



## PRESS RELEASE

### **Tourism and travel organisations reunite in Gothenburg to advance climate action and sustainability goals**

*Gothenburg, Sweden, 8 July 2025* – One year after adopting the [Rhodes Declaration](#), Europe's leading tourism and travel organisations are gathering in Gothenburg to renew and strengthen their shared commitment to sustainability and climate resilience.

From 7 to 9 July, the 2025 edition of the Rhodes Forum brings together key European stakeholders to assess progress, exchange best practices, and accelerate efforts to decarbonise both leisure and business travel and tourism. Special emphasis is placed on empowering micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) and supporting the industry to achieve the green transition. The event is complemented by site visits and engagement with local partners, including the iconic Liseberg Park, offering real-world insights into sustainable tourism in action.

#### **Why Gothenburg**

Gothenburg has earned global recognition as a leader in sustainable urban development. Nearly carbon-neutral and ranked among the top cities in the Global Destination Sustainability Index, the city exemplifies how public-private collaboration can drive climate innovation and inclusive community engagement. Delegates explored how Gothenburg's approaches to a sustainable visitor economy, infrastructure planning, and governance could inspire broader adoption across Europe.

#### **Forum Highlights**

- Case studies on Gothenburg's sustainable visitors model and climate-friendly infrastructure
- Panel discussions on long-term destination management and resilience
- Strategic workshops to align priorities across the tourism and travel sector with EU-wide sustainability goals for both leisure and business visitors

**This year's event reinforces the tourism and travel industry's joint commitment to:**

- Act as catalysts for positive change through knowledge-sharing
- Support MSMEs in navigating climate and regulatory challenges
- Advocate for a strong public-private partnership for decarbonisation
- Invest in training, upskilling and workforce readiness for a sustainable future

**Peter van der Schans, Executive Director and Vice President IAAPA EMEA, stated on behalf of the coalition:** *"We call on the European Commission, the European Parliament and the Council of the EU to take into account the sustainability priorities of Europe's travel and tourism ecosystem. In the upcoming EU Sustainable Tourism Strategy, we count on simplified regulatory frameworks, realistic transition timelines, and funding mechanisms that are accessible to MSMEs. Today's actions in Gothenburg build directly on the momentum from Rhodes and will shape a new era of responsible and resilient travel and tourism."*

The Forum's outcomes will contribute to the collective roadmap for a climate-neutral European tourism sector by 2050, while reinforcing cooperation with EU institutions and local governments.

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**The tourism and travel organisations present in Gothenburg are:**

- Airports Council International ([ACI EUROPE](#))
- Cruise Lines International Association ([CLIA](#))
- European Travel Agents' and Tour Operators' Association ([ECTAA](#))
- European Exhibition Industry Alliance ([EEIA](#))
- European Regions Airline Association ([ERA](#))
- European Tourism Association ([ETOA](#))
- European Association of Hotels, Restaurants, Bars and Cafes ([HOTREC](#))
- The Global Association for the Attractions Industry ([IAAPA](#))
- International Road Transport Union ([IRU](#))
- European Federation of Rural Tourism ([RURALTOUR](#))

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