

PRESS RELEASE

EUROPE'S TOURISM SECTOR CALLS ON THE COUNCIL AND ON THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT FOR THE SWIFT ADOPTION OF THE VISA CODE RECAST

Easing administrative procedures while maintaining the same level of security will keep Europe's position as world's number one tourist destination

UNWTO statistics speak by themselves - Europe has steadily lost market share in world tourism, decreasing from 64% in 1980 to 51% in 2010. If the situation remains, Europe's market share is expected to fall to 41% by 2030 as other regions of the world become increasingly competitive and appealing¹.

The facilitation of the entry of legitimate travellers in Europe by easing the current administrative procedures would help Europe to continue being the world's number one tourist destination, **while maintaining the same level of security within the Schengen area.**

Indeed, according to a study commissioned by the European Commission, an increase in trips to the Schengen area of between 30 and 60 % could be expected if visa rules would be more flexible. Over five years, this would mean between EUR 120 and 130 billion in total direct spending, translated into between 1.2 and 1.3 million jobs.²

For all these reasons, NET urges the European Parliament and the Council to come swiftly to an agreement on the Visa Code trilogue negotiations.

In particular, NET calls on the EU institutions to vote in favour of measures such as i) the mandatory issuance of multiple-entry visas - to encourage tourists to visit Schengen countries several times and to facilitate the movement of legitimate workers in the EU; ii) not make the proof of accommodation compulsory; iii) to give applicants a longer period to lodge their application, in order to allow them to plan their trip; iv) to support a visa fee waiver extension (e.g. for minors).

Post scriptum

Tourism is a key growth and employment driver in Europe, particularly at this crucial time of economic recovery. In 2014, tourism represented the third-largest socio-economic sector within the European Union, generating 10% of GDP and employing 13 million people³, 91% of which are working in small and medium-sized enterprises.

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¹ **Tourism Highlights**, UNWTO, 2014 http://dtxq4w60xqpw.cloudfront.net/sites/all/files/pdf/unwto_highlights14_en_hr_0.pdf

² **Study on the economic impact of short stay visa facilitation on the tourism industry and on the overall economies of EU Member States being part of the Schengen Area**, European Commission, 2013, [file:///C:/Users/marta/Downloads/finalreport_visa_facilitation_en_8152%20\(1\).pdf](file:///C:/Users/marta/Downloads/finalreport_visa_facilitation_en_8152%20(1).pdf)

³ Source: EUROSTAT

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NET, the **N**etwork for the **E**uropean Private Sector in **T**ourism is a high-level contact group comprising various trade associations. Its members are [CLIA](#), [ECTAA](#), [EFCO&HPA](#), [ETOA](#), [HOTREC](#), [IAPAA](#), [IRU](#). Our purpose is to develop common goals for industry and work with policy makers and other partners to achieve them. For more information please [email NET](#).