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PRESS RELEASE

AMERICAN TRAVELLERS KEEN ON VISITING EUROPE THIS SUMMER

Brussels, 28 June 2016 – Latest results from the Long-Haul Travel Barometer – an initiative of the European Travel Commission (ETC), the European Tourism Association (ETOA) and Eurail Group – reveal that travellers from overseas markets continue to be optimistic about their travel plans to Europe in the upcoming summer season. The strongest boost is seen in the United States of America, where more respondents intend to travel to Europe than at the beginning of the year. A strong economy and more competitive airfares are firmly placing European destinations on top of Americans' minds. Positive travel sentiment in the US is a reassuring indicator paving the way for more than 27 million expected US arrivals¹ in 2016. The United States is Europe's largest long-haul market accounting for 5% of all inbound travel.

Likewise, Japanese respondents are more inclined to travel to Europe than a year ago sparking hopes for an expected but slow return of this significant market. Trends are lagging in China and Russia. In line with travel industry trends, the index suggests lower intention to travel among Chinese respondents than at the beginning of the year. Albeit at a slower pace, China continues to be an important growth market with 12 million expected arrivals in 2016¹. In Russia, the persistently low oil prices and an underperforming currency are bearing down on the economy creating barriers for potential travellers to be enthusiastic about a trip to Europe in the near future.

This summer, the sector is confronted with rapidly changing political and economic development in key overseas markets as well as heightened security concerns from within that are undermining potential travellers' intentions to embark on a long-haul trip. Upward trends are, nevertheless, seen in the majority of surveyed markets. The peak travel season – May to August – accounts for half of all travel to and within Europe, rendering it pivotal to a successful tourism performance.

About the Long-Haul Travel Barometer

Based on 1,000 interviews in five long-haul markets (Brazil, China, Japan, Russian Federation and United States of America), the survey monitors people's intention to travel and captures key characteristics of their trip, motivations and barriers to travel. The survey is designed to gauge travellers' attitudes and intentions; it does not quantify prospective levels of demand. The project is realised by TCI Research.

¹ ETC, European Tourism – Trends & Prospects

See key findings of the Long-Haul Travel Barometer in this infographic: <http://etc-corporate.org/reports/long-haul-travel-barometer3>.

The full report can be downloaded from ETC's corporate website under the following link: www.etc-corporate.org under the category "Trends Watch in Research".

Note to editors:

The European Travel Commission is an association of National Tourism Organisations (NTOs). It was created in 1948 to promote Europe as a tourism destination to the long-haul markets outside 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 608 million international arrivals and more than 50% of the market share of worldwide tourism.

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For further information: the ETC's corporate website 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 the ETC's consumer portal www.visiteurope.com.