



2017
INTERNATIONAL YEAR
OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM
FOR DEVELOPMENT



amadeus

Connecting Europe through Innovation

Madrid, Spain 24 March 2017
Office of the European Parliament (Paseo de la Castellana, 46)

The **resilience of European tourism** and the industry's catalytic role in stimulating economic growth are undeniable. Yet European tourism is today confronted with the critical challenge of remaining competitive and attractive in the global arena. Despite this, interesting opportunities are emerging, particularly in the adoption of **technology** that would allow to **enhance the competitiveness and sustainability** of the European tourism sector and to meet the heightened expectations of the **digital traveller**. The concept of this event, "**Connecting Europe through Innovation**", aims to explore how to best stimulate innovation in tourism by connecting public-private initiatives and sharing best practices and how to assist European tourism SMEs through technology with positioning themselves and becoming more competitive in the global marketplace. The event is closely linked to the [1st World Conference on Smart Destinations](#) organized recently in Murcia, Spain.

AGENDA

08:45 – 09:15 **Registration**

09:15 – 09:20 **Introduction of the High-Level Event by the Master of Ceremony**

Sandra Carvao, Chief of Communications and Publications at UNWTO

09:20 – 10:00 **Opening**

Claudia Tapardel, Member of the European Parliament, Co-Chair of the Intergroup on European Tourism Development and Cultural Heritage

Edward Zammit Lewis, Minister for Tourism, Malta

Taleb Rifai, Secretary General, UNWTO

10:00 – 10:30 **Coffee break**

10:30 – 11:30 **Panel 1: "Connecting Europe through smart mobility"**

This panel will discuss the key challenges in intra- and inter-national connectivity and how these can be transformed into opportunities through the deployment of digital technology, the promotion of seamless mobility within Europe, and the positioning of Europe as an attractive destination globally.

Moderator: Juan-Jesus Garcia, Head of Industry Affairs Europe, Amadeus

Inés Ayala Sender, Member of the European Parliament, Committee on Transport and Tourism

Sergi Alegre, President, Airport Regions Conference

Eduardo Santander, Executive Director, European Travel Commission

Jaime Rodriguez de Santiago, Country Manager for Spain and Portugal, BlaBlaCar

Carlos Acha Ledesma, Director of Operations, ALSA

Q & A Session

11:30 – 12:30 | Panel 2: “Assisting European tourism SMEs in navigating the digital landscape”

This panel will discuss how to empower European tourism SMEs to better take advantage of the opportunities provided by the digital market. The debate will focus around the challenges and opportunities faced by SMEs in their day to day operations when using new technologies to manage the relationship with the digital travellers.

Moderator: Chris Pomeroy, Director of Global Strategies & Client Services, MMGY Global

The voice of the traveller: Mr. Arto Kauppila and Ms. Lili Kfoury

Iuliana Gabriela Aluș, Deputy Head of Unit European Commission, DG GROW, Unit F4 - Tourism, Emerging and Creative Industries

Cláudia Monteiro de Aguiar, Member of the European Parliament, Committee on Transport and Tourism

Andrea Kostner, Deputy Director, Content Management & Production, Vienna Tourist Board

Manuel Aragones Marin, CEO, Travel Compositor

Gerben Hardeman, Manager Responsible Travel & Tourism, ANVR

Ramón Estalella, Secretary-General, CEHAT

Q & A Session

12:30 – 13:00 Closing remarks

Mircea Dobre, Minister for Tourism, Romania

Maria Andres Marin, Director of European Parliament Office in Madrid

13:00 Lunch Reception