EU actions on sustainable tourism and funding for tourism 2014-2020

"ProWell - rural wellbeing tourism in Northern Europe - project seminar"
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Facts & figures on tourism in the EU

- a cross-cutting sector, the 3rd largest economic activity in the EU (after Distribution and Construction)
- involves a big diversity of services and professions
- mainly dominated by SMEs (3.4 million)

Socio-economic importance of tourism

- 5% the EU GDP
- 5.2% of the total labour force (9.7 million jobs)
Europe N° 1 tourist destination in the world with 431 million international tourist arrivals in 2013

Thanks to great:

- cultural and historical heritage
- natural assets
- diversity of sceneries
- quality services
- good connectivity
Challenges for European tourism

> **Increased competition** from destinations in emerging countries
> **Insufficient socio-economic data** on tourism at EU level
> Information and communication technologies uptake
> Ensuring economic, social and environmental **sustainability**
> **Reducing seasonality**
> **Improving quality of tourism jobs**
> Making **holidays available to all**
> **Better visibility for Europe** and its destinations vis-à-vis third countries
Legal Framework – EU Tourism competences

• EU competence (after the Lisbon Treaty art. 195): **Complement, support and coordinate** the action of the Member States in the tourism sector

  How? By:

• **Encouraging the creation of a favorable environment** for the development of undertakings in this sector

• **Promoting cooperation** between the Member States, particularly by the exchange of good practice

• **No harmonization** of the laws and regulations of the Member States
Policy Framework
Communication COM(2010)352:
« Europe, the world’s No 1 tourist destination - a new political framework for tourism in Europe »

1) Stimulating competitiveness of the sector
2) Promoting the development of a sustainable, responsible, and high quality tourism
3) Consolidating image and profile of Europe
4) Maximising the potential of EU policies and financial instruments for developing tourism

In line with the Blue Growth strategy to support sustainable growth in the maritime and marine sectors:
Communication COM(2014)86
"A European Strategy for more Growth and jobs in coastal and maritime tourism"

Stimulate competitiveness, promoting skills and innovation, strengthening sustainability of tourism, diversify tourism offer,...
Priority actions for EU tourism policy in next years, to keep EU tourism competitive and sustainable

1. Streamlining the regulatory and administrative framework
2. Promoting the digitalisation of the tourism SMEs
3. Upgrading the skills and competences
4. Promoting sustainable and responsible tourism
5. Fostering low and medium season tourism exchanges
6. Improving intermodality and transport connectivity
7. Joint promotion of Europe as a tourist destination, in third countries' markets
8. Improving the governance of tourism
Actions promoting sustainable tourism:

**Balanced approach to economic, environmental and socio-cultural aspects**

- **European Charter for a sustainable and responsible tourism** to encourage sustainable/responsible practices

- **European Tourism Indicator System (ETIS)** for Sustainable Management of **Tourist Destinations**
  
  A comprehensive system, simple to use, flexible and suitable for all tourism destinations aiming at helping destinations to monitor, manage, measure and enhance their sustainability performances. Toolkit: 67 indicators (27 core and 40 optional), detailed guidance, surveys etc.

Actions promoting sustainable tourism:

- Supporting diversification of tourism offer /products capitalising on Europe's rich cultural and natural heritage

- Promoting non-traditional tourist destinations: 
  
  **EDEN – European Destinations of Excellence initiative**

- Cofinancing transnational projects aiming at developing and promoting **sustainable and cultural transnational thematic tourism products**: (itineraries, routes, tourism offer):
European Destinations of Excellence "EDEN"

Objectives:
- Enhancing visibility of the emerging, non-traditional European tourist destinations of excellence
- Rewarding sustainable forms of tourism
- Promoting networking between awarded destinations

European quest for excellence in tourism, around an common theme
- 2007 – rural tourism
- 2008 – local intangible heritage
- 2009 – protected areas
- 2010 – aquatic tourism
- 2011 – tourism and regeneration of physical sites
- 2013 – accessible tourism
- 2015 – local gastronomy

EDEN destinations in Finland: Saimaa Holiday, Wild Taiga
http://ec.europa.eu/eden
European Destinations of Excellence “EDEN”

> around 120 destinations awarded in Europe so far + runners-up
> **EDEN Network** - a platform for the exchange of good practices at European level between awarded destinations but also with the aim to persuade other destinations to adopt sustainable tourism development practice.

Main benefits for destinations: visibility, tourism flows, networking
Supporting sustainable transnational tourism products

Since 2011 – around 40 transnational projects co-financed, involving at least 4 countries and developing transnational tourism offer around a common theme

Objectives:

- developing and promoting transnational tourism trails, itineraries, routes: environmentally friendly tourism, cycling or hiking routes, trails, rural tourism, routes based on common cultural or industrial heritage.

- supporting development of public-private partnerships with involvement of SMEs
Examples of the co-financed projects:

- EuroVelo
- Iron Curtain Trail (EV 13)
- Hiking trail along Danube
- Greenways
- Via Francigena and the Pilgrimage Ways
- CERA-DEST European Route of Ceramics
- Venetian Routes
- ProWell - rural wellbeing tourism
- European Equestrian routes
- SEAEUROPE
- SURFINGEUROPE

Concrete deliverables of the EU support to cycle tourism:

since 2010 - 11 transnational projects directly supported to promote cycle tourism (websites, observatories, maps, promotion events, participation in fairs, development of tourists packages, action plans, strengthening of partnerships...)

EuroVelo network www.eurovelo.com
European Greenways Observatory http://www.greenwayseurope.org/
In general, we aim at supporting projects which:

- concentrate on **delivering results** and achieve **concrete impact on tourism development** /increasing tourism flows
- build **strong partnerships, networks** among different stakeholders and **create new opportunities for businesses**
- **explore synergies between tourism and other sectors** (e.g.: gastronomy, culture, art, fashion, sports,...) involving local communities
- make **good promotion/visibility of activities** (involvement of SMEs, regional (local), national tourism organisations, public authorities, media).
- use **digital tools** for promoting tourism offer
- **sustainability of results** (the initiative should not end with the end of co-financing – this should be the beginning...)
Commission’s support to cultural tourism

- **Cooperation agreements with the Council of Europe** on its “European Cultural Routes” programme
- **Organisation of fairs on cultural tourism “Crossroads of Europe”.** (The next one possibly in 2016, tbc).
- **Gastronomic portal** to promote European traditions, festivals and culinary heritage [www.tastingeurope.com](http://www.tastingeurope.com)
- Starting a **closer cooperation with UNESCO**
- Support projects on transnational thematic tourism products based on cultural and industrial heritage
Tourism under COSME (programme for the Competitiveness of Enterprises and Small and Medium-sized Enterprises ) Budget

- Budget depending on decision of the COSME Committee (2015: 9 million EUR, 2016: possibly 4,5 million EUR...)
- 2015 COSME Call on 3 THEMES (1: Low season tourism exchanges for seniors and youth, 2: Sustainable transnational tourism products and 3: Accessible itineraries). Deadline for submission 30 June 2015. Total budget 5 mln EUR.

- Co-funding of projects – development and promotion of transnational tourism offer, but no investments in infrastructure
- Trans-national dimension / European added-value
- Focus on the involvement of SMEs, supporting public – private partnerships
Other EU funding sources... for tourism related projects

Different EU funding programmes available for tourism investments:

- **Horizon 2020 (R&D), the Civitas initiative – cycling in cities, Erasmus+, Creative Europe...**

- **European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF)** including European Regional Development Fund, European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development...

Guidance fiche published on DG REGIO website:

The guide covers the most important EU programmes for the tourism sector
It focuses on (in)direct funding opportunities

http://ec.europa.eu/growth/tourism-funding-guide
Upcoming major EU tourism events 2015

European Tourism Forum (Presidency Event), Luxembourg, 17-18 September

European Tourism Day, Brussels, 16 December
Contact details

European Commission, Tourism website:

Calls for proposals:
http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/contracts-grants/calls-for-proposals/index_en.htm

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Thank you for your attention