



TEXTS ADOPTED

P10_TA(2026)0123

Enhancing connectivity, preserving cultural heritage and driving local excellence in European tourism - destination management and regional tourism growth

European Parliament resolution of 28 April 2026 on enhancing connectivity, preserving cultural heritage, and driving local excellence in European tourism: destination management and regional tourism growth (2025/2120(INI))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, in particular Articles 174, 195 and 349 thereof,
- having regard to Regulation (EU) 2024/1028 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 April 2024 on data collection and sharing relating to short-term accommodation rental services and amending Regulation (EU) 2018/1724¹,
- having regard to Directive (EU) 2024/2831 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2024 on improving working conditions in platform work²,
- having regard to Directive (EU) 2019/904 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 June 2019 on the reduction of the impact of certain plastic products on the environment³,
- having regard to Decision (EU) 2023/936 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 10 May 2023 on a European Year of Skills⁴,

¹ OJ L, 2024/1028, 29.4.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/1028/oj>.

² OJ L, 2024/2831, 11.11.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/2024/2831/oj>.

³ OJ L 155, 12.6.2019, p. 1, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/2019/904/oj>.

⁴ OJ L 125, 11.5.2023, p. 1, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/2023/936/oj>.

- having regard to Commission Recommendation (EU) 2025/1021 of 22 May 2025 on transport poverty: ensuring affordable, accessible and fair mobility⁵,
- having regard to the Commission communication of 5 March 2025 entitled 'The Union of Skills' (COM(2025)0090),
- having regard to the Commission communication of 26 February 2025 entitled 'The Clean Industrial Deal: A joint roadmap for competitiveness and decarbonisation' (COM(2025)0085),
- having regard to the Commission communication of 29 January 2025 entitled 'A Competitiveness Compass for the EU' (COM(2025)0030),
- having regard to the Commission communication of 20 July 2023 entitled 'Towards a Common European Tourism Data Space: boosting data sharing and innovation across the tourism ecosystem' (C(2023)4787),
- having regard to the Commission communication of 17 May 2021 on a new approach for a sustainable blue economy in the EU: Transforming the EU's Blue Economy for a Sustainable Future (COM(2021)0240),
- having regard to the Commission communication of 4 March 2021 entitled 'The European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan' (COM(2021)0102),
- having regard to the Commission communication of 1 July 2020 entitled 'European Skills Agenda for sustainable competitiveness, social fairness and resilience' (COM(2020)0274),
- having regard to the Commission communication of 27 May 2020 entitled 'Europe's moment: Repair and Prepare for the Next Generation' (COM(2020)0456) and the accompanying staff working document entitled 'Identifying Europe's recovery needs' (SWD(2020)0098),
- having regard to the Commission communication of 20 May 2020 entitled 'EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 - Bringing nature back into our lives' (COM(2020)0380),
- having regard to the Commission communication of 13 May 2020 entitled 'Tourism and transport in 2020 and beyond' (COM(2020)0550) and to the adoption of the Tourism and Transport Package,
- having regard to the Commission communication of 11 December

⁵ OJ L, 2025/1021, 26.5.2025, ELI:
<http://data.europa.eu/eli/reco/2025/1021/oj>.

2019 entitled 'The European Green Deal' (COM(2019)0640),

- having regard to the Commission communication of 22 May 2018 entitled 'A new European Agenda for Culture' (COM(2018)0267),
- having regard to the Commission communication of 24 October 2017 entitled 'A stronger and renewed strategic partnership with the EU's outermost regions' (COM(2017)0623),
- having regard to the Commission communication of 2 June 2016 entitled 'A European agenda for the collaborative economy' (COM(2016)0356) and to Parliament's resolution of 15 June 2017 thereon⁶,
- having regard to the Commission communication of 20 February 2014 entitled 'A European strategy for more Growth and Jobs in Coastal and Maritime Tourism' (COM(2014)0086) and the Commission staff working document of 30 March 2017 on nautical tourism (SWD(2017)0126),
- having regard to the Commission communication of 30 June 2010 entitled 'Europe, the world's No 1 tourist destination - a new political framework for tourism in Europe' (COM(2010)0352) and to Parliament's resolution of 27 September 2011 thereon⁷,
- having regard to the Commission communication of 30 June 2021 entitled 'A long-term Vision for the EU's Rural Areas - Towards stronger, connected, resilient and prosperous rural areas by 2040' (COM(2021)0345),
- having regard to the Commission report of 4 February 2022 entitled 'Transition pathway for tourism' and to its stocktaking reports for 2023 and 2024,
- having regard to the Commission report of 21 September 2022 entitled 'Unbalanced tourism growth at destination level - root causes, impacts, existing solutions and good practices: final report',
- having regard to the Commission report of 11 June 2020 entitled 'The EU Blue Economy Report 2020',
- having regard to its resolution of 7 June 2022 on EU islands and cohesion policy: current situation and future challenges⁸,
- having regard to its resolution of 14 December 2022 on the implementation of the New European Agenda for Culture and the EU

⁶ OJ C 331, 18.9.2018, p. 125.

⁷ OJ C 56 E, 26.2.2013, p. 41.

⁸ OJ C 493, 27.12.2022, p. 48.

Strategy for International Cultural Relations⁹,

- having regard to its resolution of 25 March 2021 on establishing an EU strategy for sustainable tourism¹⁰,
- having regard to its resolution of 19 June 2020 on transport and tourism in 2020 and beyond¹¹,
- having regard to its resolution of 24 October 2019 on the negative impact of the bankruptcy of Thomas Cook on EU tourism¹²,
- having regard to its resolution of 14 November 2018 on the Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-2027 – Parliament’s position with a view to an agreement¹³,
- having regard to its resolution of 29 October 2015 on new challenges and concepts for the promotion of tourism in Europe¹⁴,
- having regard to its resolution of 8 September 2015 towards an integrated approach to cultural heritage for Europe¹⁵,
- having regard to its resolutions of 25 October 2011 on mobility and inclusion of people with disabilities and the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020¹⁶ and of 18 June 2020 on the European Disability Strategy post-2020¹⁷,
- having regard to the Council conclusions of 1 December 2022 on European Agenda for Tourism 2030,
- having regard to the Council conclusions of 27 May 2021 on Tourism in Europe for the next decade: sustainable, resilient, digital, global and social,
- having regard to the opinion of the European Committee of the Regions of 10 December 2025 entitled ‘Towards sustainable and resilient tourism in the European Union: Strategy for balanced and adaptive management’¹⁸,
- having regard to the own-initiative opinion of the European Economic and Social Committee of 27 February 2025 entitled

⁹ OJ C 177, 17.5.2023, p. 78.

¹⁰ OJ C 494, 8.12.2021, p. 106.

¹¹ OJ C 362, 8.9.2021, p. 55.

¹² OJ C 202, 28.5.2021, p. 73.

¹³ OJ C 363, 28.10.2020, p. 179.

¹⁴ OJ C 355, 20.10.2017, p. 71.

¹⁵ OJ C 316, 22.9.2017, p. 88.

¹⁶ OJ C 131 E, 8.5.2013, p. 9.

¹⁷ OJ C 362, 8.9.2021, p. 8.

¹⁸ OJ C, C/2026/761, 24.2.2026, ELI:
<http://data.europa.eu/eli/C/2026/761/oj>.

‘Tourism in the EU: sustainability as a driver for long-term competitiveness’¹⁹,

- having regard to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities,
- having regard to the EU Tourism Dashboard,
- having regard to the statistical framework for measuring the sustainability of tourism,
- having regard to the European Pillar of Social Rights²⁰,
- having regard to the Palma Declaration of 31 October 2023 entitled ‘The path towards the social sustainability of tourism in the EU’, signed by the tourism ministers of the EU Member States,
- having regard to the European Declaration on Cycling of 3 April 2024²¹,
- having regard to the UN Tourism report of 18 September 2018 entitled ‘“Overtourism”? – Understanding and Managing Urban Tourism Growth beyond Perceptions’,
- having regard to UNESCO world heritage resource manuals, including that of 2002 entitled ‘Managing Tourism at World Heritage Sites: a Practical Manual for World Heritage Site Managers’ and related guidance on managing visitor behaviour,
- having regard to the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism²²,
- having regard to the report by Enrico Letta of 17 April 2024 entitled ‘Much more than a market’,
- having regard to the report by Mario Draghi of 9 September 2024 entitled ‘The future of European competitiveness’,
- having regard to the study requested by its Committee on Transport and Tourism of 15 October 2018 entitled ‘Overtourism: impact and possible policy responses’,
- having regard to Rule 55 of its Rules of Procedure,

¹⁹ OJ C, C/2025/2014, 30.4.2025, ELI:
<http://data.europa.eu/eli/C/2025/2014/oj>.

²⁰ OJ C 428, 13.12.2017, p. 10.

²¹ OJ C, C/2024/2377, 3.4.2024, ELI:
<http://data.europa.eu/eli/C/2024/2377/oj>.

²² UN Tourism, ‘[Global Code of Ethics for Responsible Tourism - Roadmap for Responsible and Sustainable Tourism Development](#)’, 1 October 1999.

- having regard to the report of the Committee on Transport and Tourism (A10-0078/2026),
- A. whereas tourism directly accounts for approximately 5 % of the EU's GDP, representing a major socio-economic sector in terms of value added, employment and regional cohesion, with strong multiplier effects across various sectors; whereas, once indirect and spillover impacts are factored in, the sector's overall contribution rises to roughly 10 % of the EU's GDP; whereas in some countries and regions, tourism accounts for an even higher share of employment and GDP, supporting regional development and reducing inequalities; whereas 90 % of the EU's tourism sector is made up of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), including family-run businesses that are particularly vulnerable to crises; whereas the EU's tourism industry comprises some 2,3 million SMEs and employs approximately 12,3 million people; whereas Europe remains a global leader in tourism and the world's top tourist destination despite prevailing economic and geopolitical headwinds²³, with the sector projected to contribute 10,5 % to the EU's GDP, following strong momentum in early 2025²⁴;
- B. whereas the economic value of tourism is being increasingly challenged by social, cultural and environmental costs, including housing market pressures, higher living costs for residents, the fragmentation of living spaces, unsustainable resource use and the growing strain on essential infrastructure; whereas decades of volume-oriented growth, coupled with regulatory and governance gaps, have fostered unbalanced tourism; whereas these dynamics call for better governance and smart, sustainable and locally adapted management of demand; whereas tourism in itself is not a problem and preventing tourismphobia requires the adoption of a holistic strategy that reconciles economic growth with social well-being, environmental protection, the safeguarding of cultural heritage and long-term territorial resilience;
- C. whereas the tourism ecosystem covers many industries, including transport, travel agencies and tour operators, support services, accommodation and catering, creative arts and entertainment, and sports and amusement activities, and whereas it is crucial to enable their coherent development and resilience;
- D. whereas rising accommodation rental costs across the EU are deepening housing insecurity and social exclusion; whereas the situation is particularly acute in tourist-intensive areas, where the scarcity of affordable housing hampers the attraction and retention

²³ European Travel Commission, '[European travel maintains momentum in early 2025 despite rising global uncertainty](#)', 7 May 2025.

²⁴ World Travel and Tourism Council, '[Travel and Tourism to Create 4.5MN New Jobs across the EU by 2035](#)', 9 April 2025.

of seasonal and permanent tourism workers and essential public-sector professionals; whereas housing affordability, the functioning of local communities, the competitiveness of SMEs in the tourism ecosystem and the level playing field within the single market are increasingly influenced by short-term rentals; whereas short-term rental solutions must be tailored to each specific situation, with action taken primarily at the local level;

- E. whereas the concept of sustainable tourism is central to driving the sector's competitiveness, safeguarding Europe's cultural and natural heritage, including geographical indications, and balancing the needs of visitors and local communities; whereas sustainability rests on three interdependent pillars – economic, social and environmental – none of which can be perceived in isolation;
- F. whereas social sustainability in tourism involves a fair distribution of economic benefits – including through the diversification and deseasonalisation of tourism flows – as well as respect for the rights, needs and well-being of residents, the preservation of cultural heritage and community cohesion, and the provision of quality jobs with fair employment conditions; whereas tourism seasonality continues to contribute to economic instability, workforce shortages and strain on local communities; whereas the development of socially sustainable tourism should strengthen local communities rather than placing them under undue pressure;
- G. whereas the EU is fully committed to the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), adopted by the UN in September 2015; whereas Eurostat monitors the EU's progress towards achieving the SDGs through a set of 102 indicators; whereas tourism can make a direct contribution to the achievement of several SDGs;
- H. whereas climate change is increasingly affecting tourism, making it crucial to adapt tourism activities, plans, products and facilities accordingly; whereas sustainability and resilience in the tourism sector remain uneven across national, regional and local levels, and the adoption of sustainable practices by Member States, local actors and private-sector stakeholders continues to rely predominantly on voluntary engagement;
- I. whereas tourism has played a role in shaping territorial dynamics across many EU regions; whereas regional approaches to organising and developing this activity have produced diverse configurations that affect their trajectories of growth and well-being; whereas remote, outermost, rural, peripheral, sparsely populated and insular regions and certain coastal areas have unique and diverse characteristics, including environmental vulnerability, geographical isolation, disconnection and dependence on external resources, which call for policy approaches adapted to their specific

circumstances;

- J. whereas transport connectivity is fundamental to travel and tourism, linking people with places, cultures and experiences; whereas, however, current travel and tourism patterns present significant challenges, given that 80 % of travellers visit only 10 % of global destinations²⁵; whereas promoting rural and inland tourism through tailored strategies could alleviate excessive pressure on overcrowded coastal destinations in several Member States; whereas many peripheral, rural, remote, outermost and insular regions remain underserved because of their geographical isolation, limited infrastructure, reduced transport services during off-peak periods and the high costs and travel time required to reach them; whereas the permanent geographical and connectivity constraints of the EU's outermost regions have led to a structural dependence on air and maritime transport and exposure to market concentration, all of which directly impact the development of sustainable tourism; whereas efficient freight logistics are a key enabler of tourism services in peripheral destinations;
- K. whereas transport accounts for the largest share of the tourism sector's carbon footprint; whereas sustainable tourism cannot be achieved without sustainable mobility, including multimodal diversification, taking due account of Europe's physical and geographical constraints, which influence the availability and choice of appropriate and sustainable transport options; whereas, despite rail representing only around 10 % of journeys made today, far behind road transport (64 %) and air travel (17 %), recent research suggests that 82 % of Europeans are open to greener travel choices²⁶; whereas ferries may provide essential public-interest transport services, ensuring affordable, regular and year-round connectivity, particularly for islands and remote regions;
- L. whereas the rise of specialised tourism (gastronomy, wine, beer, nautical, cultural, religious, heritage, medical, wellness, sports, cycling, diving, agricultural, silver, eco-, regenerative, etc.) creates new opportunities for peripheral, rural and outermost regions to showcase their unique landscapes, waterscapes and heritage through place- and theme-based development strategies; whereas the growth of specialised tourism requires support through investment in the necessary infrastructure; whereas these evolving tourism trends can strengthen the sector's sustainability by extending travel beyond peak seasons, dispersing visitor flows and

²⁵ Greenwood G., 'How connectivity is shaping the future of global tourism', World Travel Market Global Hub, 14 January 2025, <https://hub.wtm.com/blog/connectivity-shaping-future-global-tourism/>.

²⁶ European Commission: Directorate-General for Communication, '[Flash Eurobarometer 499: Attitudes of Europeans towards tourism](#)', 6 December 2021.

enhancing the protection of natural and cultural heritage, and generate additional income in remote, sparsely populated and insular regions;

- M. whereas approximately 25 % of Europeans are living with disabilities or with reduced mobility; whereas according to Eurostat, the proportion of the EU's population aged 60 and above, which currently stands at 21 %, is projected to rise to 30 % by 2030; whereas taking dedicated action through investment in accessible and age-friendly tourism services represents a major opportunity to boost competitiveness, upgrade quality and support year-round demand;
- N. whereas smart tourism is aimed at strengthening destination management, elevating visitor satisfaction and delivering lasting value to local communities²⁷; whereas smart tourism hinges on the availability, analysis and effective use of data; whereas the EU's data ecosystem remains fragmented; whereas the European Tourism Data Space initiative aims to overcome this fragmentation and the resulting market concentration by building a secure, interconnected data-sharing platform to support the sector's sustainability and resilience, in line with the transition pathway for tourism;
- O. whereas, notwithstanding the EU Tourism Dashboard knowledge portal and the EU Tourism Platform, the EU still lacks an effective and sufficiently ambitious harmonised framework for assessing tourism impacts, including carbon footprint as well as overall sustainability and resilience across Member States;
- P. whereas GDP-based and aggregate performance indicators do not fully capture the real social, territorial and environmental impacts of tourism; whereas tourism should be evaluated beyond volume-growth and through sustainability indicators such as social cohesion, long-term territorial sustainability and environmental integrity, with territorial carrying capacity and biodiversity protection guiding destination limits, visitor caps and infrastructure planning, shifting success towards value-driven development models;
- Q. whereas limited data sharing and siloed operations across key transport sectors undermine multimodal capacity and hinder seamless EU-wide multimodal travel²⁸, with the ability to book such journeys still representing a major obstacle;
- R. whereas the tourism sector is labour-intensive, generating approximately 5 % of total EU employment, yet it faces notable challenges, including a 21 % rate of temporary employment; whereas

²⁷ [EU guide on data for tourism destinations. Smart Tourism Destinations, July 2022.](#)

²⁸ The European Consumer Organisation, '[Mind the gap - Making the multimodal journey the easy journey](#)', 22 March 2023.

this sector is an important source of job creation, particularly for young people, women and migrant workers who face difficulty entering the labour market; whereas tourism relies on a skilled and committed workforce that ensures quality service and authentic visitor experiences; whereas raising job quality through fair pay, stable employment and improved working conditions can enhance recruitment and retention, supporting the sector's shift towards sustainable, high-value-added development, while also addressing labour shortages and social sustainability;

- S. whereas tourism-dependent regional economies are more exposed to demand shocks and labour volatility, making economic diversification and reindustrialisation essential to stability and long-term development; whereas over-reliance on seasonal tourism risks trapping regions in a development model that limits productivity growth, innovation and the emergence of higher-value-added sectors;
- T. whereas a striking 92 % of SMEs in tourism struggle to hire skilled staff²⁹; whereas the sector's skills deficit – a challenge that predates the COVID-19 pandemic and persists despite the high rates of unemployment across the EU – requires a swift push for reskilling and upskilling to build future-oriented skills as well as green, digital, managerial, social and cultural competences that enhance resilience in tourism³⁰, which are key to its competitiveness³¹; whereas targeted measures, including sustained public and private investment, along with EU funding instruments accessible to SMEs, are needed to enhance skills and ensure that the tourism industry remains an attractive and competitive employer;
- U. whereas women make up over half of the EU's tourism workforce yet remain significantly under-represented in leadership and decision-making roles and over-represented in lower-paid, informal or precarious employment, often lacking adequate job security and social protection; whereas such inequalities undermine women's economic empowerment and hinder the competitiveness of the tourism sector, underscoring the need to integrate a strong gender equality dimension into the forthcoming EU sustainable tourism strategy;
- V. whereas even in the digital age, tourism thrives on human connection; whereas soft skills are vital for inclusive tourism, yet they remain undervalued, undertrained and underpaid, directly affecting the quality of the visitor experience and the well-being of

²⁹ European Commission: Directorate-General for Mobility and Transport, '[Jobs and skills in tourism](#)'.

³⁰ HOTREC Hospitality Europe, '[Labour shortages in the hospitality sector: forward-thinking and practices sharing](#)', September 2022.

³¹ Silva, S. et al., '[The Value of Skills for a Sustainable Tourism and Hospitality Industry](#)', Tourism Hospitality, No 6(1), 23 January 2025.

local communities;

- W. whereas culture, heritage and identity are the pillars of the EU's sustainable and responsible tourism product, with volunteers and local communities playing a crucial role in preserving and promoting the living heritage of each Member State, including sustainable cultural traditions and local languages; whereas the protection, preservation and promotion of cultural heritage can foster intercultural relations, reconciliation and cultural coexistence; whereas safeguarding cultural heritage calls for proactive management of visitor flows, the protection of vulnerable sites and the inclusion of local communities in decision-making processes;
- X. whereas digital innovation, including interactive mapping tools, immersive technologies, augmented reality, community-based digital platforms and 'phygital' experiences can enhance access to local heritage, support SMEs and allow visitors to engage more deeply with authentic cultural ecosystems, including brewing traditions and local craftsmanship;
- Y. whereas agritourism and farm-to-fork and field-to-fork initiatives create genuine value chains rather than simple supply chains, offering visitors an unparalleled experience of authenticity while strengthening rural economies, supporting local producers and promoting environmental stewardship; whereas such initiatives are increasingly recognised as a pillar of quality and sustainable tourism development across the EU;
- Z. whereas the European exhibition and business-event industry, recognised as a global leader, is a key segment of the tourism industry and a major economic driver, supporting jobs, regional development, infrastructure investment and cross-sector growth;
- AA. whereas the EU Ecolabel, one of several sustainability standards, is currently applied solely to tourist accommodation and not to the entire value chain in tourism destinations, and, although its adoption by tourist accommodations is rising, its overall market impact remains limited; whereas certification must be paired with enforceable obligations, transparency in supply chains and environmental impact monitoring to avoid greenwashing;
- AB. whereas, despite the adoption of the Single-Use Plastics Directive³², a significant share of plastic waste from the tourism and hospitality sectors still falls beyond its regulatory scope;
- AC. whereas the EU's tourism industry should transition towards a

³² Directive (EU) 2019/904 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 June 2019 on the reduction of the impact of certain plastic products on the environment, (OJ L 155, 12.6.2019, p. 1, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/2019/904/oj>).

circular economy model, improving resource efficiency in areas such as waste, water, food, mobility and energy management; whereas this transition requires the adoption of responsible production and consumption practices, including the use of local products by the hospitality sector, a reduction in waste streams, the reuse of resources and the safeguarding of local ecosystems; whereas data-driven planning, monitoring and management tools are essential to support this shift and to improve the long-term sustainability and resilience of tourism destinations;

- AD. whereas the recognition of tourism as one of Europe's 14 strategic industrial ecosystems³³ underscores the need to move beyond assumptions of its inherent resilience³⁴ towards a holistic European strategy built on strong policy coordination, reflecting the sector's cross-cutting nature, as well as targeted and effective funding;
- AE. whereas the Commission has announced the forthcoming publication of the first-ever EU sustainable tourism strategy, marking a significant opportunity to establish a coherent and forward-looking sustainable framework for the sector; whereas this initiative should aim to ensure that future growth aligns with the EU's broader climate and social objectives, while refraining from creating disproportionate administrative or financial burdens for SMEs; whereas a strong European tourism brand is a strategic asset that can strengthen Europe's competitive advantage by promoting sustainable, high-quality and experience-rich offers while supporting dispersal and seasonality management;
- AF. whereas it is vital to reaffirm that tourism constitutes an important and strategic economic sector that nurtures European identity, and whereas it should not be regarded as a marginal component of the economy; whereas the cross-cutting nature of the tourism sector requires robust political and administrative coordination; whereas a dedicated directorate-general for sustainable tourism that is provided with appropriate resources could guarantee an integrated institutional approach, improve management of existing funding programmes and address the current fragmented European governance in the sector;
- AG. whereas targeted EU funding, including pilot projects and preparatory actions as well as support under programmes such as the single market programme, Creative Europe, Interreg, the digital Europe programme and Horizon Europe, is essential in enabling local authorities, SMEs and cultural actors to test innovative models

³³ Commission communication of 5 May 2021 entitled 'Updating the 2020 New Industrial Strategy: Building a stronger Single Market for Europe's recovery', COM(2021)0350.

³⁴ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, '[Building strong and resilient tourism destinations](#)', OECD Tourism Papers, 2025/03, OECD Publishing, Paris, 2025, p. 6-8.

in cultural tourism, develop digital tools, strengthen thematic networks and scale up successful initiatives across regions; whereas Parliament has consistently called for the inclusion of a dedicated budget line for tourism in the EU's general budget; whereas upcoming negotiations on the 2028-2034 multiannual financial framework (MFF) present a timely opportunity to secure dedicated long-term, stable funding for tourism; whereas new legislative proposals on the 2028-2034 MFF will play a key role in supporting the clean transition, the digital transformation, skills development, sustainability and the overall competitiveness of the tourism ecosystem across all regions of the EU;

From isolation to opportunity: enhanced connectivity as a catalyst for sustainable regional tourism growth

1. Affirms that connectivity is a precondition for the freedom of movement enshrined in the Treaties; underlines that strong connectivity is essential for balancing tourism and extending its benefits to underserved areas, easing pressure on over-visited hotspots and supporting the revitalisation of local economies; calls on the Commission and the Member States to recognise accessible, affordable and reliable connectivity as an essential service that underpins the freedom of movement, as there is no freedom of movement without the means to move; advocates the establishment of clear, measurable and regularly updated benchmarks to assess the accessibility, affordability and quality of sustainable travel options, including progress towards barrier-free, inclusive mobility for persons with disabilities and with reduced mobility, and for remote, outermost, rural, peripheral, sparsely populated and insular regions, with particular attention to small islands; underlines that such benchmarks are essential in ensuring year-round connectivity, supporting local communities and SMEs, and safeguarding the long-term resilience of tourism-dependent regions; stresses, furthermore, the relevance of the benchmarks in supporting the Commission and the Member States in prioritising tourism-relevant infrastructure investments aimed at strengthening territorial cohesion, distributing tourism flows and easing pressure on overcrowded hotspots;
2. Draws attention to the disproportionate influence of major carriers and digital platforms in steering market trends, impacting consumer choice and exposing destinations and hospitality businesses to significant structural risks; calls on the Commission to conduct a study examining the tourism sector's dependence on dominant players with strong market power in the transport and tourism sectors, including hospitality, assessing threats to connectivity, fair pricing, fair conditions for all business users, labour conditions, service continuity and the long-term resilience of destinations, with particular attention to the structural risks in rural, remote and island regions; calls on the Commission, furthermore, as part of the study, to assess actions to address market concentration and unreasonable

price personalisation, to strengthen transparency, fair competition and consumer protection, and to enhance the competitiveness of SMEs and local operators, including through appropriate legal, regulatory and financial measures, where relevant;

3. Views efficient transport connections as the foundation of a sustainable, competitive and resilient EU tourism sector, relieving pressure on hotspot destinations operating at or beyond their capacity while opening access and redirecting visitor flows to lesser-known, emerging destinations and distributing economic benefits more equitably; calls for connectivity and accessibility to be enhanced, particularly in remote and underserved EU regions, including islands, so as to promote inclusive growth through sustainable travel, encourage deseasonalisation and support regional development;
4. Observes, at the same time, that many emerging destinations – from outermost territories to rural heartlands, mountain communities and island regions – grapple with unique connectivity challenges, and stresses that the EU's sustainable tourism strategy must identify tailored support mechanisms that reflect their specific profiles and vulnerabilities, especially to reinforce the air, sea and land links that sustain their connectivity; insists that any connectivity expansion be matched by quality infrastructure and dependable services, enabling destinations to manage new or diversified tourism flows without undermining accessibility or affordability for residents, especially in the vulnerable regions identified above;
5. Calls for exploring the potential for the wider deployment of public service obligations (PSOs), including multimodal configurations and cross-border night trains, to serve residents and visitors alike – especially in remote and outermost regions, coastal areas and islands – stressing the importance of their role in reinforcing territorial and social cohesion;
6. Highlights the central role of the completed core, extended core and comprehensive Trans-European Transport Networks (TEN-T), complemented by a range of sustainable transport service options, in achieving a more balanced territorial distribution of tourism within the EU, including by promoting off-season demand; stresses that prioritising cross-border projects under the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) has been key in delivering progress on TEN-T, and calls for a robust CEF budget under the next MFF to support a sustainable, accessible and interconnected European transport system, which is equally vital for tourism in all regions of the EU;
7. Welcomes the opportunities presented by the 2028-2034 MFF legislative proposals to strengthen EU support for sustainable, competitive and resilient tourism; highlights, in particular, the provisions of the proposed national and regional partnership plan

regulation³⁵, which recognise sustainable tourism services as a specific objective and open avenues for investment in the digital transformation, circular economy approaches, sustainable mobility, skills and workforce upskilling, tourism diversification, climate adaptation and destination management; acknowledges that the proposed regulation establishing the European Competitiveness Fund³⁶ creates prospects to support sustainable tourism via the clean transition, industrial decarbonisation and SME competitiveness measures; takes note, however, that the new MFF proposal once again fails to include an EU programme and a stand-alone budget line for sustainable tourism, noting that the availability of EU funding to develop secondary and capillary transport networks, which are necessary to support the sustainable development of the tourism sector, diversify tourism flows and support the accessibility of remote, peripheral, outermost and island regions, remains unclear; insists that the next MFF should neither marginalise a significant number of regions nor reduce funding for projects integrated into the global network in order to avoid territorial disparities and uphold the EU's social and territorial cohesion; is concerned that the outermost regions are facing reduced co-financing, despite their extreme remoteness from the continent and the corresponding need for secure connectivity and sustainable investment; reiterates, moreover, that the EU's islands and outermost regions, which face stronger competitive pressure from non-EU regions, are vital to the EU's regional tourism economy and should receive sufficient CEF and other funding to improve connectivity infrastructure, attract visitors and ensure that their growth becomes increasingly more sustainable and that they remain competitive;

8. Reaffirms that dedicated EU funding for sustainable tourism could yield substantial returns by boosting the sector's resilience, advancing its green and digital transitions in line with EU policy priorities and fostering sustainable, balanced and inclusive growth, as well as long-term competitiveness across all European destinations, including stronger territorial and social cohesion in peripheral, outermost and island regions; stresses that establishing such a budget line is essential to ensure the effective implementation of the forthcoming EU sustainable tourism strategy; calls, meanwhile, for the guide on EU funding for tourism to be updated and revised in view of the next MFF;

³⁵ Commission proposal of 16 July 2025 for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the European Fund for economic, social and territorial cohesion, agriculture and rural, fisheries and maritime, prosperity and security for the period 2028-2034 and amending Regulation (EU) 2023/955 and Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509 (COM(2025)0565).

³⁶ COM(2025)0555).

9. Calls for the EU sustainable tourism strategy, alongside the next MFF, to prioritise and identify clear funding mechanisms to support the transition towards sustainable tourism models in regions affected by seasonality, climate change, demographic strain, permanent or intense visitor pressure, diminished attractiveness, high sectoral specialisation and asset degradation, and in small and medium-sized and emerging destinations with high hosting potential; emphasises that such funding should support pilot projects, capacity building and structural transformation, prioritising sustainable infrastructure, clean connectivity, territorial diversification and training programmes that strengthen local talent and help workers adapt to new skills and market needs;
10. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to make every effort to integrate sustainable tourism mobility into EU transport policy, with investment in last-mile connections – including public transport and active mobility, and sustainable and affordable urban mobility solutions – for the benefit of visitors and residents alike; calls on the Commission to provide targeted support for using low- and zero-emission vehicles in tourism – for example, through incentives for e-vehicle leasing and charging infrastructure – particularly in island, rural, mountainous and outermost regions, to boost sustainable mobility and reduce the environmental footprint of visitors; calls on the Commission to step up the promotion of the existing EU Tourism Platform, facilitating the exchange of successful visitor management models and best practices among destinations;
11. Recalls that the pace of this transition depends on adequate destination-level charging infrastructure, including fast-charging solutions capable of serving business, operational and passenger transport needs, stressing that targeted EU financial support, underpinned by clear benchmarks, is essential to scale up zero-emission power sources across the tourism ecosystem and ensure that mobility decarbonisation supports climate goals and sustainable destination management; underscores, furthermore, the need to ensure adequate logistics infrastructure and intermodal connections to support tourism supply chains and local economic ecosystems;
12. Calls for greater EU financial support to strengthen public transport services, enabling them to become more multimodal, accessible, reliable, flexible and better tailored to territorial circumstances, especially in insular and remote areas; emphasises that such services should ensure adequate access for residents while strengthening community connectivity, social inclusion and the accessibility of tourism destinations; suggests that, where existing measures prove insufficient to address persistent structural disadvantages, the Commission should propose other tools to offset the structural disadvantages faced by citizens and businesses in peripheral, island, insular and outermost regions, and to ensure equitable access and safeguard the long-term viability and cohesion of these regions;

13. Recognises cycling tourism as a strategic European sector, as reflected in the European Declaration on Cycling, where the EU holds a leading global position; emphasises the importance of initiatives such as EuroVelo – the European network of long-distance cycling routes – in advancing journey-focused tourism; calls for incentives and investments to bolster these initiatives, amplifying their significant economic benefits across regions, including rural, peripheral and cross-border areas; stresses that such initiatives foster sustainable mobility options, strengthening local communities and SMEs, and reinforce social and geographical inclusion; calls on the Commission and the Member States to continue supporting the development and expansion of European long-distance cycling tourism routes, the upgrading of cycling infrastructure and improved road safety for cyclists, including through dedicated funding instruments and close cooperation with regional and local authorities;
14. Highlights the crucial role of maritime connections in island, coastal and peripheral regions, where they constitute essential services for both residents and tourists; stresses the importance of PSOs, modern fleets and smart timetabling that balance local mobility needs with tourism flows and help reduce seasonal pressures; calls for the EU to continue supporting sustainable transport options, such as ferries using carbon-neutral fuels and batteries, and electric and hybrid ferries with shore power supply technologies, complemented by measures to advance hybrid-electric aircraft, with priority for islands and outermost and peripheral territories, subject to proven technological and economic viability and supported by proportionate measures for operators and territories that heavily rely on air and sea links;
15. Calls on the Commission to follow up on the study assessing the advantages and drawbacks of a possible mutual recognition of boating licences for recreational boat operators by proposing a regulatory measure that facilitates the mobility of the approximately 48 million European boaters and supports the sustainable development of nautical tourism and the blue economy;
16. Stresses that inland waterway tourism and waterside activities, such as cycling, walking, gastronomy and cultural attractions, allow visitors to discover local heritage and landscapes in an environmentally respectful way; calls, consequently, for greater investment in Europe's rivers and canals to protect biodiversity and strengthen water system resilience, noting their significant potential for sustainable tourism, and for a more balanced distribution of tourism flows across regions;
17. Recognises rail as a cornerstone of sustainable tourism and a viable alternative to more polluting modes of transport; calls for increased investment in the whole of the EU's rail infrastructure – particularly

cross-border sections and sections that are vital for international connectivity – alongside strengthened support for secondary and capillary networks, to ensure the accessibility of remote and peripheral regions; recalls that railways can be developed on islands as a sustainable mode of transport and as a way of ensuring multimodal connectivity, supporting both cross-border projects and rail initiatives in island regions;

18. Reaffirms the need to make intermodality a strategic priority, promoting direct connections between airports, railway stations and ports, while acknowledging that railway connectivity and intermodal terminals are equally important for delivering goods and services that also support tourism destinations; calls, in addition, for simplified rail ticketing to improve travel flexibility and the attractiveness of the rail sector, together with a rapid rollout of a seamless integrated ticketing system covering rail, air and maritime services, clearer passenger information and easier cross-border booking methods;
19. Welcomes the vision for a high-speed rail network to promote efficient rail connections between European cities as an alternative to short-haul flights, while expanding tourism to peripheral regions beyond traditional hotspots; notes, however, that various technical obstacles still need to be addressed, for example, those relating to the differentiation between certain national/regional gauges and the European standard gauge; sees night trains, furthermore, as a key asset for diversifying tourism, enabling the development of underserved tourism destinations and promoting more sustainable modes of tourism, such as rural, cultural and ecotourism;
20. Recalls the growing importance of historical and heritage rail tourism as an innovative way to promote sustainable travel and enrich cultural experiences at the local and regional level, while safeguarding cultural and natural heritage; underlines that the restoration and tourism-oriented repurposing of disused or underused traditional rail lines and rolling stock can contribute to the regeneration of tourism destinations, the preservation of natural landscapes and local environments, and the creation of new tourism opportunities that enhance visitors' experiences while supporting the protection and sustainable development of local and regional areas; calls for EU funding to be made available to restore, transform and upgrade rolling stock and transport infrastructure – including railways, roads and cycling paths – that serve tourism destinations, with a view to supporting historical, cultural and sustainable routes;
21. Acknowledges that both transport and tourism strongly influence the energy needs of EU tourism destinations; calls for the inclusion of tourism and all transport modes – rail, road, maritime and air – in future EU energy policies and actions to support destinations in their sustainable transition and to address their specific infrastructure

needs; calls on the Commission to reinforce support for the tourism sector's energy infrastructure, and on the Member States to incorporate the sector's energy needs into their national energy and climate plans;

22. Welcomes the sustainable transport investment plan (STIP), expecting it to spur investment in sustainable fuels for aviation and waterborne transport, including the existing fleet of leisure boats, which are hard-to-abate sectors; urges the Commission and the Member States to ensure that the path to net zero, particularly the shift to sustainable fuels, avoids hidden costs, excessive bureaucracy, unfair airline surcharges that inflate ticket prices for tourists, residents and SMEs, and the imposition of disproportionate operating costs or infrastructure burdens on the outermost regions, islands and remote areas; warns about the introduction of new fiscal measures, such as a fuel tax, that could jeopardise the connectivity, affordability and competitiveness of the tourism sector;
23. Highlights the fact that environmental tourism taxes (eco-taxes) could deliver tangible results to local communities by funding projects that support residents and the environment; notes that a number of cities and regions have already introduced such eco-taxes with positive results, which should be analysed and possibly be used as examples of best practice; calls on the Commission to include these examples in its upcoming sustainable tourism strategy, which would offer additional guidance to Member States and regions to support investment in sustainable tourism, contributing to balanced territorial development and shared prosperity;
24. Recognises the cruise liner industry as an important European sector that underpins the shipbuilding and repair industries, in which the EU remains a global leader, while acknowledging the sustainability challenges observed in some destinations; calls for incentive schemes and investments to expand the availability of sustainable onshore power supply and to promote overnight or longer port stays, especially in major cruise ports; encourages ongoing dialogue with the sector to ensure that port calls and longer stays contribute to local value creation, sustainable mobility and reduced congestion; stresses the need to encourage the sustainable management of cruise activity and traffic to ensure that economic benefits are balanced with the environmental integrity of destinations and the strengthened social well-being of local communities;
25. Considers that, in this context, improved destination management should take all vessel port arrivals into account; stresses, furthermore, the need for a balanced and proportionate distribution of scheduled arrivals through berth allocation systems in order to reduce peak-day pressure on destinations and to maximise local economic benefits while minimising environmental impacts on destinations; highlights, furthermore, the need to develop a

methodology for calculating the carrying capacity of destinations receiving cruise liner visitors; stresses, in this context, the essential role of destination management organisations (DMOs), together with local authorities and stakeholders, in managing visitor flows and ensuring that cruise tourism contributes to sustainable local development; recommends that the Commission compile examples of good practice to serve as models for other sectors across the EU, building on initiatives such as its 2023 report entitled 'Good practices for sustainable cruise tourism', in order to advance tourism sustainability and competitiveness;

26. Emphasises the need for strong, enforceable passenger rights across all transport modes, including complex multimodal journeys, to maintain Europe's competitive advantage in global tourism, while supporting innovation, competitiveness and investment in the transport sector; takes note of the growing expectations of travellers for reliability, transparency and protection during disruptions and delays, particularly when journeys involve multiple transport modes or operators; underlines, in this context, the need to develop an EU strategy for efficient tourist transport that reduces waiting times, duplicate procedures and administrative obstacles, while advancing the interoperability of tickets and travel documents and the efficiency of border controls; stresses the paramount importance of robust passenger rights for travellers with disabilities and with reduced mobility, first and foremost to strengthen inclusivity and social equity, but also to reinforce Europe's standing as a provider of accessible, high-quality tourism and transport services, further enhancing the competitiveness of European tourism;

Empowering Europe's destinations to advance local excellence

27. Warns that unbalanced tourism risks straining destinations, harming local communities and residents, and eroding Europe's environmental and cultural appeal; underscores, in contrast, that when planned well, tourism holds immense value and potential to generate inclusive benefits, strengthening social cohesion, safeguarding cultural heritage and creating high-quality employment; reiterates that, as an integral component of the EU's industrial strategy, tourism requires effective governance, including at destination level, and coordinated policy action to distribute demand strategically between established and emerging destinations; calls, therefore, on the Commission and the Member States to take action, such as by promoting off-season demand; calls on the Member States to foster the diversification and promotion of less-frequented destinations and activities, and emphasises that these efforts should be supported by data-driven planning and awareness-raising initiatives in order to preserve Europe's status as a top global destination;
28. Is convinced that the sector's resilience in navigating diverse

challenges requires a clear strategy, well-defined goals and participatory, evidence-based policymaking and legislation; welcomes, in this context, the Commission's move to develop the first EU sustainable tourism strategy, and acknowledges its potential to provide the Member States, regions and sector stakeholders with a comprehensive framework for shaping a more sustainable, innovative, balanced and inclusive tourism model; believes that the strategy should redefine the role of tourism beyond its immediate economic impact, recognising its contribution to shared prosperity, social cohesion and balanced regional development; calls, in parallel to this strategy, for an implementation plan that assesses the needs and varying levels of connectivity of each tourism region and destination, prioritising tourism infrastructure in vulnerable destinations; stresses that this plan should be supported by an appropriate funding programme, a clear timetable and a strong evaluation process to ensure a coherent and just transition for Europe;

29. Emphasises that, in order to succeed in an increasingly competitive global travel landscape, Europe requires stronger EU-level coordination and investment to elevate its international visibility; calls for the development of a coherent 'Destination Europe' framework within the EU sustainable tourism strategy that complements national and regional strategies, strengthens Europe's global appeal and delivers a consistent, high-quality impression of the continent while celebrating local excellence, supporting Europe's transition towards becoming a global model destination by 2030;
30. Calls for the establishment of a dedicated directorate-general for sustainable tourism within the Commission;
31. Emphasises that the sector's cross-cutting nature must be adequately reflected across all relevant EU policies, aligning legislation on transport, the environment, regional and rural development, digitalisation, competitiveness, employment, education and access to affordable housing, and drawing on expertise from all these fields;
32. Highlights the importance of structured, multilevel governance models that systematically involve local and regional authorities, DMOs and private stakeholders, ensuring coherent and inclusive tourism strategies; underscores DMOs' strategic advantage in leveraging their local presence to expand their outreach and build partnerships with all relevant stakeholders in the tourism ecosystem, including SMEs; highlights the fact that many small and rural destinations lack the administrative and analytical capacity to design and implement sustainable tourism strategies, and could benefit from targeted EU support to strengthen their destination management capabilities; calls, furthermore, on the Member States to strengthen the role of DMOs through financial support, technical

capacity, coordination of their activities, and the upskilling of workers required to steer destination management effectively;

33. Points out that structured, multilevel tourism governance models should be strengthened through the development and regular updating of destination management plans, coordinated by DMOs in cooperation with regional and local public authorities, tourism stakeholders and residents, ensuring coherent and inclusive approaches and enabling DMOs to coordinate and advertise diversified local tourism products; emphasises that destination management plans should be based on clear sustainability indicators and, where appropriate, on carrying capacity assessments, ensuring evidence-based planning and long-term competitiveness;
34. Observes that adopting a broader regional perspective on tourism can improve the coherence of transport and tourism planning, reduce policy fragmentation, and promote greater equity, integration and cooperation across areas with varying levels of tourism intensity; highlights the key role of local and regional authorities in shaping sustainable tourism strategies, developing thematic cultural routes, promoting local identity, safeguarding cultural and intangible heritage, and supporting community-led tourism initiatives; underscores, at the same time, the importance of integrating tourism with regional reindustrialisation and smart specialisation strategies, ensuring that tourism supports and complements a diversified productive base, rather than replacing it;
35. Highlights the particular vulnerability of tourism-intensive destinations, where resident alienation, overstretched infrastructure, growing environmental impacts and threats to local culture and heritage are becoming increasingly acute; encourages boosting the visibility of less-visited regions and developing regional tourism hubs grounded in heritage, gastronomy, nature and local cultural activities, in order to enhance local excellence and promote a sustainable growth model that moves beyond the saturated sun-and-beach offer; urges the Commission and the Member States, furthermore, to finance initiatives aimed at revitalising historic villages and promoting traditional local products, including the development of green paths and other nature trails and the creation of a label recognising outstanding rural and nature-based tourism environments, similar to the 'blue flag' system for beaches;
36. Notes that short-distance, low- and zero-emission travel enhances regional cohesion by keeping value local and reinforcing SME-driven, community-rooted tourism in inland and agricultural areas; underlines the contribution of proximity tourism to easing pressure off overcrowded destinations and sustaining year-round economic activity, labour stability and demographic resilience in sparsely populated regions; stresses the need to reinforce short tourism circuits that connect visitors with micro-producers, such as

microbreweries, small wine producers, craftspeople and cultural associations; encourages, in this regard, the creation and EU-level recognition of thematic local networks to promote local and regional heritage and strengthen cultural and regenerative tourism; draws attention to the role of interactive digital tools and thematic digital platforms, thematic interactive maps and event calendars in facilitating visibility and showcasing local excellence;

37. Highlights the positive role of cohesion and development funds for tourism, culture and agri-food investments; notes that regions using these funds should be assisted in adopting tourism methodologies that integrate planning and implementation; calls for stronger EU support for agritourism and farm-to-fork and field-to-fork initiatives that create genuine value chains and authentic tourism experiences; underlines that these models strengthen rural economies, support local producers, diversify tourism offers and contribute to sustainable, high-quality tourism across the EU;
38. Recognises the potential of sports, active and outdoor tourism to contribute to regional development, promote healthy lifestyles and mitigate seasonality, and calls for more systematic integration of sports infrastructure into tourism frameworks; highlights, at the same time, the opportunities offered by health, spa and medical tourism, particularly in ageing societies, and calls for the development of quality standards and cross-border cooperation in this growing sector; emphasises, in this context, the need to raise awareness of inclusion and accessibility in tourism, improve the range and visibility of accessible services, and develop tourism offers that benefit both residents and visitors, especially older people and persons with disabilities;
39. Reiterates that the hospitality sector forms a central pillar of Europe's tourism ecosystem and cultural fabric, rooted in close ties with local SMEs, cultural institutions and regional labour markets, and highlights the essential role of Europe's restaurants, cafés and bars – predominantly micro-enterprises and family businesses – in generating employment across all skill levels and preserving local identity and cultural heritage; calls for policies that support hospitality businesses in offering high-quality guest experiences, strengthening cultural vibrancy, improving the quality of jobs in the sector, and creating sustainable, long-term value for European destinations;
40. Welcomes the Regulation on short-term accommodation rentals³⁷, applicable across all Member States from 20 May 2026, as a positive

³⁷ Regulation (EU) 2024/1028 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 April 2024 on data collection and sharing relating to short-term accommodation rental services and amending Regulation (EU) 2018/1724 (OJ L, 2024/1028, 29.4.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/1028/oj>).

step towards more effective destination management; expresses concern, however, about the unregulated growth of short-term rentals and their impact on housing, particularly affordability for local residents and essential workers, on social cohesion, including the displacement of residents and communities from their long-standing place in local life and governance, and on urban and essential services, directly impinging on the lives of local people; recalls that the ruling by the Court of Justice of the European Union in Joined Cases C-724/18 and C-727/18³⁸ stated that the regulation of short-term rentals at the national, regional or local level may be justified by a legitimate public interest, provided that the measures adopted are necessary, adequate and proportionate; calls, therefore, on the Commission to swiftly propose legislation to establish a coherent, data-driven and sustainable EU framework for short-term rentals, defining standards for service provision and clear host categories, and enabling the Member States, including regional and local authorities, to apply proportionate and evidence-based measures, such as night caps, authorisation schemes, offsetting and zoning, recalling that housing policy remains primarily within the competence of the Member States;

41. Reiterates that tourism should be regarded as a strategic opportunity grounded in the sustainable coexistence of visitors and residents; believes that short-term rentals, based on the original premise of personal connection between host and guest, can invigorate local engagement in tourism and enable more authentic experiences; notes that allowing homes to be used for tourism can provide families with extra income and may help finance energy-efficient renovations; highlights, however, that what began as a collaborative economy model has increasingly evolved into a commercialised industry, now largely dominated by commercial hosts managing multiple properties, often operating without obligations equivalent to those of traditional accommodation providers; calls for a clear distinction between commercial and non-commercial short-term rentals; underscores that any regulatory measures should remain proportionate, adapted to local contexts and mindful of local tourism economies and communities, while granting Member States, regions and local authorities the flexibility to design and implement measures suited to their specific local circumstances and housing markets;
42. Highlights the need for robust enforcement mechanisms to ensure that only compliant short-term rental activity is listed on digital platforms, given the platforms' central role in the short-term rental market, and that illegal short-term rentals identified by authorities

³⁸ Judgment of the Court (Grand Chamber) of 22 September 2020, *Cali Apartments SCI and HX v Procureur général près la cour d'appel de Paris and Ville de Paris*, Joined Cases C-724/18 and C-727/18, ECLI:EU:C:2020:743.

should be promptly removed; underlines, furthermore, that clear due diligence obligations for platforms are essential, including the verification of registration numbers, supported by strengthened control mechanisms to prevent fraudulent or invalid registrations, and by effective notice and action and takedown mechanisms to ensure the rapid removal of invalid short-term rental listings; stresses that a new legislative framework should also provide robust mechanisms to support the enforcement of, and compliance with, national or local rules aimed at managing short-term rental supply, including the effective implementation of night caps or other measures such as noise-mitigation requirements;

43. Points out, in this context, that in tourism destinations with certain structural and geographical limitations, such as islands, outermost regions and certain coastal areas, tourism-related market pressures, together with insufficient affordable and public housing, compound the housing crisis; calls for cohesion policy measures tailored to these specific conditions, in line with Articles 174 and 349 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union;
44. Acknowledges the current limitations of the EU Ecolabel; recognises the need for a unified approach to sustainability labelling in the European tourism sector, enabling the creation of a single, transparent framework that drives sustainable development, peer learning and capacity building, fosters consumer confidence, and enhances the competitiveness, efficiency and global visibility of European tourism businesses and destinations, positioning Europe as a benchmark for sustainable tourism worldwide; stresses that harmonisation does not mean the use of a single certificate, but rather the use of a common methodology for reviewing and establishing clear standards or criteria; underlines the importance of accredited, independent third-party certification to ensure that sustainability claims are substantiated, in line with the EU regulatory framework, including the Directive on consumer empowerment³⁹; calls strongly for the extension of coverage to additional segments of the tourism value chain, including cruise companies, tour operators, meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibitions (MICE) services, attractions, food and beverage services, destinations and community-friendly tourism involving local residents, to support a sustainable transition grounded in thorough impact assessments and stakeholder consultations; stresses, at the same time, that an EU-wide sustainability label should remain voluntary, proportionate, cost-effective, simple to apply for SMEs and supported by training and

³⁹ Directive (EU) 2024/825 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 February 2024 amending Directives 2005/29/EC and 2011/83/EU as regards empowering consumers for the green transition through better protection against unfair practices and through better information (OJ L, 2024/825, 6.3.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/2024/825/oj>).

financial incentives to prevent undue administrative burdens for small tourism businesses;

45. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to support the transition of tourism towards a circular-economy model by promoting actions that improve water, energy and waste-management efficiency, curb overconsumption, prevent habitat degradation, safeguard biodiversity and minimise the environmental footprint of tourism activities on destinations, guided by data-driven decision-making; calls, in parallel, on the Commission to step up support for innovation to reduce food waste and reflect it in the relevant programmes; urges, furthermore, the promotion of short supply chains in hospitality by facilitating market access for micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises, including small farms and artisans;
46. Acknowledges that the tourism sector is taking significant steps to reduce its environmental footprint, including phasing out single-use water bottles, improving energy-efficient lighting and water-saving systems, extending the lifespan of furniture through repair and reuse, and reducing food waste, with a solid legislative framework provided by recent EU regulations, such as the Single-Use Plastics Directive and the Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation⁴⁰, which are still in the process of implementation; calls on the Commission to conduct a study to identify and assess the gaps in the Single-Use Plastics Directive in relation to tourism and hospitality, and to propose measures to address these gaps, including by providing implementation support and incentives to the industry in order to accelerate, wherever possible, the phasing out of single-use plastics in the EU tourism and hospitality sector, based on a realistic transition time frame and supported by an impact assessment, scientific data and stakeholder consultation, while ensuring that no disproportionate costs are imposed on small operators;
47. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to shift from reactive to proactive tourism development management, supported by enhanced data sharing, and to collect, analyse and use data for destination management and sustainability reporting, stressing that this transition would help to ensure sustainable, high-quality tourism; emphasises that coordinated data exchange across all levels enables real-time monitoring and intelligent forecasting, empowering destinations to manage visitor flows to cultural and natural attractions, prevent overcrowding, manage resources, support efforts to reduce seasonality and adapt flexibly to changes; highlights the fact that the rapid evolution of generative AI risks rewarding

⁴⁰ Regulation (EU) 2025/40 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 December 2024 on packaging and packaging waste, amending Regulation (EU) 2019/1020 and Directive (EU) 2019/904, and repealing Directive 94/62/EC (OJ L, 2025/40, 22.1.2025, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2025/40/oj>).

large and technologically sophisticated players in the tourism market, exacerbating existing inequalities and leaving many destinations and SMEs behind if support and capacity building do not keep pace; calls on the Commission, in this context, to provide targeted funding and guidance on financial instruments for SMEs to foster data, digitisation and AI uptake in the tourism sector;

48. Calls for a systemic approach to tourism, replacing fragmented market- or product-based logic with integrated governance models; supports the creation of comprehensive metrics covering, among other things, quality job creation, employment conditions, local community well-being, resource efficiency, environmental degradation and carbon emissions, based on globally acceptable calculating methodologies, to promote transparent policymaking, guide responsible investments and enable the comparability of data across destinations; welcomes the development of a globally recognised and harmonised set of destination-level sustainable tourism indicators, noting that the methodology is being piloted by the EU Competence Centre to support data management in smart destinations (D3HUB), with input from 40 European DMOs and the European Tourism Indicator System (ETIS); insists that an EU-level approach to sustainable tourism indicators should be fully compatible with existing frameworks, such as the statistical framework for measuring the sustainability of tourism or the tourism satellite account methodological framework, enabling effective standardisation and benchmarking and ensuring simplified reporting processes that reduce administrative demands on tourism businesses;
49. Stresses that data-centric, multi-tier governance is essential for achieving sustainability and effectively handling unpredictable crises, such as pandemics and other health-related crises, geopolitical shocks, extreme climate and natural events, human-made or technological disruptions and economic downturns, as well as growing structural crises, such as demographic decline, depopulation and housing shortages; stresses the need to factor freight and logistics into crisis-preparedness tools, in view of their vital importance for safeguarding the continuity of tourism services and supply chains; notes with concern that stakeholder reluctance to share data – driven by reservations over technology, data sovereignty, trust, legal risks and costs – is slowing down the rollout of the common European Tourism Data Space; points to the EU Tourism Dashboard and D3HUB as strong examples of how aggregated EU-level insights can guide local action and sustain tourism supply chains in times of uncertainty; reiterates that these mechanisms ensure that DMOs and SMEs have simplified access to interoperable data to support evidence-based decision-making, thereby strengthening and safeguarding resilience across their value chains; highlights, furthermore, the contributions of D3HUB in helping tourist destinations make strategic use of data, stresses that

this initiative is essential for strengthening data-driven governance and preparing the sector for the digital transition, and calls on the Commission to ensure its continuity beyond 2026 in line with the EU's strategic objectives;

50. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to develop a centralised platform based on verifiable data to map major events across the EU that may trigger local disruptions, especially in vulnerable regions, and to establish a dedicated European crisis management mechanism for tourism to strengthen preparedness, crisis prevention and resilience in the face of future crises; calls on the Commission, furthermore, to integrate the mechanism with advanced crisis-preparedness tools and quick-response measures, including early warning systems, contingency planning, strategic transport infrastructure and corridors, and targeted support through flexible procedures, to enhance tourism resilience and safety;
51. Observes that technology and environmental awareness are driving a shift from passive sightseeing to purposeful, personalised and responsible experiences; highlights the potential of itinerary-generating recommender systems to cultivate community-led, slow tourism such as cycling and hiking that benefits local SMEs, communities, local producers, including those recognised by geographical indications, as well as cultures and products; insists, however, that, to capitalise on this potential, the sector must integrate local groups and citizens into the tourism value chain alongside large corporations, for example through expert support in the use of digital tools, the establishment of multi-stakeholder councils with consultative and advisory roles on licenses, carrying capacity, limits and planning, and the diversification of its offers to reduce market and seasonal dependencies; calls on the Member States to promote school-based educational initiatives and wider awareness-raising campaigns to enhance awareness of sustainable tourism practices;

Shaping the future of tourism with skills and cultural engagement

52. Stresses that a skilled and valued high-quality workforce is the backbone of Europe's tourism economy; notes that structural challenges, such as low pay in certain tourism sectors, informal employment, part-time and undeclared work, seasonality, limited training and, at times, poor working conditions, continue to perpetuate labour and skills shortages in tourism, further exacerbated by persistent gender inequality, as women represent the majority of the tourism workforce and dominate low-paid, labour-intensive and temporary occupations; acknowledges that in some Member States there has been progress in improving working conditions, working time arrangements and remuneration, including through updated collective agreements following the COVID-19 pandemic; calls, nevertheless, for further advancement towards a

tourism labour market based on quality jobs, fair wages, reliable social protection and year-round employment, including during the off-season; draws attention, at the same time, to the value of paid training during working hours and the importance of extending such opportunities to seasonal workers during the off-season;

53. Underscores the ever-increasing demand for an adaptable and crisis-resilient workforce equipped with digital and green skills to implement innovative solutions that balance economic growth with environmental stewardship; stresses that the digital and green transitions offer opportunities to create better, safer and more resilient employment across tourism value chains, and urges that these opportunities be fully harnessed, including through cooperation with regional and local authorities in designing specialised training programmes for tourism professionals;
54. Calls for a coordinated EU-wide agenda to upskill and reskill the tourism workforce, in line with the pact for skills, so as to tackle labour shortages, improve working conditions, overcome mobility barriers, respond to evolving skills demands and strengthen the sector's long-term attractiveness and competitiveness, ensuring lasting value for European destinations and promoting the European way of life; proposes the introduction of a tourism skills card, designed in close cooperation with social partners and recognised across the Member States and sectors of the tourism industry, to document accredited training, skills, qualifications and professional experience; suggests that training be delivered and co-financed through EU programmes, including the European Social Fund Plus, Erasmus+, the single market programme and the digital Europe programme;
55. Underlines that upskilling and reskilling must go hand in hand with valuing every role – from human connections, which are indispensable for delivering high-quality and culturally-attuned services, to physically demanding roles that sustain many tourism services – ensuring that none of these aspects are lost as the sector shifts towards more digitally driven models; notes that both soft skills and physical work remain undervalued in economic and policy terms, often lacking formal recognition, training or remuneration comparable to that of technical or managerial roles; calls for these skills and roles to be properly recognised, valued and rewarded, as this is essential to raising job quality, advancing gender equality and ensuring that tourism's human dimension is fully acknowledged and nurtured within Europe's tourism model;
56. Encourages stronger cooperation between tourism businesses, education providers and public authorities to advance high-quality training programmes and apprenticeships and to address future skills demands; underlines the importance of targeted initiatives – such as industry-aligned curricula, clear career pathways and

mentorship programmes – that boost the attractiveness of hospitality careers for young people and help build a stronger, more skilled workforce in the sector; insists that these initiatives must translate into quality employment outcomes, including long-term contracts, real opportunities for career progression and wage increases;

57. Underlines that culture, deeply woven into our way of life, is fundamental to Europe's tourism appeal and to our national and European identities; recalls that this cultural fabric encompasses, among many other elements, sustainable traditions, archaeological heritage and local languages, whose preservation reflects genuine respect for regional and national identities and the continuity of local communities; welcomes the efforts undertaken by certain Member States to return cultural works and artefacts to their places of origin; highlights the new Culture Compass for Europe strategic framework as a key instrument for strengthening the cultural dimension of EU policies; calls on the Commission, given the EU's diverse and richly layered tourism offer, to place EU incentives, such as DiscoverEU, European Capitals of Culture and the European Heritage Label, at the forefront of promotion of Destination Europe within the new sustainable tourism strategy;
58. Commends the vital role of professional cultural workers, local organisations and volunteers as custodians of Europe's cultural heritage, whose work ranges from site maintenance and conservation to public engagement through community outreach and guided tours; highlights their role in strengthening Europe's distinctiveness and attractiveness as a global tourism destination; notes that precarious working conditions and inadequate remuneration often fail to reflect the value of their contribution in safeguarding and transmitting Europe's cultural heritage, a situation that may be further aggravated by increasing competitive pressure from platform-based services that undercut the prices of cultural tours and guiding services through tipping practices and connection fees;
59. Recognises, in this context, the remarkable commitment of volunteers, who dedicate significant personal time, including during their annual leave, to support cultural preservation in Europe; calls on the Commission, in cooperation with the Member States, to propose guidelines to incentivise and enable individuals to engage in cultural volunteering, including through supportive measures that facilitate participation and promote the recognition of cultural volunteers across the EU; stresses that promoting cultural volunteering reinforces the goals of the European Year of Skills and enhances current EU programmes, such as Erasmus+, by encouraging intergenerational learning, the exchange of skills and deeper cultural engagement; stresses that the long-term objective is professionalisation, and calls for a passion-to-profession scheme that would enable training, certification and fair remuneration, co-

financed through Erasmus+, Creative Europe and the European Social Fund Plus, to help those who preserve our identity to develop viable careers of their choice; underlines that the scheme should remain voluntary, with cultural leave never being tied to professional commitments; encourages the Member States to foster volunteering in ways that enrich cultural life and complement professional cultural employment, rather than replacing it;

60. Stresses the importance of ensuring that EU funding is made available for intangible heritage under the next MFF in order to provide direct support for initiatives that protect and showcase cultural traditions – from maritime and nautical practices such as sailing to local languages and craftsmanship, including geographical indications – ensuring their intergenerational transmission and strengthening community engagement in sustainable, responsible tourism; underlines the importance of ensuring fair recognition for those investing in heritage and skills, and highlights the need to include indigenous and community-led tourism initiatives that safeguard ancestral knowledge, conserve biodiversity and foster authentic, culturally respectful experiences that sustain local livelihoods; calls, furthermore, for EU funding to support producer associations working to register a geographical indication under Regulation (EU) 2023/2411⁴¹, recognising this as a key instrument for enhancing regional craft heritage;
61. Stresses that funded projects should promote knowledge transfer across areas and sectors and harness the strategic potential of tourism to safeguard intangible heritage and enhance its social and economic benefits for local communities, with a more even territorial distribution and fairer allocation of value across the tourism value chain; points out, furthermore, that funding should prioritise projects that advance territorial cohesion, especially in regions where intangible heritage is most at risk and where cultural tourism can foster local development and support population retention; underlines the role of public-private partnerships in strengthening the tourism sector's ability to protect, promote and enhance cultural heritage, and calls for deeper collaboration between authorities, industry and community actors to maximise sustainable outcomes;
62. Calls for annual reporting to Parliament on progress towards sustainable tourism, drawing on the operational roll out of the EU Tourism Dashboard and measurable indicators covering the environment, connectivity, infrastructure readiness, quality of employment and local community well-being, to inform funding

⁴¹ Regulation (EU) 2023/2411 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 October 2023 on the protection of geographical indications for craft and industrial products and amending Regulations (EU) 2017/1001 and (EU) 2019/1753 (OJ L, 2023/2411, 27.10.2023, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2023/2411/oj>).

decisions and future reforms;

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63. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission and the governments and parliaments of the Member States.