



## Press Release

12 September 2014

### **AETTA took part in EU's Service Innovation Conference in Helsinki**

AETTA participated as a special guest in the Service Innovation Conference organised by the European Commission on September 9-10, 2014 in Helsinki, Finland. The conference was dedicated to the innovation in the European services sectors with particular emphasis on the travel and tourism and the impact of the service innovation on the regional economic development.

The interest of AETTA for innovation is profound and driven by the globalisation processes affecting the travel and tourism sector in Europe. AETTA's research group demonstrated to the conference participants that innovation is the key element of sustainable development and profitability in our sector. Addressing the conference audience Helmut Messner, Secretary General of AETTA, said, "For the European travel and tourism sector in general and for AETTA's members in particular service innovation is in the core of our business. In fact, AETTA has been in the forefront of the innovation process as over the last years we initiated several major innovative services including our well-known ground transportation reservation service. "

AETTA's Competition Task Force led by Eduard Wurzman also took this opportunity to forge new promising relationships with colleagues from other service industries. He commented, "The conference highlighted that various services sectors can successfully learn from each other. That in itself has given a lot of inspiration and new ideas for innovation. Our research group will soon present some of these ideas at the next Strategic Committee of AETTA."

On the occasion of the conference Helmut Messner also took an opportunity to meet with EU representatives working on the preparation of the Small Business Act for Europe, the upcoming European policy to support small and medium-sized companies. He conveyed the position and ideas of AETTA members with respect to the travel and tourism sector.

For further information, please contact:  
Alexandra Goodwin  
Public Relations Manager  
Phone: +32 (0)2 403 3888 - Email: [alexandra.goodwin@aetta.org](mailto:alexandra.goodwin@aetta.org)

Note to the Editor: Association of European Travel and Tourist Agencies (AETTA) brings under one roof over one thousand travel and tourist agencies working in Europe or serving European destinations. Each year these collectively serve 8.6 million clients, generate a total turnover of some €4.9 billion and employ directly 22 000 people.

**Association of European Travel and Tourist Agencies**  
Quartier Européen – Schuman, Rue de la Loi 227, B-1040 Brussels, Belgium  
Tel: +32 (0)2 403 3888 Fax: +32 (0)2 403 3888  
secretariat@aetta.org - [www.aetta.org](http://www.aetta.org)