Travel and Tourism Industry Unite for
a Sustainable Future

In April 2024, association representatives from Europe's travel and tourism sector, both business and leisure, convened in Rhodes, Greece, to sign a Joint Declaration. This landmark agreement outlines a shared roadmap to advance sustainability in the tourism sector.

Key priorities include advancing decarbonisation, promoting collaboration across the sector and engaging policymakers in constructive dialogue. Together, we aim to ensure a sustainable and resilient future for European travel and tourism.

Meet the Associations

Airlines for Europe (A4E) is Europe's largest airline association. A4E represents 17 airline group members which collectively count for over 80% of European air traffic and carried over 718 million passengers in 2023.

Aviation strengthens ties between citizens, businesses and communities across borders – and facilitates European integration. Our goal is a competitive, sustainable and safe air transport market in Europe.

A4E has committed to decarbonizing air transport and accelerating efforts to make Europe the world's first carbon-neutral continent by 2050. A4E's core objective is that aviation can grow sustainably while continuing to benefit the social and economic development of countries across Europe in the coming decades. This requires a coherent policy framework that promotes sustainability while supporting competitiveness.

ACI EUROPE is the European region of Airports Council International (ACI), the only worldwide professional association of airport operators. ACI EUROPE represents over 600 airports in 55 countries. Our members facilitate over 90% of commercial air traffic in Europe. Airports and air connectivity support 14 million jobs, generating €851 billion in European economic activity (5% of GDP).

In response to the Climate Emergency, in June 2019 our members committed to achieving Net Zero carbon emissions for operations under their control by 2050, without offsetting. Based in Brussels, we lead and serve the European airport industry and maintain strong links with other ACI regions throughout the world.

Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) is the preeminent cruise association, providing a unified voice for the industry as the leading authority of the global cruise community.

CLIA represents oceangoing member lines which comprise 95% of global cruise passenger capacity, including the world's most prestigious ocean, river, and specialty cruise lines, as well as a business community of leading ports, destinations, shipyards and maritime business services providers and the largest network of travel professionals who specialise in cruise travel.

Together with its members and partners, CLIA supports policies and practices that foster safe, healthy and sustainable cruise operations; tourism strategies that maximise the socioeconomic benefits of cruise travel; and technologies and innovations that both protect and preserve our planet.

ECTAA, the European Travel Agents' and Tour Operators' Association, represents approximately 80,000 travel enterprises, predominantly SMEs. Its mission is to collaborate with members and stakeholders to accelerate the transition towards a more sustainable travel and tourism industry, by fostering collaboration and education, while developing and supporting the adoption of sustainable practices and tools within the sector.

ECTAA has signed the Glasgow Declaration on Climate Action in Tourism, recognising the need to accelerate climate action in tourism and align with global goals to halve emissions over the next decade and reach Net Zero emissions before 2050. As part of this commitment, ECTAA has adopted a Climate Action Plan based on the five shared pathways – measure, decarbonise, regenerate, collaborate and finance.

The European Exhibition Industry Alliance (EEIA) is a cooperation between UFI, the Global Association of the Exhibition Industry, and the European Major Exhibition Centres Association (EMECA). It represents the European exhibition industry towards the EU Institutions.

Our industry has developed the global Net Zero Carbon Events (NZCE) initiative, i.e. pledge, roadmaps, guidelines, measuring methodologies and in-depth guidance to reduce our scope 1,2 and 3 emissions fast to meet the Paris goals. NZCE has been linked to the UN COPs since the very beginning, it is supported by UNFCCC and its methodology has been officially integrated into the official UN Green Events Tool, GET. EEIA is committed to the NZCE initiative and makes sure it is aligned with the EU's Green Transition legislation.

The European Regions Airline Association (ERA) represents more than 50 airlines and over 150 associate members, including manufacturers, airports, suppliers and aviation service providers, spanning the entire aviation sector. A core part of ERA's mission is to advocate for sustainable air connectivity and fair competition, while driving innovation and ensuring regional European air transport aligns with environmental goals.

The association actively lobbies for supportive policies, publishes detailed sustainability reports, hosts environmental forums and collaborates on initiatives such as Destination 2050 to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050. ERA also highlights the critical role of regional aviation as a testbed for new sustainable technologies, such as hybrid-electric aircraft, which will pave the way for greener air travel.

HOTREC, the European Association of Hotels, Restaurants and Cafés, represents 2 million businesses – 90% microenterprises – and 10 million jobs across Europe. As the voice of the hospitality sector, HOTREC is committed to sustainability and empowering businesses to build a greener future.

Our priorities include sharing climate action guidelines, promoting the Net Zero Roadmap for Hospitality and developing Product Environmental Footprint Category Rules (PEFCR) for accommodation to encourage sustainable practices. We support the EU Transition Pathway for Tourism, the Glasgow Declaration and circular business models to minimise waste.

Through these initiatives, HOTREC drives the sector toward sustainability, ensuring a resilient and thriving future for Europe's hospitality businesses and the communities they serve.

IAAPA, the Global Association for the Attractions Industry, represents 6,500+ members worldwide, including 1,300+ in the EU. Rooted in Europe's rich heritage, the attractions industry is a diverse ecosystem that includes theme parks, zoos, science centres, and more, supported by a strong network of manufacturers and suppliers, producing world-class roller coasters as well as cutting-edge ticketing systems. IAAPA members in the EU generate €30 billion annually and support 243,000+ jobs.

IAAPA drives sustainability by expanding environmental and social initiatives at its expos, implementing green practices across its offices, and assessing its climate footprint. Through training, toolkits, and professional networks, IAAPA equips members to take action, fostering an innovative, responsible industry that delivers unforgettable experiences while advancing sustainability goals.

IRU, the International Road Transport Union, is the global road transport organisation, representing over 3.5 million companies providing mobility and logistics services worldwide. Through our members national federations, IRU represents over 1 million operators of bus, coach, taxi, and truck services in the EU. We act to shape policies that support economic growth and community well-being, including by driving sustainability and leading the industry's transition to carbon neutrality.

Our *Green Compact* sets out a clear roadmap to achieving carbon-neutral commercial road transport by 2050, focusing on alternative fuels, efficient logistics, vehicle innovation, driver training, and collective mobility, while ensuring an efficient commercial road transport.

Ruraltour, the European Federation of Rural Tourism, represents an estimated 500.000 rural micro and nano enterprises and about 5-6.5 million bed places through 28 professional and trade organisations from 25 countries of geographic Europe. Services include hospitality from rural Bed&Breakfast and self-catering / STR in private homes up to small family-run rural hotels or guesthouses, gastronomy and active tourism services.

Sustainability has been at the heart of our service concept for more than 50 years giving value to local heritage, nature, and produce, thus generating new resources of income for rural communities. Our objectives in the coming years include a Rural Tourism Roadmap to address climate change, multi-modal transport, net-zero emissions of services, awareness about the risk of over-tourism and how to tackle it, and improvement in the related skills and competencies.

The Industry's Key Sustainability Asks to EU Institutions (2024-2029)

- **Simplify regulatory frameworks:** Ensure harmonisation of reporting obligations (e.g., Due Diligence, Corporate Sustainability Reporting, Taxonomy, Pay Transparency) and provide clear guidance to reduce administrative burdens and costs.

- **Allow adequate transition time:** Provide businesses with sufficient time to adapt to Green Deal requirements.

- **Increase EU support and incentives:** Increase funding (e.g., Cohesion Funds, Recovery and Resilience Facility, Horizon Europe, ETS Innovation Fund; Expanding the scope of EU taxonomy-aligned activities, and dedicated travel and tourism budgets) to help companies implement necessary infrastructure changes, enhance preparedness for natural disasters and accelerate the development of green technologies to decarbonise.

- **Include travel and tourism energy needs in policies:** Address the travel and tourism sector's energy requirements within EU Energy Policy, ensuring clean energy investments are factored into national strategies.

- **Boost competitiveness:** Value and support the green transition to achieve excellence as Destination Europe and boost competitiveness internationally, while ensuring competition neutrality through EU regulation to avoid diversion of business to extra EU-players and carbon leakage.

- **Promote intermodality:** Continue exploring ways to promote intermodal transport journeys across Europe.

These actions will enable the sector to align with sustainability goals while maintaining competitiveness and resilience.