37. **Salvatore Pogliese** (IT/EPP)

38. **Wim Van de Camp** (NL/EPP)

Members of the European Committee of the Regions (CoR):

1. **Markku Markkula** (FI/EPP), outgoing President of the CoR, City councillor of Espoo
2. **Karl-Heinz Lambertz** (BE/PES), President-elect of the CoR, Senator and Member of the Parliament of the German-speaking Community
3. **Adam Banaszak** (PL/ECR), Vice-chair of the Kujawsko-Pomorskie Regional Assembly
4. **Alain Hutchinson** (BE/PES), Member of the Municipal Council and Deputy Mayor of Saint-Gilles
5. **Andris Jaunsleinis** (LV/EPP), Vice-President of the CoR, Member of Ventspils Municipal Council
6. **Anne Quart** (DE/PES), State Secretary for Europe and Consumer Protection, Ministry of Justice, European Affairs and Consumer Protection of the Land of Brandenburg
7. **Apostolos Tzitzikostas** (EL/EPP), Vice-President of the CoR and Head of the Region of Central Macedonia
8. **Arno Kompatscher** (IT/EPP), President of the Autonomous Province of Bolzano and Regional Councillor
9. **Barbara Hackenschmidt** (DE/PES), Member of the Brandenburg Regional Parliament
10. **Barbara Schwarz** (AT/EPP), Member of the Lower Austria Regional Government
11. **Birgitta Sacrédeus** (SE/EPP), Member of Dalarna County Council
12. **Brigitta Pallauf** (AT/EPP), President of the Salzburg Regional Parliament
13. **Bruno Hranic** (HR/EPP), Mayor of the Municipality of Vidovec
14. **Carmen Kiefer** (AT/EPP), Deputy Mayor of the Marktgemeinde of Kuchl
15. **Cees Loggen** (NL/ALDE), Member of the Executive Council of the Province of North-Holland
16. **Christian Buchmann** (AT/EPP), Member of the Styrian Regional Parliament
17. **Christian Illedits** (AT/PES), Member of the Burgenland Regional Parliament
18. **Csaba Borboly** (RO/EPP), President of Harghita County Council
19. **Dee Sharpe** (UK/ECR), Member of East Riding of Yorkshire Council
20. **Dimitris Kalogeropoulos** (EL/EPP), Politically accountable to the Municipal Council of Palaio Faliro
21. **Domenico Gambacorta** (IT/EPP), President of the Province of Avellino
22. **Doris Kampus** (AT/PES), Styrian Regional Government Minister
23. **Fernando Clavijo Batlle** (ES/ALDE), President of the Autonomous Community of the Canary Islands
24. **Fernando López Miras** (ES/EPP), Presidente Región de Murcia

25. **Franz Schausberger** (AT/EPP), Representative of the Region of Salzburg at the Committee of the Regions
26. **Gerry Murray** (IE/NI), Councillor Mayo County Council
27. **Guillermo Fernández Vara** (ES/PES), President of the Regional Government of Extremadura
28. **Günther Platter** (AT/EPP), Governor of Tyrol
29. **Hannes Weninger** (AT/PES), Leader of the Municipal Council of Giesshübl and Member of the National Council
30. **Hans Niessl** (AT/PES), Governor of Burgenland
31. **Hans-Josef Vogel** (DE/EPP), Mayor of Arnsberg
32. **Harald Sonderegger** (AT/EPP), President of the Vorarlberg Regional Parliament
33. **Heinz Lehmann** (DE/EPP), Vice-President of the CoR and Member of the Saxony Regional Parliament
34. **Heinz Schaden** (AT/PES), Mayor of Salzburg
35. **Herwig Seiser** (AT/PES), Member of the Carinthia Regional Parliament
36. **Herwig van Staa** (AT/EPP), Vice-President of the CoR and President of the Tyrol Regional Parliament
37. **Inga Berzina** (LV/ALDE), Member of Kuldīga Municipal Council
38. **Ivo Nesrovnal** (SK/EPP), Mayor of Bratislava
39. **Jan Durnez** (BE/EPP), Member of the Flemish Parliament
40. **Jean-Luc Vanraes** (BE/ALDE), Member of Uccle Municipal Council
41. **Jerry Lundy**, (IR/ALDE), Member of Sligo County Council
42. **Jesús Gamallo Aller** (ES/EPP), Director-General for External Relations and Relations with the European Union, Region of Galicia
43. **Juan José Sota Verdion** (ES/PES), Minister for the Economy, Finance and Employment of Cantabria
44. **Johanna Mikl-Leitner** (AT/EPP), Governor of Lower Austria
45. **Karsten Uno Petersen** (DK/PES), Regional Councillor Region Syddanmark
46. **Kieran Mc Carthy** (IE/EA), Member of Cork City Council
47. **Marion Walsmann** (DE/EPP), Member of the Thuringia Regional Parliament
48. **Markus Linhart** (AT/EPP), Mayor of Bregenz
49. **Markus Wallner** (AT/EPP), Governor of Vorarlberg
50. **Michael Häupl** (AT/PES), Mayor and Governor of Vienna
51. **Michel Lebrun** (BE/EPP), Member of Viroinval Municipal Council
52. **Michael Strugl** (AT/EPP), Deputy Governor of Upper Austria
53. **Olgierd Geblewicz** (PL/EPP), President of Westpomerania Region
54. **Ossi Martikainen** (FI/ALDE), Local councillor of Lapinlahti
55. **Pauliina Haijanen** (FI/EPP), Vice-President of the CoR and City councillor of Laitila
56. **Pavel Branda** (CZ/ECR), Vice-Mayor of Rádlo Municipality
57. **Peter Florianschütz** (AT/PES), Member of the Vienna Regional Parliament and Member of Vienna City Council

58. **Peter Kaiser** (AT/PES), Governor of Carinthia
59. **Petr Osvald** (CZ/PES), Vice-president of the CoR and Councillor of the City of Plzeň
60. **Povilas Žagunis** (LT/EA), Member of Panevėžys District Municipal Council
61. **Renate Brauner** (AT/PES), Deputy Mayor and Deputy Governor of Vienna
62. **Roberto Pella** (IT/EPP), *Mayor of Valdengo, Province of Biella*
63. **Salvatore De Meo** (IT/EPP), Mayor of Fondi, Latina Province
64. **Susana Díaz Pacheco** (ES/PES), President of Andalusia
65. **Viktor Sigl** (AT/EPP), President of the Upper Austrian Regional Parliament
66. **Virginijus Komskis** (LT/EA), Member of Pagėgiai Municipal Council
67. **Vytautas Kanevicius** (LT/ECR), Member of Kazlų Rūda Municipal Council
68. **Vytautas Vigelis** (LT/ALDE), Member of Švenčionys District Municipal Council
69. **Witold Stępień** (PL/EPP), President of Łódzkie Region

Members/Regions of NECSTouR:

1. Andalusia
2. Barcelona Province
3. Croatian Chamber of Commerce
4. Flanders
5. Gabrovo
6. Galicia
7. Liguria
8. Ringkobing-Skjern
9. South Limburg
10. Tirol
11. Valencia
12. Vastra Gotaland

European Associations of Local and Regional Authorities

1. Association of European Border Regions (AEBR)
2. Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR)
3. European Association of Elected representatives from Mountain Regions (AEM)

European Groupings of Territorial Cooperation

1. AEuCC – European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation Cities of Ceramics (EGTC limited)
2. EGTC AMPHICTYONY

3. EGTC Banat-Triplex Confinium
4. EGTC Eurodistrict PAMINA
5. EGTC Eurodistrict SaarMoselle
6. EGTC Galicia Norte Portugal
7. EGTC Linieland van Waas & Hulst
8. EGTC The Tisza
9. EGTC Tirol/Südtirol-Alto Adige/Trentino
10. Saeftinge' Cross-border Park (Part of the Interreg Flanders-The Netherlands program)

Organisations of the European tourism industry:



1. ACI EUROPE (Airports Council International)
2. AE4 (Airlines For Europe)
3. Amadeus (Multinational IT Provider for the Global Travel and Tourism Industry)
4. CLIA (The Cruise Lines International Association)
5. Confturismo (Unified Grouping of National Organisations Representing Enterprises and Professions in Tourism)
6. CTP (Portuguese Tourism Confederation)
7. EAAM (European Association of Aquatic Mammals)
8. EARTH (European Alliance for Responsible Tourism and Hospitality)
9. ECF (European Cyclists' Federation)
10. ECTAA (The European Travel Agents' and Tour Operators' Association)
11. ECTN (European Cultural Tourism Network)
12. EDEN (European Destinations of Excellence)
13. EFCO & HPA (European Federation of Campingsite Organisations and Holiday Park Associations)
14. EFFAT (European Federation of Food, Agriculture and Tourism Trade Unions)
15. EGWA (European Greenways Association)
16. EHHA (European Holiday Home Association)
17. ENAT (European Network for Accessible Tourism)
18. ERF (European Road Union Federation)
19. ESPA (European Spas Association)
20. ETF (European Transport Workers' Federation)
21. ETLC (European Trade Union Liaison Committee on Tourism)
22. ETOA (European Tourism Association)
23. ETTSA (European Technology and Travel Services Association)
24. EUFED (European Union Federation of Youth Hostel Associations)
25. Eurail Group (The Organization Marketing and Managing the Eurail Pass)
26. Euro Disney S.C.A. (Operator of Disneyland® Paris)

27. EuroGites (European Federation of Rural Tourism)
28. Europa Nostra (The Voice of Cultural Heritage in Europe)
29. European Boating Industry (Organization Representing the Interests of the European Leisure Marine Industry)
30. Federturismo Confindustria (National Travel and Tourism Federation)
31. FEG (European Federation of Tourist Guide Associations)
32. FEST (Foundation for European Sustainable Tourism)
33. Global Blue (Tourism Shopping Tax Refund Company)
34. HOTREC (Hotels, Restaurants and Cafés in Europe)
35. Innsbruck Tourismus
36. IRU (International Road Transport Union)
37. ISTO (International Social Tourism Organisation)
38. OTIE (Observatory on Tourism in the European Islands)
39. Pearle*-Live Performance Europe (Representing more than 7000 Organisations in the Performing Arts and Music Sector)
40. Startup Turismo (Italian Tourism Startup Association)
41. Tourism Society Europa (Membership Body for People Working in all Sectors of the Visitor Economy)
42. Tourismusverband Linz, Austria
43. UNI Europa (European Trade Union Federation for Service Workers)
44. WTTC (World Travel and Tourism Council)

Universities, research institutes and academia

1. Aiest International Association of Scientific Experts in Tourism
2. DGT Deutsche Gesellschaft für Tourismuswissenschaft e.V.
3. Lapland University of Applied Sciences
4. Management Centre Innsbruck
5. North Aegean University
6. Polytechnic Institute of Leiria
7. Responsible Tourism Institute
8. University of Girona