

# IRU Forum

Long distance coach lines – Lessons & Opportunities  
A Global Perspective



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# About Eurolines today

- 31 years in business (Founded 1985)
- 500+ destinations included in our network
- Present in 27 European countries
- Members of Eurolines include some of the biggest names in European coach transportation including
  - Transdev
  - National Express/ALSA
  - Arriva
- Articles of Association that oblige Member compliance for:
  - Service quality
  - Safety & Security
  - Brand continuity



# Liberalisation - Opportunity or Threat?



# Customers' perspective

Coach market liberalisation in Europe has already improved standards and choice

- ✓ Smartphone booking apps
- ✓ Smartphone E-Ticketing
- ✓ GPS Coach tracking online
- ✓ Free WiFi on-board
- ✓ Power sockets on-board
- ✓ Better entertainment on-board
- ✓ Better catering on-board
- ✓ Improved comfort on-board
- ✓ More routes, higher frequency
- ✓ Lower fares



# Coach industry perspective

- Since liberalisation in France & Germany, competition in the coach sector is already realising benefits in the wider context of the transport industry
  - ✓ Much higher collective marketing spend on coach travel
  - ✓ Increased public awareness of coach travel
  - ✓ Increases in overall volume of passengers travelling by coach
- **Short term** - new coach market entrants dilute passenger volume and revenue of established coach operators, resulting in the survival of the fittest of those companies willing to invest longer term.
- **Longer term** – collective investment of a stronger liberalised coach industry sector could increase sustainable market share from other transport sectors through offering improved customer choice.

# Coach industry challenges

- **Complacency** – the coach industry has to recognise the need to change and adapt work practices in order to compete effectively
- **Political support** - Continued low prioritisation at local and national government levels to invest in supporting infrastructure for international coach travel e.g.
  - Modernising coach station facilities
  - Coach access to city centre locations
  - Coach transportation included in their inter-modal transport strategy
  - Perception that international coach travel is only for economic migrants. Not true !!
- **Price reductions** - must be sustainable with regulatory controls to prevent predatory pricing (i.e. offering fares below cost to gain market share)

# Coach industry opportunities

- Better marketing and communication integration between international coach and national bus service partnerships to expand network and destinations
- Actively engage comparison/aggregator websites to demonstrate that travelling by coach is great value at great prices
- Promoting better the positive advantages of travelling by coach
  - Better opportunity to see the countries visited and transited
  - Bigger range of smaller city/town destinations
  - Bigger baggage allowance included in the basic fare
  - Green credentials

