



## Press Release

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### **AETTA conducted a seminar on EU funding for the tourism sector**

Continuing its series of open educational workshops and seminars AETTA held a seminar on funding for the tourism sector with a particular focus on funding sources available from EU institutions. The seminar took place in Brussels on September 2-3, 2015 and was attended by 163 participants representing AETTA members and other industry stakeholders.

Addressing the seminar participants Helmut Messner, Secretary General of AETTA, said, "Tourism is the third largest sector in the EU economy and employs over 10% of all workforce. The importance of this sector for EU goes beyond just economic numbers as tourism helps build European cohesion and unique European identity. EU recognises the importance of the tourism sectors through various support programmes. These range from direct grants targeted at helping companies develop new products to indirect financing via financial intermediaries. We believe that there is much potential in this area for AETTA members and our objective in that matter is to help our members unlock this potential. "

Bretta Bonnet, AETTA's Infrastructure Task Force Coordinator, added: "EU is doing a good job of promoting and supporting tourism in EU. In fact, in times of the economic crisis when most industries were badly hurt the tourism sector showed a remarkable resilience. Not only did it not drop but actually showed a growth of about 9% compared to the 2008 pre-crisis level. This has been achieved also largely due to a number of support programmes developed and proposed by EU to the European tourism sector operators, especially for small and medium sized companies.

The seminar aims at not only providing you with an overview of the existing EU financing programmes but also at discussing the practical steps necessary to benefit from them. What is important we have the knowledge and success stories on EU funding among AETTA members and will use this opportunity to share the most inspiring stories with you."

For further information, please contact:

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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.

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