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THE EUROPEAN UNION**

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to: Competitiveness Council

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Subject: Draft Council conclusions on Europe, the world's No 1 tourist destination – a
new political framework for tourism in Europe - adoption

1. INTRODUCTION

On 6 July 2010, the Commission submitted to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions a Communication entitled "Europe, the world's No 1 tourist destination – a new political framework for tourism in Europe".¹

¹ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: Europe, the world's No 1 tourist destination – a new political framework for tourism in Europe (doc. 11883/10 of 6 July 2010).

On 20 July 2010, the Presidency presented draft Council conclusions on Europe, the world's No 1 tourist destination — a new political framework for tourism in Europe to the Working Party on Competitiveness and Growth.

The Working Party discussed these conclusions on 20 July and 7 September 2010 and achieved considerable agreement on the text.

The Committee of Permanent Representatives reached complete agreement on the text at its meeting on 22 September 2010.

II. CONCLUSION

The Competitiveness Council is invited to adopt the conclusions as set out in the Annex to this document at its meeting on 12 October 2010.

**DRAFT COUNCIL CONCLUSIONS ON
EUROPE, THE WORLD'S No 1 TOURIST DESTINATION – A NEW POLITICAL
FRAMEWORK FOR TOURISM IN EUROPE**

The Council:

- (1) RECALLING that the Lisbon Treaty has introduced a legal basis for a European policy on tourism in Title I, Article 6(d) TFEU, and in Title XXII, Article 195 TFEU, which for the first time empowers the European Parliament and the Council, acting in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure, to establish specific measures to complement actions by Member States within the tourism sector to achieve the objectives of:
- (a) encouraging the creation of a favourable environment for the development of undertakings in the tourism sector;
 - (b) promoting cooperation between the Member States, particularly by the exchange of good practice;

while any competence to harmonise the laws and regulations of the Member States is excluded from the scope of Article 195;

All measures should be in conformity with the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality as defined in the Treaty;

- (2) RECALLING that tourism policy, given its transversal nature, is influenced by other Treaty provisions, notably in the area of transport, competition, the Internal Market, taxation, consumer protection, public health, the environment, employment and training, maritime policy, home affairs, external relations, culture, as well as regional and rural development policy;

- (3) RECALLING that the tourism industry is a dynamic sector in the EU and is currently the third sector of the economy in terms of jobs and turnover, employing 9.7 million people in 1.8 million enterprises, mainly SMEs, generating over 5 percent of the EU's GDP, and that the industry has a significant growth potential and many promising opportunities for development;
- (4) RECALLING that the tourism industry faces a number of challenges, including climate and demographic changes, pressure on biodiversity, the growing impact of information and communication technologies and increasing global competition, and that, moreover, the industry needs to recover from the effects of the global economic crisis;
- (5) RECALLING that the long-term competitiveness of the European tourism industry depends on the sustainable nature of its development, and that a competitive and responsible tourism sector is therefore a key element of Europe 2020² and the flagship initiatives of this strategy, notably the "Industrial Policy in the Era of Globalisation" initiative³;
- (6) NOTING the Madrid Declaration⁴ adopted at the informal meeting of European Tourism Ministers on 15 April 2010 and its recommendations with regard to competitive, sustainable, modern, socially responsible and ethical tourism, the need to reinforce its sustainable competitiveness, as well as the emphasis on the substantial added value that action at EU level could bring in complementing the actions of Member States;
- (7) WELCOMES the Commission's Communication entitled 'Europe, the world's No 1 tourist destination - a new political framework for tourism in Europe'⁵;

² Communication from the Commission: Europe 2020 - A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth (doc. 7110/10 of 5 March 2010).

³ [Document still due.]

⁴ Information Note: Informal meeting of Ministers for Tourism in Spain (Madrid, 15 April 2010) (doc. 9864/10 of 18 May 2010).

⁵ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions - Europe, the world's No 1 tourist destination – a new political framework for tourism in Europe (doc. 11883/10 of 6 July 2010).

- (8) EMPHASIZES that sustainability, innovation, a well-functioning Internal Market and the improvement of professional skills are key conditions for the competitiveness of the tourism sector, and STRESSES the need to increase training and life-long learning and mobility of human resources in tourism, as in other sectors;
- (9) UNDERLINES that the implementation and enforcement of the Internal Market principles in the Directive on the recognition of professional qualifications ⁶ and the Services Directive ⁷ have the potential to ease administrative burden on tourism operators, improve the protection of customers and spur increased competition and innovation;
- (10) AGREES that the main objective of the Commission's Communication is to increase the competitiveness of sustainable, responsible and ethical tourism in Europe, while taking into account social policy, territorial cohesion and the contribution of the tourism sector to the protection and promotion of Europe's natural and cultural heritage;
- (11) CONSIDERS that tourism can contribute to strengthening a sense of European citizenship;

⁶ Directive 2005/36/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 7 September 2005 on the recognition of professional qualifications (Text with EEA relevance) (OJ L 255, 30.9.2005, p. 22).

⁷ Directive 2006/123/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 December 2006 on services in the internal market (OJ L 376, 27.12.2006, p. 36).

- (12) CONSIDERS that actions in support of tourism may be organised on the basis of the four axes outlined in the Commission's communication, i.e.
- (a) stimulating competitiveness in the European tourism sector;
 - (b) promoting the development of sustainable, responsible and high-quality tourism;
 - (c) consolidating the image and profile of Europe as a collection of sustainable and high-quality destinations;
 - (d) maximising the potential of EU policies and existing financial instruments for developing tourism;
- (13) UNDERLINES that in order to reach the above objectives, an integrated approach ensuring that tourism is taken into account in other policies, including structural policies at European, national and regional level, is needed; this approach may consist of a certain number of actions of a European dimension and with a multiannual duration, which should be evidence-based and provide clear European added value; such actions should fully respect the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality as defined by the Treaty;
- (14) ACKNOWLEDGES the importance of the diversity and excellence of sustainable European destinations and underlines the importance of continuing successful Commission initiatives in this field;
- (15) NOTES that the large number of SMEs in the tourism industry provides considerable added value through the diversity of their products and services and could potentially reap the benefits from well-designed actions in support of tourism at all levels, in particular with regard to innovation, networking and the application of information and communication technologies;

- (16) ACKNOWLEDGES the need to improve the tourism-related socio-economic knowledge base regarding such elements as demographic and climate change, trends in the evolution of tourism demand and supply and the impact on tourism of unforeseen events and difficult situations, with a view to providing useful information to the industry's strategies and the policies of public authorities, while avoiding unnecessary administrative burdens;
- (17) STRESSES the substantial economic and social benefits of appropriate measures to extend the tourist season;
- (18) UNDERLINES the importance of efforts at all levels to enhance the image and profile of Europe as a set of sustainable and high-quality tourist destinations;
- (19) INVITES the Commission to:
- gather further evidence, consult widely, and analyse the European and plurinational added value of the actions and initiatives addressing the key issues mentioned above, as set out in detail in its Communication;
 - consider these actions further in light of the upcoming talks on the action implementation plan involving Member States and EU tourism stakeholders, to be discussed in the context of the European Tourism Forum on 18 and 19 November 2010, thus providing a fresh impetus to European tourism policy;
 - continue its regular exchange of views with Member States and the tourism industry, using existing structures without creating unnecessary administrative burdens;
 - report to the Council on the results of these actions and initiatives before the end of 2013 by means of a mid-term review;
- (20) INVITES Member States to participate actively and in a spirit of partnership, and acting at European, national, regional and local level, in actions aimed at increasing the competitiveness of the European tourism industry.