

Press Release

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AETTA held a workshop on European Commission's Single Market Strategy and its implications for travel and tourism sector

In 2015 the European Commission presented a new Single Market Strategy. The implications of this plan for the European travel and tourism sector were discussed at an AETTA workshop that took place in Lisbon on September 6, 2016. The workshop was attended by 132 AETTA members.

Addressing the workshop participants Helmut Messner, Secretary General of AETTA, said, "The principal vision unveiled by the European Commission in its Single Market Strategy is to ensure that EU citizens can travel, live, work or study wherever they wish in any country of the European Union. This trend for a deeper integration has obviously been observed over a number of years already. However, it is the first time that we see a clear and unambiguous plan, which outlines the end goals and steps that will be taken to achieve them. The analysis made by AETTA experts points out that the implementation of the Single Market Strategy will impact the business environment in the EU travel and tourism sector. Consequently, there is need to discuss the key implications of this strategy so you could timely adapt your long term development plans and, even possibly, your business models."

AETTA's Competition Task Force Coordinator Eduard Wurzman provided an extensive analysis of the changes to come: "Patchwork of different regulations excising currently at local, regional and national level will be gradually phased out in favor of the legal framework harmonised across all EU member states. This also includes SME-friendly intellectual property rights legislation and the simplification of tax regulation. Service providers, both companies and professional agents, will be able to deliver cross-border services without restrictions. The European Commission also previews the creation of a fund-of-funds for venture capital in order to channel EU funds into SMEs and start-ups. The outcome of the Single Market Strategy is the creation of opportunities for both new and existing market participants. Therefore, there is more competition to come to your traditional markets but also great opportunities for cross-border expansion via organic growth, M&A activity, joint ventures and partnerships and alliances with your peers in other markets. "

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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 8.4 million clients, generate a total turnover of some €4.9 billion and employ directly 21 000 people.

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