



## Press Release

April 11, 2018

### **AETTA organised a round table on the perspectives for the development of maritime and coastal tourism in Europe**

The Association of European Travel and Tourism Agencies (AETTA) held a round table “perspectives for the development of maritime and coastal tourism in Europe.” The round table took place in Marseille, France on April 11, 2018 and was attended by 41 participants including 33 AETTA members.

Opening the round table Helmut Messnger, Secretary General of AETTA observed, “Europe has long being a cruise destination of excellence in the world. Some 6 million tourists cruise along Europe’s coasts every year, which generates at least 3.5 million direct and indirect jobs in Europe. Moreover, the maritime and coastal tourism has been identified as one of the key growth areas for the European travel and tourism industry overall. This fact has been highlighted by the Strategy on Coastal and Maritime Tourism issued by the European Commission. We are here today to discuss the challenges, opportunities and ways forward for the development of maritime and coastal tourism with a particular focus on tour operators and travel agencies.”

Bretta Bonnet, AETTA’s Infrastructure Task Force Coordinator, added, “Many industry experts agree that the maritime and coastal tourism in Europe has considerable untapped potential for development. However, most small- and medium-sized enterprises prevailing in the tourism sector struggle with too many challenges and cannot adequately exploit this potential alone. Therefore, unlocking this growth potential requires coordination from different industry stakeholders including the cruise and tour operators, local governments and various local providers managing local attractions. Such coordination can help better use the existing resources but also create innovative integrated programmes for the visitor’s stay. Another important growth trigger is the improvement of transport connections between ports and nearby cities possessing significant culture heritage and other local attractions. Not least important is the investment in the human capital to foster customer-oriented and multilingual workforce.”

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Note to the Editor: Association of European Travel and Tourism 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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