



## **Boost of European youth hostelling due to new legal framework**

Commissioner Antonio Tajani presented a first communication on tourism suggesting a consolidated European policy framework and 21 initiatives<sup>1</sup> to be implemented in close cooperation with representatives of the public and private sector.

EUFED highly welcomes this new policy frame which will concentrate on four objectives: improvement of the competitiveness of the tourism sector in Europe, promotion of sustainable, responsible and qualitative tourism, enhancement of Europe's image as home to sustainable and high quality destinations and maximising of the potential of EU policies and financial instruments for the development of European tourism.

Today, the EU is number one tourism destination in the world. The Lisbon Treaty acknowledges this importance for the first time and lays down the Union's competence in the field. Consequently, European actions will complement future Member States' activities, allowing decisions to be taken by qualified majority vote.

### **European Youth Mobility as a future priority**

In this context, EUFED, as a participant of the European Tourism Stakeholders Conference, met Commissioner Tajani, advocating a strong emphasis on youth tourism.

Taking into account that

- In 2009, 95 million young people aged 15-29 were living in the EU,
- One third of tourism in total is youth tourism,
- Non-profit operators offer 2 to 3 million packages to young people (aged 18 to 29),
- Non-profit youth accommodation records 37 million overnights corresponding to 15% of overnight stays in total and,
- About 3 million students participate in school trips and international exchanges every year.

The European Commission should further define **youth tourism as the key priority of the following years**. Young people should be at the centre of a political initiative and the European Tourism Forum 2011 should focus on young travellers, especially in the context of the European Year of Volunteering.

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<sup>1</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/tourism/files/communications/communication2010\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/tourism/files/communications/communication2010_en.pdf)

## **High Quality standards and sustainable tourism to ensure that Europe remains the world's top destination**

Moreover, EUFED strongly recommends to the European actors to ensure that European tourism guarantees **high quality standards** and, thus represents the specific **European brand**. Since stressing economic impacts cannot be sufficient for the generation of growth and employment, EUFED calls for a **holistic approach** to European Tourism relying on a strong **sustainable development** strategy with clear principles, objectives and measures.

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### **Links:**

*Commission Communication*

[http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/tourism/files/communications/communication2010\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/tourism/files/communications/communication2010_en.pdf)

*Press Release*

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/10/858&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

*EUFED policy paper:*

Michèle, si possible

### **NOTE TO EDITORS:**

EUFED represents the interests of national Youth Hostel Associations all over Europe and stands for their guest's interests at the EU level. It comprises 19 Youth Hostel Associations in 16 European countries. Operating 1.787 Youth Hostels, it serves 2.8 million members with about 22 million overnight stays per year. Despite their name, Youth Hostels are open to guests of all ages and especially welcome disadvantaged people.

Furthermore, European Youth Hostels are hosting each year thousands of young people who contribute to issues such as Sustainable Development, Environmental Protection, Intercultural Dialogue, Human Rights, Diversity, Drug Prevention, Job Orientation, Family Holidays, etc.

Today, Youth Hostel Associations are the largest member association for young people worldwide and offer their 3.5 million members over 4.000 accommodation centres within 90 countries.

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