

EU-China Tourism Year familiarization trip brings 70 top Chinese tour operators to Europe

Brussels, 16 March 2018 – The European Travel Commission (ETC), the European association of National Tourism Boards, in partnership with the European Tourism Association (ETOA) and several European destinations in ETC member countries, hosted the first pan-European familiarization trip to foster inbound tourism to Europe from China on the occasion of the EU-China Tourism Year (ECTY). From 8 March to 15 March 2018, 70 qualified tour operators from first and second tier cities across China -including Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Shenyang, Jinan, Chongqing, Chengdu, Tianjin, Hangzhou, Suzhou, Shenzhen, Zhuhai, Wuhan, Nanjing and Xiamen- had the opportunity to experience Europe through and beyond its famous gateway cities.

ETC organised the trips into seven clusters that followed simultaneously different transnational itineraries through ETC member countries, based on the Chinese tour operators' singular interests and product portfolio. These destination clusters included fifteen countries in the macro-regions of the Adriatic, the Balkans, the Baltic, Benelux and Central Europe. The itineraries included visits to landmark cities, cultural and natural attractions, meetings with local businesses as well as experiences of lesser-known destinations easily accessible from traditional gateways.

The programme kicked-off with the Partnerships in European Tourism (PET) conference and B2B workshop between tourism-related European companies and Chinese operators jointly organised by ETC, ETOA and the European Travel Agents' and Tour Operators' Association (ECTAA) in Berlin on 6th and 7th of March.

Both initiatives, the pan-European FAM trip and the Partnerships in European Tourism, are part of the programme of activities prepared by the European Commission during the EU-China Tourism Year. The ECTY aims to promote the European Union as a travel destination in China, to provide opportunities to increase bilateral cooperation as well as mutual understanding and to create an incentive to make progress on market opening and visa facilitation.

China is the world's largest travel market in terms of both outbound travel and expenditure. European destinations have strengthened their position in this market, attaining 13.4 million Chinese arrivals in 2017, accounting for a share of 14% of all outbound travel from China.

The full programme of activities and events of the ECTY as well as market reports and practical tips on doing business in China are available on the official website www.ecty2018.org.

ENDS

[Note to editors](#)

[About the European Travel Commission](#)

The European Travel Commission is an association of National Tourism Organisations (NTOs). It was created in 1948 to promote Europe as a tourist destination to the long-haul markets outside of Europe, originally in the USA and later in Canada, Latin America and Asia. It currently has 33 member NTOs, including 8 from outside the European Union. Europe is the world's no. 1 tourist destination with 671 million international arrivals in 2017 and more than 50% of the market share of worldwide tourism.

For further information: ETC's corporate website <http://www.etc-corporate.org> is aimed at industry, government and educational personnel interested in tourism to Europe. Tourists seeking travel-specific information and ideas are directed to ETC's consumer portal <http://www.visiteurope.com>.