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MINISTRY
OF REGIONAL
DEVELOPMENT CZ

EUROPEAN TOURISM FORUM

15 Nov 2022, Prague Congress Centre

CONFERENCE SPEAKERS



1st Block: Package Travel Directive: Lessons Learned from Pandemic

Robert Mathiak
European Commission,
DG JUST (Justice and Consumer)



Bio:

Robert Mathiak has worked in different departments of the European Commission, and has been working in the unit responsible for consumer and marketing law of the Directorate-General for Justice and Consumers for more than ten years. He was in charge of the negotiations on the Package Travel Directive adopted in 2015 and is now head of the team conducting the review of this Directive.

Presentation:

The review of the Package Travel Directive: The presentation will provide information on the ongoing review of the Package Travel Directive and the various steps in this process. It will provide background and context, and will, next to questions of process and timing, cover different issues that are at the centre of this review.

Klára Dvořáková (CZ) & Michael Wukoschitz (AT)
Attorneys at law in the area of travel law



Bio:

Klára Dvořáková is a Czech attorney advising tour operators, travel agents, (mountain) guides and providers of transportation. She is a co-author of the first Czech complex legal book on travel law. She regularly gives lectures and writes articles on issues related to liability, travelling and regulation of travel business. Klára is an experienced personal injury lawyer with special interest in outdoor and climbing accidents. She acts as a chief of the Legal Commission of the International Climbing and Mountaineering Federation. She is an active member of Pan-European Organization of Personal Injury Lawyers and International Forum of Travel and Tourism Advocates. She also acts as an Honorary Consul of Iceland in Prague.

Michael Wukoschitz has been working in the travel industry for more than 25 years. He is the author of numerous articles on travel law in national and international publications and a member of the International Forum of Travel and Tourism Advocates, the most important association in the field of international travel law, which he chaired as president for eight years, as well as the German Society for Travel Law and the International Travel Law Network. He has been teaching travel law since 2005.

Presentation:

Klára and Michael will shed light on which PTD legal requirements caused to their clients the biggest problems, which ambiguities of PTD they revealed, and whether there is a lesson to be learned. They will discuss the practical legal challenges related to the concept of extraordinary and unavoidable circumstances, early withdrawal, 14-days refund policy, redress from suppliers, consequences of Covid-19 based insolvency, or specific contractual limitations of Covid-19 related risks.

Benoît Chantoin

ECTAA (The European Travel Agents' and Tour Operators' Associations)



Bio:

Benoît Chantoin, born in Nantes, France in 1982, holds a Master Degree in Public and Environmental Law, at the University of Nantes. He started his career as Policy Officer at Orange and held previously various positions in EU public institutions, NGOs and consultancies. He joined ECTAA, the European Travel Agents' and Tour Operations' Associations in 2012. As Director Legal and Consumers Affairs, he is responsible for the Package Travel Directive, insolvency protection, general consumer protection and sale of travel services.

Presentation:

The upcoming revision of the PTD is a good opportunity to draw the lessons from the successive crises that had hit the travel and transport sectors and to improve the revision from 2015. Broader, more accessible insolvency protection applied on services providers, improved B2B refunds, flexible scope and crisis specific measures are all issues which deserved to be addressed quickly. However, a revision of the PTD alone would be meaningless and harmful toward SMEs without a reform of passenger regulations in parallel.

2nd Block: Short-Term Rentals Regulation

Amaryllis Verhoeven
European Commission,
DG GROW (Digital Transformation of Industry)



Bio:

Amaryllis Verhoeven, Head of Unit, Digital Transformation of Industry, DG GROW, European Commission. In charge of making and implementing policies to help EU industry take up digital solutions and business models, as a lever to become more competitive, green & resilient. Ph.D. in law and visiting professor, KU Leuven.

Presentation:

Ms Verhoeven will give a presentation on the EU legislative initiative on short term rentals.

Mark Boekwijt
European Cities Alliance



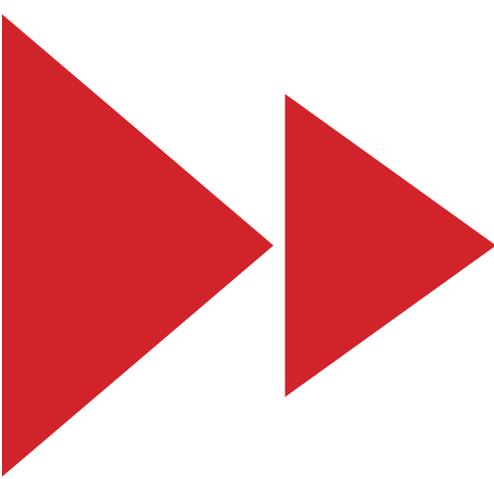
Bio:

Mark Boekwijt (1964) graduated from the European School in Brussels and continued to study International Law and Communications Science at the University of Amsterdam.

He worked on policy and research in the Dutch audiovisual industry, before becoming advisor on media affairs for the city of The Hague. Since 2002, Mark has been a strategic advisor for the mayor and deputy-mayors of the city of Amsterdam on several issues such as integration, housing, monuments, and local media. In 2011, he became the EU representative for Amsterdam and works and lives in that capacity in Brussels.

Presentation:

Mark Boekwijt coordinates the work for the European Cities Alliance on Short Term Rentals (SHT). It is a cooperation of cities which are main European tourist destinations, and which are impacted by in particular SHT-activities that do not respect the regulations that are in place. Short Term Rental Platforms are a cross-border service and therefore the European Cities Alliance on Short Term Rentals advocate better European legislation to ensure compliance with local and regional regulations and balanced development of this particular sector of the tourism industry.



Marie Audren
HOTREC
(Hotels, Restaurants & Cafés in Europe)



Bio:

Marie Audren joined HOTREC (the umbrella Association of Hotels, Restaurants, Bars and Cafés in Europe) as Director General in August 2020. She has extensive experience in EU public affairs. She was Deputy Director General of spiritsEUROPE. She also worked as an adviser in the EU office of the French business federation, MEDEF. She holds a Master's degree in European studies from the Louvain-la-Neuve University (UCL) and a Master's degree in Public Administration from Institut d'Etudes Politiques (Rennes).

Presentation:

We are reaching a critical moment for developing the appropriate regulatory framework for STR. HOTREC believes that it requires close coordination and an integrated approach where a common EU framework for registration and data sharing supports the establishment of the required measures at local, regional and national level, in line with the subsidiarity principle. It also needs to build upon the recently adopted Digital Services Act, which has set out fundamental principles for the platform economy.

Eduardo Miranda
European Holiday Home Association



Bio:

Eduardo Miranda has been recently nominated as a Non-executive Chairman of the European Holiday Home Association, which gives a voice to short-term rentals. He is also the President of the Portuguese association of local lodging (ALEP).

Working in the vacation rental industry for more than 10 years, Eduardo has been an active advocate of a balanced regulation for short-term rentals in Portugal. His experience and knowledge of the Portuguese short-term rental law are of a true added value – Portugal was the first in the EU to introduce a simple, online, quick and easy to comply registration scheme for short-term rentals. Because of his work, short-term rentals were officially embraced in the Portuguese Tourism Value Chain. ALEP has been awarded with the Silver Medal for Tourism Merit by the Portuguese Ministry of Economy.

Presentation:

“STR Regulation: creating balanced rules that work for all.” The European Holiday Home Association, the united voice for short-term rental accommodation in Europe, embraces and promotes fair regulation for all short-term rental accommodation providers that will create a foundation for sustainable long term growth of a more diverse and resilient tourism. We have been calling for a vertical EU initiative on STRs to harmonize EU rules and provide clarity and certainty for all (hosts, platforms, property managers & local governments alike). EHHA stresses that the first step towards a better policy making at a national/regional/local level is to understand the complexity of how the STR accommodation can be booked and the existing variety of STR players which offer STR accommodation. European Holiday Home Association is open to further discussion on this topic and beyond with policy makers at all levels.

3rd Block: Transition Pathway for Tourism

Marie-Hélène Pradines
European Commission, DG GROW (Tourism, Textiles)



Bio:

Marie-Hélène Pradines is Head of Unit for tourism and textiles in the European Commission's Directorate-General Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs (DG GROW). Before joining the European Commission, she worked as administrator in the French Ministry of Economy and Finance and then as deputy financial adviser at the Representation of France to the European Union.

Marie-Hélène Pradines joined the European Commission in 2004, where she started working for the Directorate-General for Human Resources and Security (DG HR). Between 2009 and 2014, she worked as member of Cabinet of Vice-President Barrot (Justice, Freedom and Security) and of Vice-President Šefčovič (Inter-institutional relations and administration). Back in DG HR, she has been head of two units before joining DG GROW in 2021.

Presentation:

The Transition Pathway has been published in February 2022 following an extensive co-creation process. Since then, several stakeholders have committed to the transition of tourism and several of them made pledges to help achieve the green and digital transition as well as improve the resilience of tourism. The Transition Pathway for tourism has been used as a basis for discussions for the upcoming EU Agenda for tourism and is now the main reference at EU level for tourism policy. The co-implementation is on-going but the transition of the ecosystem will be a success only if all tourism stakeholders engage in making it a reality with practical actions.

Jan Doležal
SmartGuide



Bio:

Jan Doležal is the founder and CEO of a Czech travel tech company SmartGuide. He has a background in Machine Learning and holds an MBA from Harvard Business School. Jan has 10 years of experience leading digital transformations with McKinsey & Company and worked for start-ups in Europe, USA, and Africa. As a passionate traveller, he backpacked around the world visiting more than 60 countries in a quest for authentic experiences.

Presentation:

SmartGuide is a digital guide platform that turns every phone into a personal travel guide and every tourist into an explorer. It helps hundreds of tourist attractions, destinations, and national tourism boards to publish engaging guides without any IT development. These guides inspire independent travellers to visit also off the beaten path places making tourism more authentic and sustainable.

Mercedes Muñoz Zamora
European Greenways Association



Bio:

Mercedes Muñoz Zamora is the Director of the European Greenways Association (EGWA). She is responsible for the design and implementation of activities for the development and promotion of European Greenways. She has led the preparation of the pledges of the EGWA to contribute to the co-implementation of the “Tourism Transition Pathway”.

She is Geographer, M.Sc on „Rural Planning in Relation to the Environment”. Before joining EGWA she worked for TECNIBERIA, the Spanish Association of Engineering and Consulting companies and acted as a project manager for land use and environmental planning in a consulting engineering company (Epypsa).

Presentation:

Presentation of EGWA’s pledges to help the transformation of greenways into „greener“ ecosystems, with the support of digital tools, and involving stakeholders. EGWA’s pledges are mainly oriented towards raising awareness and promoting the green transition, by sharing best practices to disseminate achievements and inspire new sustainable greenways initiatives.

Sustainable mobility is a key priority and we focus on best practice to remember the need to promote safe and accessible non-motorized infrastructure for cycling, walking and wheeling, such as greenways or visitors and locals.

Paying special attention to the transformation of disused railways into greenways as the best way to reuse old infrastructures for the benefit of environmental, economic and social sustainability, and therefore the request to include greenways as a priority in the European Tourism Agenda 2030.

Serafino Nardi
European Committee of the Regions



Bio:

Serafino Nardi is the Head of Unit for the NAT commission at the European Committee of the Regions. The NAT deals with many European policy linked to territorial resilience, including tourism policy, and supports policy dialogue between the local and regional representatives and EU authorities. Before taking over the NAT, Serafino led the CoR press and audiovisual department, facilitating communication from local to global level.

He is Italian, speaks English and French.

Presentation:

Tourism is for many European cities and regions the key industry, generating wealth, driving innovation forward and keeping our traditions alive. Yet, the painful experience of COVID-19 and the impact of the war on Ukraine, have shed light on sector’s vulnerabilities. Boosting tourism resilience across the whole spectrum of policies is our objective: the European Committee of the Regions supports the Commission’s vision to make tourism greener, more digital and robust.

Our Mayors, councillors and regional Presidents define and implement strategies to tackle climate change, to modernise mobility link, boost online presence and promote off the season travel. There is considerable wealth of experience behind these policy choices; and each and every small change brings us closer to our goal – making European tourism sustainable and fit for future.

4th Block: Trends in Tourism

Jennifer Iduh

European Travel Commission



Bio:

Jennifer Iduh is currently Head of Research and Development at the European Travel Commission (ETC), a non-profit organisation responsible for the promotion of Europe as a tourist destination. In that capacity, Jennifer is responsible for research and reporting into different source markets, the identification of key trends and opportunities for the sustainable development of European tourism and research in the field of sustainability and data driven tourism decision-making. Jennifer is also in charge of research activities linked to the European Commission (EC) and other organisations such as the World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO), and the European Tourism Association (ETOA) amongst others.

Jennifer's knowledge in market research is backed up by four years of working experience at the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) where she provided support to the Tourism Market Trends department and to the Travel department.

Presentation:

Jennifer's presentation will take the audience through the latest research developments at ETC that support European tourism's recovery and its sustainable development. Her presentation will showcase state of the art approaches in research and data collection, as well as joint initiatives with the EC and other international organisations.

Peter Vittek

Czech Technical University in Prague



Bio:

Peter Vittek is the University teacher, researcher, entrepreneur, technology enthusiast and visionary. Continuously educated in aviation economics. Analysing data, discovering connections. Developing new concepts and models.

Presentation:

Do you love to travel but worry about the large carbon footprint of aviation? Have you experienced crowded airports this summer and realised the passenger experience is important? There will be two concepts presented that may engage today's travellers. Both carbon offsetting and virtual queueing between cities and airports have great potential for tourism.

Gorjan Lazarov
OREA Hotels & Resorts



Bio:

Gorjan is the Chief Executive Officer at OREA Hotels & Resorts, a Czech company from the 80s which has gone through a complete makeover in the last five years. OREA is the largest Czech hotel brand with 20 hotels, in the most attractive destinations all over the Czech Republic. The brand is ready to grow with its commitment to differentiate on delivering a great customer experience.

Lazarov is a passionate leader that drives change by innovation and motivating the team to perform at its best. A true believer that exceptional customer experiences are core for exceptional long term financial results. Gorjan has a cross industry experience, working for hospitality and telco through his career. He started his career in Prague at the Prague Marriott Hotel in finance, and after one year he became Revenue Manager for the same hotel. In 2004 he started to work for Oskar as Pricing Manager, he was responsible for the pricing strategy of the third and fastest-growing mobile operator in the Czech Republic. Lazarov also worked for Vodafone Czech Republic as Director of Pricing and Products. Before joining OREA Hotels he was General Manager of the Boscolo Prague Hotel.

Presentation:

Hospitality future – Impact of robotization and automatization

- Key forces that shaped the travel industry
- The Covid impact and long term plans
- Customer information & personalization – the future
- Robots and AI use cases

Jan Kubinec
Czech Event Association



Bio:

Jan Kubinec, Executive Director of AV MEDIA EVENTS. Chairman of the Board of Directors of Prague Convention, co-founder of the Czech Event Association and its Vice-Chairman. Prior to his current engagement, he has experience in senior management in market analysis and strategy (AC Nielsen, Plzeňský Prazdroj), and sales and marketing management of brands and business segments at Plzeňský Prazdroj. Active representative of the event industry, active in the cultural section of the Chamber of Commerce and in international associations with event themes and a judge of international competitions. Member of the board of the professional study programme Tourism at the Metropolitan University Prague.

Presentation:

- *Anchoring event industry in the tourism ecosystem.*
- *Green and digital perspective in the event industry.*
- *Introduction to EU industry collaboration.*

4th Block: Trends in Tourism

Mariana Oleskiv

State Agency for Tourism Development of Ukraine



Bio:

Chairperson of the State Agency for Tourism Development of Ukraine (from March 3rd, 2020). In June 2020 agency started a large promotion company «Travel in Ukraine» to develop domestic tourism. This company was supported by famous Ukrainian bloggers, celebrities, and opinion leaders, which made traveling to Ukraine a fashion trend.

Ms Oleskiv has been working for over 17 years in the tourism sector, convention industry, and marketing. During 2003-2006, while creating a website about vacations in Ukraine Nezabarom.com.ua, she traveled all over the country and studied Ukraine both big cities and small towns. She worked in the hospitality of the three largest tourism centers – Lviv, Odesa, and Kyiv.

2016-2018 – Director at LME «Lviv Centre for Tourism Development»

2013-2015 – Head of the Division of Tourism Agencies and Travel Bureau at Ltd. «Slupskyi»

2011-2012 – Deputy Head of the Department – Head of Tourism Division at Department of Culture and Tourism at Odesa City Council

2007-2009 pp. – Head of the Advertisement Division at «Initia Events» (Kyiv)



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