



# Moving people, driving the economy

The role of the coach in the economy

**IRU**



## FACT

### **Coach tourism plays an important role in the economy.**

It accounts for up to 2 % of national GDP in European economies.

### **Coach tourism is a creator of employment.**

160,000 people are directly employed by European coach operators.

For every 1 person directly employed by coach operators, 3 more are created in the coach tourism sector: tour operators, guides, specialized travel agents.



## FACT

### **The average length of a coach journey is between 100 and 500 km.**

Coach trips are typically longer than the average train trip. Coach trips are usually shorter than air travel distances.



## CONCLUSION

- Recognise the importance of the coach in the economy.
- Encourage the use of coaches.
- Treat coaches equally and provide fair competition between different modes.
- For public service needs, compare the costs of using different modes of transport, including coaches.
- Harmonize the VAT rates applied to different modes of passenger transport.
- Treat coaches fairly when putting public services out to contract.
- Give priority to coaches at frontiers to reduce waiting time for large numbers of travellers - time that could be spent consuming services at the destination.

## CONCLUSION

- Coaches complement planes, trains, buses and ships.
- Coaches are a cost-effective alternative to other transport modes. In terms of pkm, rail is twice as expensive and travelling by car is almost three times as costly as using the coach.
- Coaches are an environmentally friendly alternative to other modes of transport, especially short distance flights.
- Coach operators are generally Small and Medium sized Enterprises. Their innovative and entrepreneurial character encourages rapid and flexible responses to market needs, including the growing demand for collective transport.

## FACT

### Coach tourists' spending benefits the local economy.

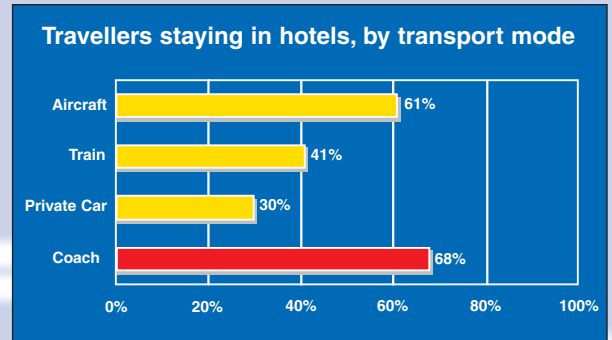
68% of all coach tourists stay in hotels, which is a higher proportion than those travelling by any other means, including air transport.

A coach tourist spends 40% more, on average, per day than the typical tourist: EUR 30-55/day\*. Coach tourists spend their money mostly on food, souvenirs and entertainment.

### Coach tourism is less likely to suffer in a recession than other modes.

"Tourism by coach is a stable part of the total tourism sector and is relatively unaffected by economic changes." NEA study conclusion 2001.

\* Deutsches Wirtschaftswissenschaftliches Institut für Fremdenverkehr: Tagesreisen. 1995, Heft 46, München.



## CONCLUSION

- Encouraging coach-based tourism is a good investment, which will generate a continuous flow of income into the local economy.

## FACT

### Coaches help to relieve traffic congestion.

One coach can replace up to 40 private cars.

### Coaches help to reduce the environmental impact of tourism.

To carry one passenger over 100 km, coaches need on average only half a litre of diesel. Between 1990 and 2000 emissions – CO, HC and NOx have been reduced by 50 % and emission rates of particulates have dropped by 80%.

### Coach tourism permits visitors to maximize enjoyment, appreciation and respect for historical and cultural sites.

Coaches allow tour groups to travel with a guide who can provide informed commentary in the appropriate language.



## CONCLUSION

- Allow this vital industry to help the local economy to flourish.
- Provide adequate unloading and parking areas near the town centre and key tourist sites.

The International Road Transport Union (IRU) is a confederation of national road transport associations, which represents the road transport industry worldwide, including both carriers of passengers and of goods. It speaks for the operators of buses, coaches, taxis and trucks.

Since there is a lack of significant data about the impact of the coach on the economy and perceptions of its importance vary, the IRU commissioned NEA Transport Research and Training to carry out a study on this subject in a representative number of European countries\*\*, as a complement to various national initiatives by IRU Members.

*\*\* Czech Republic, France, Germany, Italy, Poland, Spain, the Netherlands and United Kingdom.*

- Coach transport is a consumer friendly answer to sustainable mobility needs in a modern Europe.**
- Coach transport provides a safe, flexible, efficient and environmentally friendly alternative to all other modes of transport especially the private car.**
- Coach transport associations are your speaking partner for an open dialogue, to develop effective plans and policies, which balance the needs of all interested partners.**

International Road Transport Union (IRU)  
3, rue de Varembé  
1211 Geneva 20  
Switzerland

Tel: +41-22-918 27 00  
Fax: +41-22-918 27 41  
iru@iru.org  
www.iru.org

