



ECTAA NEWSLETTER

In cooperation with
Mastercard



November, 2024

What's happening in Brussels

Passenger rights – Council is finalising its general approach

The Hungarian Presidency aims to adopt a general approach on the two passenger rights Regulations proposals, the so-called omnibus proposal (revising the existing passenger rights legislations) and the multimodal passenger rights proposal. There are some good elements in the current compromise texts, notably in terms of the refund process when an intermediary is involved and there is no longer a requirement to refund the intermediation fee when a transport service is cancelled. However, Member States have reservations about extending the scope of the passenger rights legislation to tickets sold as part of a package, which ECTAA advocates, but with a right of the tour operator to obtain a refund from the carrier when a refund is due to the customer under the package travel Directive.

Passenger rights hearing at the European Parliament

While the Council is completing its general approach, the Parliament is only starting its work with the organisation of Public Hearing on the passenger rights proposals on the 18th of November. Stakeholders representing carriers, hub managers, passengers and intermediaries presented their views on the proposals. Speaking in the multimodal passenger rights panel, ECTAA highlighted:

- Refunds through intermediaries: need for practical provisions and longer refund deadlines;
- Tickets sold as part of package travel: should be included in the scope of passenger rights legislation, but with some specific provisions on refunds;
- Prohibition to use passenger contact details shared by intermediary with carrier for commercial purposes;
- Reduced liability for missed connections when passenger was not properly informed about the type of ticket he/she purchased.

Court rules again on passenger rights cases

The European Court of Justice (ECJ) ruled in the [joined cases C-650/23 and C-705/23](#) that a passenger who had a confirmed booking for a flight on the basis of a package tour can claim compensation from the operating air carrier under Regulation 261/2004, even if incorrect information provided by the tour operator led to the passenger believing that the flight originally booked would not be operated, although it took place as planned. The ECJ ruled that the operating air carrier is liable for incorrect information provided by the tour operator to passengers regarding the rescheduling or cancellation of

a flight. The ECJ referred to the possibility of the operating air carrier to have recourse against the tour operator in accordance with Art. 13 of the Regulation.

Platform VAT: Council reaches agreement on contentious platform rules

Member States have reached [agreement](#) on a common approach on the ViDA package, including the VAT platform proposal. Estonia finally conceded and accepted the latest Council compromise texts, which allows Member States the possibility of an opt-out from the Deemed Supplier Regime for taxable persons falling within the special SME scheme and adelayed application until 2030. This legislation will have an impact on online travel intermediaries facilitating the supply of 'untaxed' accommodation and road transport services (e.g. holiday homes provided by private owners), but should not affect travel intermediaries selling in their own name and falling under the special scheme for travel agents. The ECTAA Fiscal Committee will review the text and next steps.

PTD: New compromise text on LTAs

After months of deadlock regarding the future of Linked Travel Arrangements (LTAs), the Hungarian Presidency has circulated a new proposal addressing their definition. The Council is now presented with two options: either remove all references to LTAs or introduce an obligation to inform consumers that the combination being booked does not constitute a package. The new compromise text was reviewed by the Legal Committee on November 18, with option two—emphasizing this information obligation—receiving broad support in principle.

However, concerns over insolvency protection persist. The text remains vague regarding what should be covered under insolvency protection, potentially leading to higher protection costs or fewer actors remaining in the market.

The next PTD working party meeting is scheduled on 21 November 2024.

IATA Corner

Reminder: Results of recent IATA mail votes

ECTAA informed its members on 23 October on the latest IATA mail votes. As a result of these mail votes the changes of the Local Financial Criteria (LFC) for France and Greece as unanimously agreed in the local Agency Passenger Joint Councils (APJCs) were adopted. The changed LFC become effective for France in January 2025 and for Greece in January 2026.

Travel Industry Ambassador Programme

ESA TALONEN CEO of IMT.fr

He is a father of three and a husband, fully embracing family life. His hobbies have transitioned from football and floorball to skiing, jogging, and padel in recent years, with the latter completely winning his heart. Every week, he and his wife lead a scout troop for 10-year-olds, infusing their lives with adventure. Rock music, especially drumming, resonates deeply with him. His passion for leading people drives him forward, both in his personal life and professional career.

His journey has been marked by both achievements and challenges. He led the responsible tourism startup Oncarbon, managing to launch it successfully but encountering difficulties in delivering value to potential customers.



Holding a strong belief in entrepreneurial thinking, he is convinced of our collective ability to improve the world, one step at a time. The tourism sector has faced turbulent times, particularly during the Covid crisis, which at moments seemed almost insurmountable. However, those challenging days have imparted lessons more valuable than he could have anticipated. At IMT.fi, they create dream vacations to Europe's most magical destinations for Finnish travelers. As the CEO and co-owner, he guides this thrilling endeavor.

ECTAA Insights

New: ECTAA podcasts available on YouTube and Spotify

Stay informed with our latest insights on multimodality and the Package Travel Directive through our new podcast series. Accessible and shareable, these episodes are designed to keep you and your network up to date on key industry developments.



Events



ECTAA

SAVE THE DATE!

Join us on our
**TRAVEL PROTECTION
SUMMIT**

19 February 2025
At the Hilton Bruxelles Grand Place

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Vamoos the Travel App that adds Wow!

Enjoyed playing with the Vamoos app during the ECTAA meeting in Sofia, or simply curious about it? Then join us for a short, interactive webinar on 21 November at 10h00 CET, where Peyton Labiak from

Vamoos will share practical strategies for travel intermediaries to meeting the evolving needs of today's travellers.

In this 20 minutes session, she will highlight keyinsights and hands-on tips designed specifically for travel companies lookingto stay competitive and cater to changing traveller expectations. Don't missthis chance to gain valuable, actionable advice tailored for travel companiesnavigating a dynamic market!

[REGISTRATION LINK](#)



Staying Competitive: Meeting Changing Traveller Demands in Today's Market

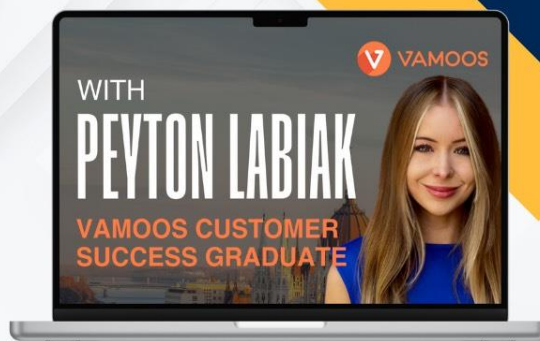


November 21st at 10:00 CET

Vamoos **The travel app that adds wow.** Vamoos provides all the information your clients need for their trip. It adds excitement before and during their travels, and ensures the first thing they do after returning from one trip is book the next one.

Join our interactive webinar

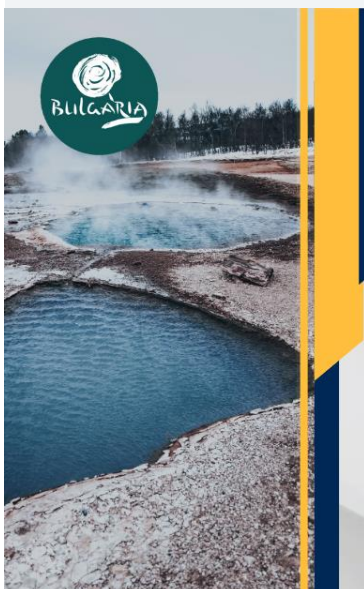
a 20-minute online presentation



Unlock New Opportunities in Bulgaria – A Must-Attend B2B Webinar!

Calling all European travel agencies! Join us for an exclusive ECTAA/ESPA B2B webinar diving into Bulgaria's unparalleled offerings. From its breathtaking mountains to serene seaside escapes, and ancient Roman thermal waters to wellness havens, Bulgaria is a treasure trove of experiences ready to captivate travel agents' clients. This is an opportunity to expand their portfolios and grow their business with this remarkable destination!

[REGISTRATION LINK](#)



Discover Bulgaria's Thermal Waters and Natural Beauty

Join us for a **B2B webinar** showcasing Bulgaria's unique attractions for European travel agencies. Discover untouched landscapes, ancient thermal waters, and stunning natural beauty from mountains to seaside, offering wellness and relaxation.



12 December 2024 at 10am Brussels time.

Speakers

- Csilla MEZÖSI, European Spas Association
- Siyka KATSAROVA, Bulgarian Union for Balneology and Spa tourism
- Moderation by Eric DRESIN, ECTAA

Join our 45-minutes Webinar



As part of a larger coalition of travel and tourism stakeholder organisations, ECTAA will be organising a lunch event on 10 December 2024 hosted by MEP Daniel ATTARD (S&D, Malta), the aim of which is to promote the [Rhodes Declaration](#) on resilience of the travel and tourism industry in the face of the climate crisis. This declaration focuses on three key priorities: decarbonization, collaboration, and meaningful engagement with policymakers to facilitate this transition, in particular the need for substantial investments in order to achieving carbon neutrality by 2050. This is an opportunity for industry stakeholders to meet with the new MEPs in the EP Transport and Tourism Committee.

WTAAA General Assembly in Athens: Shaping the Future of Global Travel Distribution

The World Travel Agents Associations Alliance (WTAAA) held its latest General Assembly from November 7-9, 2024, in Athens, bringing together delegates from over 70 markets worldwide. The event focused on pivotal developments in travel distribution across air, land, and sea sectors. This diverse gathering offered an invaluable platform for members to share insights on regional and national trends, highlighting emerging opportunities and challenges shaping the future of the global travel industry. Through meaningful dialogue, the delegates reaffirmed their collective commitment to fostering innovation and resilience within the sector.

As a follow-up, WTAAA hosted its inaugural Open Session, organized in collaboration with FEDHATTA and HATTA. This session featured presentations from key representatives, including the Greek National Tourist Organisation, showcasing innovative strategies for promoting Greece as a premier destination in major international markets. Of particular interest was the unveiling of the "Greece Destination Experts Program", an online certification initiative designed to empower travel agents with in-depth knowledge of Greek destinations. The second part of the session shifted focus to the transformative "Modern Airline Retailing" initiative, with expert insights from IATA, Amadeus, and Mastercard. Attendees explored the upcoming evolution of airline distribution, centered on a seamless "shop/order/pay" ecosystem that prioritizes the customer experience across all sales channels. The event concluded with a post-meeting tour of Crete, offering participants a firsthand experience of one of Greece's most iconic destinations.



Preferred Destination

ECTAA

Preferred
Destination

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Over 500 mineral springs await you in Bulgaria

Since the time of the Thracians, mineral springs in Bulgaria have been renowned for their healing properties. The Romans also revered these "Sacred Springs of Thrace", which spread across the entire territory of the empire. For over 2,000 years, Bulgaria's thermal springs have been used both for relaxation and for the prevention and treatment of various illnesses and ailments. Several Roman baths, now part of the country's historical heritage, testify to the fact that even centuries ago, mineral water attracted people from all corners of the Roman Empire. [Read more](#)



Publications

Europe's tourism still going strong despite inflationary pressures

The ['European Tourism Trends & Prospects' Q3 2024](#) report published by ETC on 7 November highlights a 6% rise in foreign arrivals over 2019 levels and a 7% increase in year-on-year growth. While headline inflation in Europe has eased, services inflation remains elevated, notably for accommodation and package holidays. As travellers become increasingly price-conscious, there is a notable shift toward value-driven travel experiences. Overall tourist expenditure across Europe is projected to rise by 10.3% in 2024 compared to 2023 and reach €719.7 billion, with Western Europe accounting for 74% of his total.

Save the Date

- 21 November 2024** Council PTD working party
- 22 November 2024** ECTAA Fiscal Committee, online
- 10 December 2024** EP Lunch event 'EU Tourism – Resilience in the Climate Crisis Era', Brussels
- 18 February 2025** ECTAA Committees Meeting, Brussels
- 19 February 2025** ECTAA Travel Protection Summit in Brussels
- 3-4 June 2025** ECTAA 130th semi-annual meeting, Macao

Let's unlock Europe's travel potential

Click below and read our 2024-2029 manifesto

ECTAA

Let's **unlock**
Europe's travel potential.

MANIFESTO

2024

Don't forget to follow us on



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amadeus

Sabre

TRAVELPORT

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