

September
2023

What's happening in Brussels

The MDMS Regulation: Can it transform how we travel?

This is the title of the event we are co-organising on 10 October in the European Parliament hosted by MEPs Jan-Christoph Oetjen and Jakob Dalunde. ECTAA supports this event together with other stakeholders and will be speaking on a panel about "What are the obstacles to the development of multimodal ticketing services". A second panel will look into "How MDMS could be a game changer for modal shift towards more sustainable transport modes?" Besides ECTAA, there will be speakers from the consumer organization BEUC, the corporate travel association GBTA, the Dutch Ministry of Infrastructure, the European Passenger Federation EPF, eu travel tech, Transport & Environment as well as the Finnish Transport Ministry. An update on MDMS will also be given at the next joint meeting of the Air Matters Committee and Technology Working Group on 29 September in Anavyssos, Greece.

PTD proposal scheduled for Nov 2022

The revision of the package travel directive is still ongoing at Commission level. DG JUST is now aiming at an adoption between end October and end November.

Despite previous information stating that the College would stop adopting new proposals after October, the PTD could still be published in 2023 as the current Commission would like to adopt all the legislations addressing the COVID 19 pandemic, including PTD, before the end of its term in 2024. It is still not 100% sure that the Commission will ultimately adopt the PTD proposal in November. The impact assessment of the proposal is being submitted again to the regulatory scrutiny board, which can again deliver a negative opinion, further derailing the adoption process. Should the proposal be adopted as scheduled, it is very unlikely that the European Parliament will work on the PTD proposal before end 2024, considering the European Elections in June 2024 and the time to appoint the new European Commission. The Council is however not bound by the elections and can start the preparatory work earlier. The secretariat will investigate about the foreseen timeline at Council level.

Ryanair facial verification process

ECTAA sent a memo to the European Commission (DG JUST and DG MOVE) as well as the European Data Protection Board on the controversial facial

verification process implemented by Ryanair for bookings made by intermediaries. The memo explains why we consider the Ryanair practise to be in breach of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). The European privacy advocacy group NOYB filed a complaint against this Ryanair practise. Several articles have reported about this. Two of them can be found [here](#) and [here](#).

VAT platform rules – Council is considering some flexibility

Not all Member States are convinced about the need to introduce a Deemed Supplier Regime, which would require platforms to pay VAT on behalf of 'untaxed' platform suppliers, such as private accommodation providers. There are discussions at Council working group level to consider two compromises: 1) exempt VAT from short-term accommodation rentals (STR) in those Member States that have introduced such exemptions, and 2) exempt VAT from STR services in rural areas with competitive disadvantage for parts of the year. This would mean that some Member States would not introduce the platform rules for all or parts of their country. Meanwhile, the European Parliament is considering an amendment to exclude from the platform rules any platform that falls in the category of an SME. ECTAA and a number of other industry stakeholders will be holding a workshop at the European Parliament on 12 October inviting MEPs and Council Permanent Representations with the aim to explain why the platform rules are inadequate.

Indirect Sales Summit at the World Aviation Festival

ECTAA organizes two panel discussions at the Indirect Sales Summit of the World Aviation Festival on 26 September. The first panel will discuss the question "Multimodality as an opportunity for the whole travel industry?". A second panel discusses "Consumer payment trends and the impact on B2B payments". As a reminder – members of ECTAA member associations benefit from a 50% discount on tickets for the World Aviation Festival taking place from 26-28 September in Lisbon by applying the discount code ECTAA50 [here](#).

EU survey on jobs in EU tourism

Due to C19 lockdowns and reduced employment opportunities, many workers previously employed in tourism moved to other sectors. In Europe, employment in travel and tourism is estimated to have dropped by 9.3%, equating to 3.6 million jobs (WTTC, Global Economic Impact and Trends 2021). The Commission is currently working on finding effective ways to support the tourism industry in attracting and retaining a skilled workforce, and to relaunch EU tourism with improved long-term resilience. In this framework, the Commission has launched a survey on jobs in the EU tourism. Its goal is to

find the most effective strategies to address staff shortages in the tourism industry, focusing on the hospitality sector (but not only). It invites stakeholders to share good initiatives / solutions implemented to address the staff shortages at all levels. Feel free to respond to this [survey](#) by end of the month.

Sustainability Corner

SUSTOUR project coming to an end

Our three-year EU-COSME funded project to help SME travel agents and tour operators become more sustainable has come to an end on 15 September with a final peer-2-peer learning event in Cascais, showcasing the sustainability achievements of 24 of the 627 SMEs enrolled in the 1-year SME support programme. A video recording will be available [here](#) if you have missed one of the very interesting panel presentations and discussions on carbon management, plastic management, supply-chain management, shore excursion certification and sustainability marketing. The project has allowed us to develop a set of tools for companies to improve their sustainability performance, including: improved carbon footprint calculator for trips (CARMACAL), a plastic waste reduction toolkit, 30+ activity codes of conduct, supplier specific sustainability checklists and a hotel sustainability assessment tool. Moreover, the project has helped 209 travel companies to achieve Travelife Partner and 57 Travelife Certified! Thank you to all the project partners and the members that have supported this project throughout these three years!

VIVA Marketplace: Sourcing Sustainable Products

ECTAA is pleased to partner with ETOA to host the first ever B2B match-making event that will focus on bringing together sustainable-minded European suppliers with international buyers. This online marketplace will take place online on the 23rd of November 2023 – see details [here](#). Leading up to this, ETOA and ECTAA are organising a webinar on 3 October on the same subject. We will hear about the challenges and opportunities of sourcing sustainable products from different speakers from the private and public sector. More details and registrations are available [here](#).

IATA Corner

IATA BSP figures for the first half of 2023

The European Billing and Settlement Plans (BSP) showed on average an increase in sales volumes of 36,9% for the first six months of 2023 vs 2022 with strong differences between the separate markets. While the BSP sales volumes in Greece grew by nearly 80%, Iceland saw a decrease of 8%. BSP sales also decreased by nearly 8% in Ukraine and 2,5% in Russia as a result of the Russian war of aggression against the Ukraine. Comparing the first six months of 2023 with 2019 – the last full “normal” year before the pandemic – the European BSP sales volumes decreased on average by 32,9%. There is again a strong difference in the development of the different markets. While the BSP in Greece is already more than 90% above 2019 volumes, Finland is still 36% below 2019.

Publications

FAQ on PTD available on ECTAA's website

A FAQ on the ongoing revision of the package travel directive is now available in the public section of ECTAA's website: <https://www.ectaa.org/en/my-ectaa/documents/faq-on-package-travel-directive>.

A pdf version is also available in the Member section of the website. This document should help Members answering most of the questions related to PTD that could arise when meeting stakeholders and journalists on PTD. It contains answers based on the ECTAA position and the various documents prepared by the secretariat during the consultation process.

Air Passenger numbers development

Air passenger numbers at European airports in the first half of 2023 vs 2019 stand at 7,7%. In June 2023 Greece saw the strongest increase of 14,2% whereas Finland (-32,2%), Slovenia (-31,9%), Germany (-21,7%), Bulgaria (-20,5%) and Sweden (-18,8%) still show considerable decreases compared to 2019. More [here](#).

From our Partners

Webinars - Discover cities, delicious food and beautiful nature in Latvia!



ECTAA is organising two webinars in collaboration with LIAA on the Destination Latvia.

4th of October for the German speaking market. [Registration](#)

18th of October for the English speaking market. [Registration](#)

More information on Latvia in this [Newsletter](#)



Seen in the Press

Rwandair pays commission for GDS bookings in Germany

The airline from Ruanda, Rwandair, has announced to pay 5% commission for bookings that are made via GDS in Germany. This is an especially interesting move at times where many airlines apply zero commission and additionally charge surcharges for bookings made via GDS. The German travel trade media reported about this. The article (paywall) can be found [here](#).

Save the Date

- 26-28 September:** World Aviation Festival, Lisbon
- 26 September:** Indirect Sales Summit at the World Aviation Festival, Lisbon
- 28-29 September:** ECTAA's joint technical committees meeting (Air matters & Technology WG, Legal committee, Sustainability committee), Anavyssos/Greece
- 3 October:** [Webinar](#) on Sourcing of Sustainable Products
- 4 October:** Webinar Destination Latvia for the German speaking market
- 10 October:** MDMS event at the European Parliament, Brussels
- 12 October:** Workshop at EP on VAT platform rules
- 18 October:** Webinar Destination Latvia for the English speaking market

17-19 October: A [World for Travel](#), Seville
20 October: European Commission REFIT expert group
25-26 October: IATA World Financial Symposium (WFS) and World Passenger Symposium (WPS), Chicago
30-31 October: ECTAA semi-annual meeting, Lamego / Douro
8-10 November: 7th [Summit](#) of Travel Agents' Associations, Granada
23 November: [VIVA Marketplace](#): Sourcing of Sustainable Products

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