

COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

COM(92) 130 final

Brussels, 2 April 1992

Amended proposal for a

COUNCIL DECISION

on a Community action plan to assist tourism

(presented by the Commission pursuant to Article 149(3)
of the EEC-Treaty)

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

1. The Commission is presenting, under Article 149(3) of the EEC Treaty, an amended proposal for a Council Decision on a Community action plan to assist tourism (COM(91)97 final, 16 April 1991). The proposal as now amended takes into account a number of changes proposed by Parliament (adopted on 14 February 1992 - document PE 158.955), a number of suggestions in the opinion of the Economic and Social Committee (OJ C 49, 24.2.1992), and some of the points made at the meeting of Ministers of Tourism in Noordwijk on 16-17 October 1991.

2. Among the amendments suggested by Parliament, the Commission has adopted those on improving the structure of the proposal for a Decision in such a way as to clarify its objectives and possible scope. The proposals for the presentation of certain specific measures (rural tourism, youth tourism) to be reformulated in the shape of an indicative list of measures designed to achieve a broad objective have been taken up, and in order to keep the text consistent they have been aligned on thematic measures. A timetable of priorities has been added, and the Commission has also included in the preamble to the Decision a number of changes specifying more precisely the criteria for Community action, including compliance with the principle of subsidiarity, not distorting competition and strengthening collaboration between those involved in developing tourism, including local authorities.

The Commission has also followed Parliament's suggestions on strengthening horizontal measures in tourism, especially coordination between national and Community policies, and consultation with trade circles.

The Commission has also endorsed a number of concrete ideas which Parliament or the Economic and Social Committee wish to see introduced into the action plan, most of which are reformulated in the light of the Community's possibilities for action. It has thus taken up Parliament's idea that Community measures at the interface between tourism and the environment, and action to assist social tourism and youth tourism, should be strengthened.

3. The Commission has taken up a number of amendments designed to give priority to Community measures to assist tourism in eastern and central Europe, but only in part. Cooperation with the countries there is envisaged as taking the form of implementation of a number of cross-frontier pilot projects, but there could be no question of making this a priority objective under this plan.

4. On the other hand, the Commission has not been able to accept a number of amendments falling under other aspects of Community action, particularly its cultural policy. Nor has it been able to endorse Parliament's amendment concerning the budgetary resources to be allocated to the plan, in view of the allocation of powers between the Community institutions in budgetary affairs.

Amended Proposal for a COUNCIL DECISION concerning a Community Action
Plan to assist tourism

(presented by the Commission according to article 149, indent 3 of the EC
Treaty)

INITIAL TEXT

The Council of the European Communities,

Having regard to the provisions of the Treaty
establishing the European Economic Community,
and in particular Article 235 thereof,

Having regard to the proposal for a decision
presented by the Commission,

Having regard to the opinion of the European
Parliament,

Having regard to the opinion of the Economic and
Social Committee,

Whereas tourism occupies an important place in the
economy of the member states and that tourism
activity is a strong potential for employment,

Whereas tourism is a vehicle to promote a better
knowledge of the cultures and way of life in the
member states of the Community for all its citizens,

AMENDED TEXT

The Council of the European Communities,

Having regard to the provisions of the Treaty
establishing the European Economic Community,
and in particular Article 235 thereof,

Having regard to the proposal for a decision
presented by the Commission,

Having regard to the opinion of the European
Parliament,

Having regard to the opinion of the Economic
and social Committee,

Whereas tourism occupies an important place in
the economy of the Member States, with tourist
activities representing a large potential source of
employment and the sector being one of the few
in which growth is expected in Europe as a
whole, including eastern and central Europe;

Whereas tourism allows people of all kinds to
gain a better knowledge of Europe's cultural
roots and of the cultures and ways of life in the
Member States of the Community, thus making a
great contribution to the progress of the idea of
"European citizenship", which is one of the main

Whereas taking into account of the results obtained during the European Year of Tourism,

Whereas, in view of the above, Community action in the field of tourism should be translated through a reinforcement of the horizontal approach of tourism in national and Community policies and the realisation of specific actions,

Whereas a certain number of measures are already in place in order to improve the knowledge of the tourism sector and to respond to its needs within the framework of the Community instruments and policies,

Whereas the Community can contribute to improve the quality and competitiveness of the supply of Community tourism, favouring a common approach towards medium term problems which face European tourism, by encouraging the development of transnational actions, as well as developing the promotion of European tourism on the main third markets,

Whereas in view of the above, the Community can promote the smooth development of economic activities in the Community as a whole, a continued and balanced expansion, an accelerated increase in the standard of living and closer relations between the member states;

preoccupations of the Community institutions, and in particular the European Parliament;

Whereas the achievements of the European Year of Tourism should be taken into account;

Whereas, in view of the above, Community action regarding tourism should take the form of a strengthening of the horizontal approach to tourism in Community and national policies, and of the implementation of specific measures, and whereas that approach should also include coordinating the measures undertaken by other Commission departments which affect tourism;

Whereas a number of measures are already in place in order to improve the knowledge of the tourism sector and to respond to its needs within the framework of the Community instruments and policies;

Whereas the Community can contribute to improving the quality and competitiveness of the Community's tourism supply, by encouraging a joint approach to the medium-term problems facing European tourism, by encouraging the diversification of tourist activity and the development of transnational measures, and by developing the promotion of European tourism on the main external markets;

Whereas tourism can make an effective contribution to achieving economic and social cohesion in the Community and whereas it can promote in the Community a harmonious development of economic activity, continuous and balanced expansion, a higher standard of living and closer relations between the countries which it links ;

Whereas tourism in the Community will, in future, have to be more compatible with the needs and the integrity of the local population and the natural and cultural environment, and whereas supply will have to be oriented more towards quality than quantity, in order to avoid the excesses of mass tourism;

Whereas in addition to a better integration of tourism in the different Community policies it is necessary to favour a close cooperation between all the public and private actors of the tourism sector, and that the putting into operation at Community level of a certain number of specific measures, complementing those taken at national level, is the most appropriate way of realising such a cooperation,

Whereas, without influencing the negotiations in course, the Community should envisage the situation where agreements with third countries or international organisations will be necessary to ensure the success of the objectives defined in its action plan in the field of tourism and that, in addition, the Commission should be authorised to conduct the negotiations,

Whereas the Treaty does not provide, for the adoption of the present decision, powers other than those of Article 235,

Whereas it is necessary to encourage not only better integration of tourism into the various Community policies but also close cooperation between all public and private bodies in the sector, including representatives of tourist regions, and whereas the implementation at Community level of a number of specific measures, complementary to those taken at national level, is the best way of achieving such cooperation, while avoiding any distortion of competition at European level;

Whereas European transport policy has a major influence on the future quality of tourism in Europe's regions;

Whereas free competition should be preserved in the sector, both for the benefit of consumers and in order to promote SMEs;

Whereas there is a need for the early availability of extensive statistics on tourism in the Community and for the carrying-out of forecasts on new forms of tourism;

Whereas, without prejudice to current negotiations, the Community must envisage the possibility of agreements with non-Community countries or international organizations being necessary in order to achieve the objectives of its action plan to assist tourism, and whereas the Commission should accordingly be authorized to conduct the necessary negotiations;

Whereas decentralized tourism policy structures are effective and whereas the Commission must comply with the principle of subsidiarity;

Whereas the Treaty does not provide for any other powers for the adoption of this decision than those provided for in Article 235;

Has decided as follows:

Article 1

A Community action plan in favour of tourism shall be declared.

Article 2

The budgetary authority shall determine the budget available for each financial year.

Article 3

The Commission shall put into operation the action within the framework defined in the annex. It shall be assisted by the Tourism Advisory Committee, established by the Council decision of 22 December 1986 (1).

Article 4

Without influencing the general negotiations and in the case where cooperation with third countries and international organisations be deemed necessary for the pursuance of the objectives of the current action plan, the Commission shall be authorised to negotiate.

(1) OJ L 384/52 of 31.12.86

Has decided as follows:

Article 1

A Community action plan to assist tourism shall be declared.

Article 2

The budgetary authority shall determine the budget available for each financial year.

Article 3

The Commission shall put the action plan into operation within the framework defined in the annex. In order to fulfil the objectives of the plan, it may undertake measures other than those set out in the annex, after having consulted the Committee established by the Council Decision of 22 December 1986 (1). The Commission shall coordinate the action plan with the various Community policies, and through the various Directorates General concerned, in accordance with current procedures.

Article 4

The measures must be consistent with the principle of subsidiarity and must be implemented through coordination with the national authorities and, whenever necessary, with the regional authorities or the representatives of the local population, so as to take account of the importance of tourism for regional development.

Article 5

Without influencing the general negotiations and in the case where cooperation with third countries and international organisations be deemed necessary for the pursuance of the objectives of the current action plan, the Commission shall be authorised to negotiate.

1 OJ L 384/52 of 31.12.86

Article 5

After a period of three years maximum, the Commission shall evaluate the actions in progress and shall propose the appropriate modifications to the present decision and its annex.

Article 6

Every year from the adoption of the plan, the Commission, in a report to the Council and Parliament, shall evaluate the Community's activities which affect tourism, with reference in particular to regional development, the state of competition and progress in competitiveness.

Article 7

By 1995, at the latest, the Commission shall evaluate the actions achieved under this decision and report to the Council and European Parliament.

ANNEX

SPECIFIC COMMUNITY MEASURES IN FAVOUR OF
THE DEVELOPMENT OF EUROPEAN TOURISM

8. Improving the Knowledge of the Sector

launch of a programme of studies to complement the tourism statistics programme (3) concerning on the one hand an evaluation of the impact of existing Community policies in favour of tourism, and the other hand an analysis of new forms of tourism

ANNEX

I. COMMUNITY MEASURES TO ASSIST TOURISM

A. Horizontal measures

A1. Improving knowledge of the tourist industry and assuring greater consistency of Community measures

Community action is intended to improve the consistency of the measures taken to assist tourism by increasing knowledge of its characteristics, components and development.

This will be carried out by means of the following measures :

- the development of Community statistics on tourism
- implementation of detailed studies providing improved knowledge of tourism as an activity, assessment of the impact of current Community policies to assist tourism, forward analysis of new types of tourism, and the preparation of strategies in response
- co-ordination of Community tourism policies
- consultation of tourism professionals within the Community

(3) Council decision of 17.12.90, OJ L538/90 of 21.12.90

7. **Staggering of Holidays**

- measure to encourage national authorities to better stagger holidays
- experimental actions in order to study the possibility of future Community measures to be adopted

9. **Transnational Actions**

- continuation of cooperation initiatives between border regions
- developement of commercial links with Central and Eastern Europe through the transfer of know-how
- putting into operation of new forms of tourism and technical cooperation between towns

A2. **Staggering of holidays**

Community action is designed to promote a better seasonal and geographical distribution of tourism.

This will be carried out by means of the following measures :

- support for the setting-up of an international framework, open to the EFTA countries, whose purpose would be to exchange information and monitor the activities of governments and the tourist industry
- support for measures aimed at co-ordinating European actions and strategies to encourage the use of tourism infrastructure and facilities outside the peak season

A3. **Transnational measures**

Community action is designed to promote transnational development initiatives covering any of the many different sectors of the industry.

This will be carried out by means of the following measures :

- support for cooperation between border regions
- support for transnational initiatives contributing to the improvement of tourist information, in particular those using new technology
- development of tourist links with central and eastern Europe through the transfer of know-how, assistance for training and the implementation of strategies for promotion, marketing and the creation of small and medium-sized tourist businesses
- support for initiatives designed to promote codes advocating behaviour which respects the integrity of the local population

- support for the establishment of new forms of partnership between towns so as to strengthen tourist and technical cooperation between them and devise appropriate methods for joint action

- support for innovative pilot projects involving co-operation between the public and private sectors for the development of traditional tourism regions in decline as well as less developed rural regions

- support for the exchange of experience related to practical measures undertaken by operators to reduce the risk of crime affecting tourists

B. Specific measures

B1. Cultural tourism

Community action is designed both to highlight the importance of the cultural heritage for tourism and to promote a greater knowledge of the cultures, traditions and ways of life of Europeans.

This will be carried out by means of the following measures :

- support for initiatives to develop new European cultural tourism routes, in co-operation with the Member States, regions and local authorities concerned, and to disseminate information on these routes by means of brochures and publications

- support of exchange of experience in the field of visitor management techniques

- encouragement for improving the welcome given to foreign tourists in European museums and tourist sites through, inter alia, information material available in several languages and through an appropriate system of symbols

1. Cultural Tourism

- support for the elaboration of new European cultural tourism routes and their promotion through brochures and publications

- creation of a European prize for the best cultural tourism products

- European competition for museums which offer a tourism product in partnership with operators of the sector

- exchange of experiences in the field of visitor management techniques

- improvement of the welcome and the services offered to foreigners in European museums and sites in particular by the availability of information in several languages and the improvement in signposting

2. Tourism and Environment

- support for the establishment by the Member States of an inventory of the European tourism resources in order to identify the regions with potential for developing new forms of tourism in harmony with the environment and those which require better management and protection
- elaboration of a code of behaviour for tourists, in order to provide ecological guidelines and ethics of behaviour
- encourage the development of a practical guide for the use of operators
- launch of a Community prize for the environment
- support for pilot actions concerning the exchange of experiences on tourism management techniques at sites

- encouragement and assistance for the establishment of European networks enabling tourist operators and cultural institutions to exchange experience, especially as regards highlighting the cultural heritage

- creation of a European prize for the best cultural tourism products

B2. Tourism and the environment

Community action relating to the interaction between tourism and the environment has as its objective ensuring that the environment is more fully taken into account in order to preserve, in the long term, the potential for tourist development in Europe.

This will be carried out by means of the following measures :

- support for initiatives aimed at informing and increasing the awareness of tourists and suppliers of services about the interaction between tourism and the environment and in particular, through the creation of an environmental European prize
- support for the establishment by the Member States of an inventory of European tourism resources, so as to identify regions with potential for developing new forms of tourism in harmony with the environment and so as to gather information on regions particularly affected by mass tourism
- encouragement, in particular through seminars, conferences, etc, for the preparation by all parties concerned, including local authorities, of codes of conduct aimed at tourists and tourism operators so as to reach consensus on the message to be put across, in terms of ecological guidelines, whilst preserving the diversity of these codes
- support for the development of networks involving transnational exchanges of experience, including experience of techniques for management of tourism sites

3. Rural Tourism (2)

- elaboration of a harmonised European signposting system aimed at facilitating access to tourism products in rural areas
- improving the information of operators in rural areas by the edition of documents explaining existing Community aids in the field of rural tourism and the edition of a European rural tourism operators manual
- pilot actions in favour of the creation, development and promotion of new rural tourism products emphasising partnership between operators at local, regional and European level
- renewal of a European competition for the best rural tourism areas with an award for the most successful tourism initiatives by local authorities

- consideration, in liaison with the Member States, of a landscaping policy for tourism sites
- support for initiatives encouraging forms of soft tourism which promote rail transport and cycling

B3. Rural tourism

Community action in this field is designed to develop tourist activities in a rural environment, whether farm tourism, small family-run hotels or facilities set up by associations or local authorities.

This will be carried out by means of the following measures :

- support for partnership initiatives between operators at local, regional or European level, to allow the exchange of experience and the transfer of good practice through the organization of visits, seminars, exchanges of experts and the development of transnational pilot schemes, in particular in the field of vocational training
- improved information for rural operators and better access for them to the various schemes of Community assistance available for rural tourism, in particular through the publication of documents for mass circulation and the publication of an operators' manual
- encouragement for improving the quality of rural tourism supply, in particular through support for and dissemination of a Community label and the development of a European system of symbols to facilitate access to rural tourism
- renewal of the Community competition for the best rural tourism areas, rewarding the most successful tourist activities run by local authorities, including the highlighting of a region's principal attractions, such as local produce

4. **Social Tourism and Youth Tourism**

- support for the study by operators of the conversion and promotion of tourism facilities
- support for the extension of the "holiday Eurocheque" system and other forms of holiday assistance
- publication of a guide entitled "Accessible Europe" aimed at the disabled as well as the managers of facilities in order to encourage them to make their facilities accessible to the handicapped
- encouragement of reflection and specific actions on the particularities of tourism for the elderly
- support for the organisation of a European youth forum to include the principal youth travel organisations in order to facilitate youth travel
- support for the extension of the youth reduction card
- dissemination of information to young people on tourism resources and careers
- support for the establishment in all Community countries of homogenous measures to encourage youth accessibility to culture

B4. **Social tourism**

Community activity in this field seeks to facilitate access to tourism by groups of people who, for various reasons, but especially for health or social reasons, have difficulty in taking holidays.

This will be carried out by means of the following measures :

- shared information at Community level between public and private sector partners concerning the various methods used in the Member States to encourage holiday-taking by certain categories of tourists and support for initiatives to help spread such methods throughout the Community
- support for measures to bring operators closer together, with the objective, on the one hand, of upgrading supply by establishing a Community network of organizations and reception facilities, and, on the other hand of meeting and increasing demand by the extension to other Member States of the various forms of encouraging holiday taking, such as holiday vouchers or family/senior-citizen passports
- support for the publication of guides for persons with disabilities and for reception facility managers, so as to encourage the latter to make their facilities accessible to the disabled

B5. **Youth tourism**

Community action in this field is aimed both at promoting young people's knowledge of cultures and lifestyles in the various Member States and at making it easier for young people to take holidays.

This will be carried out by means of the following measures :

- extension of the "youth card" to all the countries of the Community
- support for the organization of a European youth forum bringing together

the main youth travel organizations so as to increase opportunities for travel, especially in connection with European sports and cultural events

- support for the establishment of exchange networks for "European classes" (school travel for pupils from several Member States)

5. Vocational Training

- identification of professional profiles of the sector
- encouragement of the participation of tourism businesses in existing Community action programmes for training
- support for the cooperation between Universities and tourism schools and tourism professionals
- pilot actions for specific training in this sector: rural, social, cultural, environment

B6. Training

Community action in this field is aimed at making the tourist industry in the Community more competitive through support for increased professionalism in Community tourism.

This will be carried out by means of the following measures :

- dissemination of information among young people on tourist resources and professions
- identification of professional profiles for the industry and improvement of mutual information on the qualifications attained in the various Member States
- encouragement of the participation of tourism business in existing Community training programmes and measures
- support for transnational co-operation projects between universities, tourism schools, tourism professionals, or the authorities concerned
- specific pilot schemes, especially in the fields of rural, cultural and environmental tourism
- support for networks aimed at improving the quality of vocational training so as to raise the quality of tourism services

6. **Promotion in Third Countries**

- **Strengthening of promotional actions in the North American and Japanese markets**
- **launch of a feasibility study in order to identify the means of launching a European promotion campaign in 1992 and 1993**

B7. **Promotion in Third countries**

Community activity in this field is directed at making Europe a more attractive destination for tourists from third countries.

This will be carried out by means of the following measures :

- **strengthening tourism promotional actions in third countries, whose growth is likely to have a substantial impact on tourism within the Community, particularly in the North American and Japanese markets**

II. **TIME TABLE OF PRIORITIES**

These priority areas for action will be implemented according to the procedure defined in article 3 of the present decision, within the framework of the objectives set out in the annex, and in particular through the measures which will be drawn up following consultation with the Committee set up by the Decision of 22 December 1986.

1993

Implementation of measures under the following headings:

A1. Improving knowledge of the tourist industry and assuring greater consistency of Community measures

- a) **the development of Community statistics on tourism**
- b) **implementing detailed studies and dissemination of the results**
- c) **co-ordination of Community and national tourism policies**
- d) **consultation of tourism professionals within the Community**

A2. Staggering of holidays

- a) support for the setting-up of an international framework, open to the EFTA countries, whose purpose would be to exchange information and monitor the activities of governments and the tourist industry

A3. Transnational measures

- a) support for cooperation between border regions
- b) support for transnational initiatives contributing to the improvement of tourist information, in particular, those using new technology
- c) development of tourist links with Central and Eastern Europe through the transfer of know-how, assistance for training and the implementation of strategies for promotion, marketing and the creation of small and medium-sized tourist businesses

B1. Cultural tourism

- a) support for initiatives to develop new European cultural tourism routes, in cooperation with the Member States, regions and local authorities concerned, and to disseminate information on these routes by means of brochures and publications
- b) support of exchange of experience in the field of visitor management techniques

B2. Tourism and the environment

- a) support for initiatives aimed at informing and increasing the awareness of tourists and suppliers of services about the interaction between tourism and the environment and in particular, through the creation of an environmental European prize
- b) support for the development of networks involving transnational exchanges of experience, including experience of techniques for management of tourism sites
- c) support for initiatives encouraging forms of soft tourism

B3. Rural tourism

- a) improved information for rural operators and better access for them to the various schemes of Community assistance available for rural tourism, in particular through the publication of documents for mass circulation and the publication of an operators' manual
- b) encouragement for improve the quality of rural tourism supply, in particular through support for and dissemination of a Community label and the development of a european system of symbols to facilitate access to rural tourism

B4. Social tourism

- a) support for the publication of guides for persons with disabilities and for reception facility managers, so as to encourage the latter to make their facilities accessible to the disabled

B6. Training

- a) identification of professional profiles for the industry and improvement of mutual information on the qualifications attained in the various Member States
- b) encouragement of the participation of tourism businesses in existing Community training programmes and measures
- c) support for transnational co-operation projects between universities, tourism schools, tourist professionals or the authorities concerned

B7. Promotion in Third countries

- a) strengthening tourism promotional actions in third countries, particularly in the North American and Japanese markets

1994

1. Launching of new actions within the framework of this decision and according to the procedure defined in article 3.

2. Continuation of measures within the following areas for action:

A1. Improving knowledge of the tourist industry and assuring greater consistency of Community measures

except a) the development of Community statistics on tourism (possible implementation of a new programme)

A2. Staggering of holidays

A3. Transnational measures

except a) support for cooperation between border regions

B1. Cultural tourism

B2. Tourism and the environment

except c) support for initiatives encouraging forms of soft tourism

B3. Rural Tourism

except a) improved information for rural operators and better access for them to the various schemes of Community assistance available for rural tourism, in particular through the publication of documents for mass circulation and the publication of an operators' manual

B6. Training

except a) identification of professional profiles for the industry and improvement of mutual information on the qualifications attained in the various Member States

B7. Promotion in Third countries

1995

1. Evaluation of the actions carried out under the present decision, and preparation of the report envisaged by the declaration relating to article 3 t) of the Treaty of 07/02/92.

2. Continuation and completion of the measures carried out within the following areas:

A1. Improving knowledge of the tourist industry and assuring greater consistency of Community measures

except a) the development of Community statistics on tourism (possible implementation of a new programme)

A2. Staggering of holidays

A3. Transnational measures

except a) support for cooperation between border regions

B1. Cultural tourism

except a) support for initiatives to develop new European cultural tourism routes, in cooperation with the Member States, regions and local authorities concerned, and to disseminate information on these routes by means of brochures and publications

B2. Tourism and the environment

except c) support for initiatives encouraging forms of soft tourism

B6. Training

except a) identification of professional profiles for the industry and improvement of mutual information on the qualifications attained in the various Member States

b) encouragement of the participation of tourism businesses in existing Community training programmes and measures

B7. Promotion in Third countries

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