

**THE IMPACTS OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON THE EUROPEAN TRAVEL AND TOURISM SECTOR
STRATEGIC DISCUSSION BETWEEN THE HEAD OF CABINET OF COMMISSIONER FOR INTERNAL
MARKET WITH TRAVEL AND TOURISM STAKEHOLDERS**

Online, the 7th of April 2020

ECTAA, HOTREC, EU TRAVEL TECH and NECSTouR are grateful to Commissioner Breton for his commitment in putting and tourism at the highest in the agenda of the European Coronavirus Response team and to Mr. Moutarlier, his head of Cabinet for engaging active discussion with the European tourism stakeholders.

We see this strategic cooperation could be a way to establish a dedicated tourism policy and to help the tourism create an exit plan for coming back to business safer, more resilient and more sustainable because this alliance builds consensus and commitment in deploying the same measures at European level.

We welcome the continuation of the stakeholders' dialogue with the Commission and are committed to cooperate and the rest of [European Tourism Manifesto](#) partners to help the European Commission to build joint solutions.

MESSAGES

1. COVID-19 is having unprecedented consequences in the tourism sector. For the moment, all activities in the tourism sector face a standstill. Borders are closed, air traffic is reduced to 10% of its usual activity, people are encouraged to stay at home. Most bars, cafés and restaurants are closed. Hotels are either closed or with a 10-20% guest flow. The whole destination ecosystems are suffering more than other industries because tourism is a place based and visitors-based activity. 10 million of jobs are at risk according to the World Travel and Tourism Council. The time frame for a “full” recovery is probably 2022.
2. Building a specific European Tourism recovery plan based on responsibility, solidarity and effectiveness is well founded: Investing directly in European tourism, which is international, open, dynamic and fragile industry, will generate growth and jobs building recovery of the economy due to its cross-sectorial nature and multiplier effect. The recently approved Danish state aid scheme, which provides refunds for cancelled events and package travel, could be seen as a best practice for other national support schemes.
3. This is the reason why, ECTAA, EU Travel Tech, HOTREC and NECSTOUR, together with the European Tourism Manifesto partners call on the European Commission to take the following short, medium- and long-term initiatives, subscribing the measures proposed by the European Tourism Manifesto to Commissioner Breton while supporting the whole process.

PROPOSALS

1. The creation of as soon as possible of a **European guarantee fund for enterprises** where tourism is directly targeted. Regional Tourism authorities are deploying this measure in coordination with their national authorities to overcome the liquidity crunch of tourism businesses and more is needed.
2. Clear **position of the Commission on refund/vouchers rules** likely to be deployed by the different stakeholders to avoid a patchwork of different rules across Europe.
3. **“Anticipate the day after” range of measures** on the medium term: A coordinated approach for exit strategies and opening of the borders is crucial. In addition, the postponement of burdensome legislative measures affecting the industry with obvious costs for the industry such as the Strong Customer Consumer Authentication Directive ([2015/2366](#)) are needed. Companies would simply not be able to comply. Formal consultations should also be postponed.
4. **Building recovery by transforming business models**: Accelerating the **greening and digital transition** of destinations’ ecosystems is the long-term solution. For this the “Green Deal” and “Digital Agenda for Europe” should be the pillars of the tourism of tomorrow.
5. **European tourism data** (market share, number of jobs, travel forecasts, cross-sectorial impacts, Tourism Satellite Accounts) and Intelligence on “post COVID-19” customer patterns for effective decisions (where and when to travel, how much, what experience, how safe?) is crucial in all the recovery phases.

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION

1. How could we stakeholders all support in building such European guarantee fund for enterprises?
2. How can the industry partners and regional tourism authorities and all support in coordinating efforts and building response across the different recovery phases?
3. What opportunities in the new MFF to directly support tourism recovery and what support from stakeholders is needed: Cohesion policy, other programmes?
4. Could we envisage an interservice coordination mechanism to mainstream EU tourism related legislation, policies, actions and financial instruments?
5. This crisis is an opportunity to revise the strategy for a EU tourism policy. The industry would welcome such initiative and positively contribute to it.

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