VisitEurope Application Wins UNWTO Ulysses Award for Innovation in Research and Technology

The 11th UNWTO Awards for Excellence and Innovation in Tourism distinguished the VisitEurope application with the prestigious Ulysses Award for Innovation in Research and Technology. This award honours outstanding initiatives in the use of technology for their significant contribution to the development of competitive and sustainable tourism. The VisitEurope app was developed by Amadeus for the European Travel Commission (ETC) in partnership with the European Commission [EC].

The VisitEurope app was distinguished for its innovative technology which aims to maximise tourism flows and serves both the European NTOs and tourism SMEs at

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ETC General Meeting #89 Elects Three Vice-Presidents

The CEOs of Turismo de Portugal, João Cotrim de Figueiredo, and the Icelandic Tourist Board, Ólöf Yrr Atladóttir, and Tourism Ireland’s Central Marketing Director, Mark Henry, have been elected Vice-Presidents of the European Travel Commission by the 89th General Meeting of the ETC, held on 22nd April 2015 in Riga, Latvia.

The ETC President and CEO of Visit Flanders, Peter de Wilde, said: “I am very proud to be working together with such a solid team of experienced professionals. Their strong commitment and support reinforce the values of the organisation and will be vital to prepare Destination Europe for the challenges that lie ahead.”

Eduardo Santander added: “I am certain that these appointments will strengthen ETC’s contribution

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ABOUT THE EUROPEAN TRAVEL COMMISSION

What Is The European Travel Commission?
The European Travel Commission (ETC) is the non-profit organisation responsible for the promotion of Europe as a tourist destination in long-haul markets.

ETC’s mission is to strengthen the sustainable development of Europe as a tourist destination and to increase competitiveness, through knowledge gathering and sharing amongst members and lobbying, as well as by establishing a professional marketing platform for the successful promotion of member countries in overseas markets.

Since When?
ETC was established in 1948 to promote the importance of tourism in revitalising Europe’s economy after World War II. ETC’s core task has remained unchanged since its foundation more than 60 years ago.

Who Are Our Members?
ETC’s members are the National Tourist Organisations (NTOs) of 33 European countries, including 24 EU member states. The NTOs of all sovereign states in Europe are eligible for full membership of ETC.

European Union: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden.

Others: Iceland, Monaco, Montenegro, Norway, San Marino, Serbia, Switzerland, Turkey.

How Does ETC Function?
ETC has its headquarters in Brussels, where its Executive Unit is based. The organisation is headed by a president elected from the directors of its member organisations.

Vital to ETC’s activities are its Market Intelligence Group (MIG) and e-Marketing Network (eMN). The MIG commissions and produces studies, handbooks on methodologies and best practice, and facilitates the exchange of European tourism statistics. The eMN provides information and expertise about the use of digital media by NTOs.

The work of all the above-mentioned groups is carried out by experts from member NTOs.

Who is Who at ETC?

Eduardo SANTANDER
Executive Director

Teodora MARINSKA
Head of Finance and Administration

Miguel GALLEGU
Head of Marketing and Communication

Stefanie GALLOB
Head of Research

Iulia NICULICĂ
Administration Project Manager

Güneş VURAL
Project Manager - Online Marketing

Jennifer IDUH
Research Project Manager

Our two interns are Zuzana Helikova (King’s College London) and Yasemin Volders (University of Antwerp).

Where Does ETC Operate?
ETC currently promotes and markets the Europe – a never ending journey brand and the VisitEurope.com portal in four major overseas markets: Brazil, Canada, China and the USA. ETC’s focus will shift gradually towards emerging markets in the coming years.

The representatives of the European NTOs operating in these markets join together to form an ETC Operations Group (OG) and elect a Chairperson. They decide on a programme of joint activities for the promotion of Europe for the year ahead, propose a budget, and seek local industry support.

What Are ETC’s Activities?
ETC undertakes three basic activities: consumer advertising, market research and public relations. ETC initiates marketing activities to promote pan-European products and themes, which are complementary to the individual marketing actions of its members. It provides members, industry partners and other interested parties with material and statistics regarding inbound tourism to Europe and best practices.

ETC also provides a forum for the directors of the European NTOs to meet regularly and exchange ideas, and it is in constant liaison with international organisations such as the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), the European Commission’s Tourism Unit (DG Growth), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation & Development (OECD) and the European Tourism Association (ETOA).
local destinations. By helping potential visitors plan their trip, providing prices in real time and offering the possibility of booking trains, the VisitEurope iPad app encourages the use of intermodality. It also helps improve efficiency when searching for the optimum itinerary, reducing time and costs and thus reducing the environmental impact of the trip.

In addition, the planning function of the VisitEurope app enables potential visitors to see the prices of their desired destination throughout the whole year, effectively demonstrating that the best deals are available during the low season. This helps to combat the negative effects of seasonality and the underuse of available facilities, the environment, the infrastructure, and employment in the tourism sector.

“The VisitEurope application is a key tool to strengthen the image of Europe as the world’s number one tourist destination through the implementation of new technologies, while enabling the public and private industry to work together towards the sustainable development and promotion of Destination Europe,” commented Eduardo Santander, ETC’s Executive Director.

Juan-Jesus Garcia, Senior Advisor Industry Affairs, at Amadeus IT Group, the company that developed the application, commented: “We are very pleased that ETC has received this award from UNWTO for an outstanding contribution to innovation and knowledge in tourism, alongside so many other prestigious winners, past and present. We are proud to have been part of this project, and it has been a great privilege working in partnership with ETC and the European Commission on making the VisitEurope app a reality.”

ETC Invited to the European Parliament to Give Keynote Speech

Eduardo Santander, ETC’s Executive Director, participated in the hearing ‘How to keep Europe at Number One? - European Tourism’s Challenges and Responses’, organised by the Committee on Transport and Tourism (TRAN) of the European Parliament on 27th March 2015.

Members of the TRAN committee, other MEPs interested in tourism, representatives of the European Commission and industry stakeholders were invited to debate the future of European tourism. In view of the fact that, in recent years, Europe has been losing market share, Eduardo Santander emphasised the importance of an inclusive and holistic approach for the joint promotion of Destination Europe and announced that ETC is willing to provide knowledge and expertise to the European Parliament and other policy makers.
ETC and the European Commission hosted an essential workshop at ITB Berlin to discuss a course of action for the joint public-private promotion of Europe as a tourist destination. A panel of high-level representatives of successful public-private partnerships promoting major international tourist destinations shared their experiences and presented their achievements to top ranking tourism officials from across Europe.

Keynote speakers included Malcolm Smith, Vice President of Business Development of the US Travel Association; Anne Madison, Chief Communication Officer of Brand USA; Jayson Westbury, CEO Australian Federation of Travel Agents (AFTA); Martina Groenegres, Director of Deutsche Lufthansa AG, Professor Peter F. Keller, Member of Board of Directors Switzerland Tourism and Christian Delom, Director of Strategy at Atout France. The panel discussions were followed by an open brainstorming session with the audience.

Underlining the importance of the discussions, ETC President, Peter De Wilde said: “It is crucial for tourism organisations at all levels to continue to strengthen their collaboration under the umbrella of a common European approach. I am convinced that, together, we will be able to safeguard Europe’s position as the world’s top travel destination.”

The workshop followed up on the high-level discussions initiated during the European Tourism Forum in Naples and the European Tourism Day in Brussels late last year, which highlighted the need for European tourism organisations at all levels to continue to strengthen their collaboration under the umbrella of a common approach and positioning in order to respond to the shifting patterns in global tourism that threaten Europe’s position as the top tourist destination in the world.

The workshop keynote presentations are available on ETC’s corporate website.

New Europe SMARTguide: Information and Ideas for Tourism Professionals

ETC has created a new tool aimed at supporting the work of travel professionals, operators and agents from around the globe by providing them with key information and new ideas for planning travel itineraries in Europe.

The Travelling in Europe SMARTguide gives a solid overview of the ongoing evolution of Europe’s transport and accommodation infrastructure, as well as a number of new initiatives to promote culture, gastronomy, nature, health and accessible tourism. Miguel Gallego, Head of Marketing and Communication at ETC, said: “Awareness-raising campaigns implemented by destination marketing organisations bring stronger return on investment when they are accompanied with concrete actions for transforming the hype into business. The information and advice compiled in the Travelling in Europe SMARTguide will result in improved planning for better targeted and smarter future itineraries in Europe.”

Download the Europe SMARTguide on ETC’s corporate website or read online.
ETC, through its overseas Operations Groups (OGs), is expanding its travel trade outreach activities in the Americas with a series of seminars in Canada, USA and Brazil throughout 2015.

The first travel trade seminar of the series took place in Toronto on 22nd April. ETC’s Canada OG and the Travel Corporation gathered more than one hundred travel agents and journalists for a Feast for the Senses, showcasing the continent in the spectacular Casa Loma. During different lectures the participants could update their knowledge about European destinations with a special focus on transnational cultural and gastronomy tours.

In June, the USA OG will host a round-table in New York City comprising top-level agents and ETC representatives, with discussions focussed on the latest European travel trends. The round-table conversations will be followed by an engaging ‘crossing borders’ interactive experience where each participating destination will have a chance to interact individually with the most influential travel professionals in the US.

Finally, the Brazil OG will be resuming its annual roadshow next autumn in cooperation with the Brazilian Tour Operators Association (BRAZTOA). The initiative involves an incentive sales campaign followed by a series of networking events in all five regions of the country. More than one hundred travel agents are expected to participate in each event.

ETC OPERATIONS GROUPS

Travel Trade Outreach in the Americas

Laura Pena, OG Canada Chair, together with representatives of the Travel Corporation Group.

Culture Hub: Europe

Discover a treasure trove of art and style, where culture is at its very heart and soul...

This is the key message of a new cross-platform digital campaign for the American market spotlighting a variety of interactive cultural touch points, from music festivals and nightlife to arts and cultural events in European destinations.

The campaign is being carried out by ETC’s Operations Group in the USA together with Travel + Leisure, one of the most influential travel brands in North America. The costumed marketing programme includes the use of rich online media units as well as a series of print inserts targeting arts and culture enthusiasts in New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Chicago and Texas.

With a similar message highlighting the appeal of the various regions in Europe, ETC’s Operations Group in Canada is also conducting a digital campaign optimised for high levels of engagement and online exposure among Canadian travel intenders. The campaign combines different behavioural targeting techniques to drive traffic to Visit Europe’s web and social media handles, offering rich content on pan-European travel experiences. The campaign is being carried out in partnership with Insight Vacations and Air Canada.
Collaboration in Research at the Forefront of ETC Activities

The 29th Annual Meeting of the ETC Market Intelligence Group (MIG) took place in Malahide, Ireland, from 18th to 21st February 2015 and was hosted by Fáilte Ireland. The meeting was this year’s key event, gathering the Research Directors of ETC’s 33 Member Organisations to freely exchange expertise and research findings on the most topical issues in European tourism. The event also offered the opportunity to enjoy the wonderful attractions of Ireland and get first-hand experience of playing Irish Gaelic games.

Participation in the MIG Annual Meeting offers ETC members the opportunity to shape the organisation’s future research programme in line with ETC’s overall strategic development. During the workshop, the Think Tank identified a series of topics the organisation should investigate next year in order to help European destinations increase their competitiveness while strengthening Europe’s position as the most visited tourist destination worldwide.

The programme also places a strong emphasis on discussing new research results with top-level experts in the field. This year’s meeting focussed on an active exchange on hot topics such as health tourism (medical and wellness tourism), the meetings’ industry but also the Russian outbound travel market. An analysis of the marketing strategies of Europe’s main competitors in overseas markets provided valuable insights and benchmarking opportunities. The collaborative spirit and forging of partnerships was reinforced by the participation of the European Commission (EC), the European Tourism Association (ETOA), European Cities Marketing (ECM), the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC).

The 29th Annual Meeting also marked a significant milestone in the governance of ETC’s high-level research group. Mr Peter Nash (Tourism Ireland) was nominated as Chairman and Mrs. Emőke Halassy (Hungarian Tourism PLC) as Vice-Chair of the ETC Market Intelligence Group and these appointments were approved by the ETC General Meeting #89 in Riga, Latvia.

Monitoring Long-Haul Travellers’ Intention to Travel to Europe

Long-Haul Travel Sentiment Survey & Index

Monitoring the development of current and potential demand is an essential activity for any tourist destination wishing to remain competitive in the dynamic tourism sector. The newly-established Long-Haul Travel Sentiment Survey & Index (LHTSI) is a joint initiative of the European Travel Commission (ETC), the European Tourism Association (ETOA) and the Eurail Group and is designed to provide the European tourism sector with early indications on travel sentiment from key non-European markets. The survey is carried out every four months and uncovers travel sentiment based on 1,000 interviews in each of the extra-European markets: Brazil, China, Japan, the Russian Federation and the United States of America.

The Long-Haul Travel Sentiment Survey & Index captures people’s intention to travel to medium and long-distance destinations, their motivations and barriers to travel, and sheds light on the key characteristics of their trip within Europe and competing destinations. The first results for 2015 emphasised that Europe has a strong positioning in respondents’ minds: four in five of all the Brazilian, Chinese, Japanese and Americans who plan to travel to long-haul destinations in 2015 intend to visit a destination in Europe. Results for the travel period May-August will be released in May 2015.

The initiative is intended as a gauge of travellers’ attitudes and intentions, and is not meant to quantify prospect demand levels – the sample represents the travel population in each market. Full results are available to the members of partner organisations only, and key results will be regularly made available through the website of partner organisations. Private companies or organisations interested in joining the initiative are kindly requested to contact the ETC Executive Unit.
Enhancing Access to Timely Market Intelligence: ETC Executive Dashboard

The European Travel Commission recently released the rejuvenated ETC Executive Dashboard with new features that improve usability and depth of information. The upgrade builds on the first pilot version which was launched in early 2014.

The Dashboard is conceived as a single entry point to key statistics and performance indicators on the tourism sector in Europe and worldwide. Information is provided on tourism performance, outbound travel from key markets and air bookings. The highly visual and easy-to-use interface supports tourism professionals in getting a quick overview of the latest trends and enables them to draw evidence-based conclusions from expected developments.

Providing up-to-date information on inbound travel to Europe from key long-haul markets is an important asset of the Dashboard. The expanded market widgets feature developments in international arrivals from ten markets in absolute and relative terms. The integration of additional sources allows users to monitor travel to their own destination and benchmark inbound flows against the European aggregate.

Further improvements enhance the pilot version in terms of usability: (i) New charts and gradient maps improve user-friendliness to track relative performance. (ii) Users can personalise and save their preferences. A new widget analyses key performance metrics for ETC’s consumer portal VisitEurope.com.

Developments have been made possible with the contribution of data partners, see http://etc-dashboard.org/data-partners. The Dashboard is a continuous project, constantly improving and growing to offer the best value and user experience. This service is part of Destination Europe 2020, a joint initiative between the European Commission and the European Travel Commission to enhance the promotion and visibility of Europe to third markets.

The Dashboard - www.etc-dashboard.org - is an exclusive service for ETC members. To receive access credentials please contact the Executive Unit.

New in the ETC Library

ETC’s portfolio of research results is constantly growing and the beginning of the year marked the addition of some interesting reports and studies to the ETC library.

The series Marketing Strategies for Tourism Destinations collects best-practice examples in tourism and promotion strategies from outside Europe. The results on six strategic markets – Brazil, Canada, China, Japan, Russia, USA – are now available in a highly visual and intuitive Executive Summary.

In order to help its members make informed decisions on which markets and segments offer the best potential for tourism to Europe, ETC added new research reports on the Russian, Brazilian and US travel market. In particular, a unique view on the image of Europe as expressed in the blogosphere is provided by the ETC-UNWTO report Understanding Russian Outbound Tourism – What the Russian Blogosphere is Saying About Europe.

Calendar of Webinars 2015

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<td>European Tourism – Trends &amp; Prospects (Quarterly Reports)</td>
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<td>14th October</td>
<td>Tourism Economics</td>
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ETC MEMBER ORGANISATIONS

- Austria
  Austrian National Tourist Office (ANTO)

- Belgium
  Flanders: Visit Flanders
  Wallonia: Walloonie-Bruxelles Tourism (WBT)

- Bulgaria
  Bulgarian Ministry of Tourism

- Croatia
  Croatian National Tourist Board (CNTB)

- Cyprus
  Cyprus Tourism Organisation (CTO)

- Czech Republic
  CzechTourism

- Denmark
  VisitDenmark

- Estonia
  Estonian Tourist Board - Enterprise Estonia

- Finland
  Visit Finland - Finpro

- Germany
  German National Tourist Board (GNTB)

- Greece
  Greek National Tourism Organisation (GTO)

- Hungary
  Hungarian Tourism Plc.

- Iceland
  Icelandic Tourist Board

- Ireland
  Fáilte Ireland Tourism Ireland Ltd.

- Italy
  The Italian Government Tourism Board

- Latvia
  Latvian Tourism Development Agency (TAVA)

- Lithuania
  Lithuanian State Department of Tourism

- Luxembourg
  Luxembourg National Tourist Office (ONT)

- Malta
  Malta Tourism Authority (MTA)

- Monaco
  Monaco Government Tourist and Convention Office

- Montenegro
  National Tourism Organisation of Montenegro

- Norway
  Innovation Norway

- Poland
  Polish Tourist Organisation (PTO)

- Portugal
  Turismo de Portugal, I.P.

- Romania
  Romanian National Authority for Tourism

- San Marino
  State Office for Tourism

- Serbia
  National Tourism Organisation of Serbia (NTOS)

- Slovakia
  Slovak Tourist Board

- Slovenia
  Spirit Slovenia, Slovenian Tourist Board

- Spain
  Turespaña - Instituto de Turismo

- Sweden
  VisitSweden

- Switzerland
  SwissTourism

- Turkey
  Ministry of Culture and Tourism

ETC AGENDA 2015

  Antwerp, Belgium on 11th - 12th June

- 77th ETC Board of Directors’ Meeting
  Brussels, Belgium on 23rd June

- PMASD™ Annual Event - 3rd Summer School in Leadership and Governance for Sustainable Tourism
  Vitoria-Gasteiz, Spain on 30th June - 3rd July

- 11th TourMIS Users’ Workshop & International Seminar on Monitoring Sustainability: International Seminar on Environmental and Social Tourism Indicators for Measuring Tourism Development
  MODUL University Vienna, Austria on 10th - 11th September

- 90th ETC General Meeting and 78th ETC Board of Directors’ Meeting
  Belgrade, Serbia on 7th - 9th October

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