



European
Commission



A European Strategy for
more Growth and Jobs in

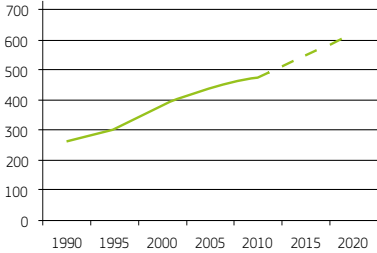
Coastal and Maritime Tourism



Coastal and maritime tourism – a source for growth and jobs

The extraordinary beauty, cultural wealth and great diversity of Europe's coasts make them the preferred destination for many holidaymakers from Europe and abroad. On offer is a wide range of facilities and activities for those who seek recreation for mind and body.

International tourist arrivals in Europe (millions)



Source: UNWTO (Tourism 2020 Vision).

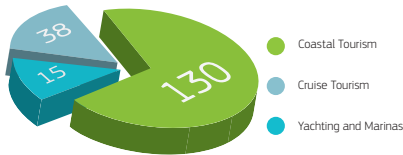
Tourism demand is increasing worldwide. The challenge for Europe's coastal and maritime resorts is to exploit this potential sustainably in order to offer attractive jobs to its people. Coastal and maritime tourism can be a major source of growth and jobs, especially for the young. The European Commission has issued a European Strategy aiming to bring all stakeholders together to develop innovative and smart solutions to the multiple challenges facing the sector. This strategy sets out 14 targeted actions involving national, regional and industry level partners.



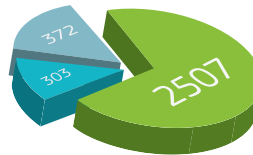
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Coastal areas attract more than one third of all tourism business in Europe.

Gross Value Added in maritime and coastal industry in 2011 in the EU (in € bln)



Employment in maritime and coastal industry in the EU (in 1000s jobs)



DID YOU KNOW?

Coastal and maritime tourism is the largest maritime activity in Europe and employs almost 3.2 million people, generating a total of € 183 billion in gross value added and representing over one third of the maritime economy.

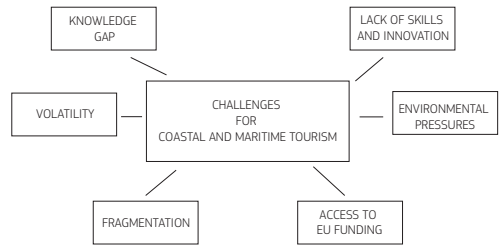


The challenges

Tourism is a growing business: in 2013, the number of nights spent in hotels or similar establishments in the EU28 reached a peak of 2.6 billion. Despite almost half of these nights being spent by the sea, the coastal tourism industry is faced with huge challenges.

These challenges are exacerbated by business fragmentation, difficulties in accessing finance and investment, and by environmental pressures. Average daily expenditure has been decreasing since the mid-2000s, with a further 9% decrease in annual expenditure expected between 2011 and 2020.

A European strategy can help businesses to overcome these difficulties. Destinations should build on their strengths and enhance cooperation, best practice sharing and create transregional and transnational partnerships. Together, they can help develop innovative and attractive offerings, in order to appeal to tourists travelling in low season.



DID YOU KNOW?

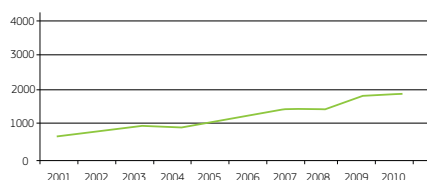
Coastal tourism covers beach-based tourism and recreation activities, e.g. swimming and sunbathing, and other activities for which the proximity of the sea is an advantage, such as coastal walks and wildlife watching. **Maritime tourism** covers predominantly water-based activities, e.g. sailing and nautical sports (often carried out in coastal waters) and cruising, where marine regions such as the Mediterranean or Baltic can be covered in the course of a week's holiday.

The Greek maritime municipality of Marathon is a truly unique destination and a historic symbol. It has invested in high-quality services to provide easy access for people with disabilities. For this initiative Marathon has been selected for the 2013 EDEN award (European destination of excellence).

Opportunities from cruise tourism

In 2012, European ports had 29.3 million passenger visits, a 75% increase over 2006. These arrivals generate wealth and business opportunities but also represent big challenges for the receiving ports. For coastal regions it is not always easy to capture economic benefits generated by cruise tourism, while pressures to invest in port infrastructures and to preserve the environment are increasing. That is why the Commission proposes promoting a pan-European dialogue between cruise operators, ports and coastal tourism stakeholders.

Average number of passengers per cruise call in the Grand Harbour of Malta, 2001-2010



In 2012 cruise tourism alone generated a direct turnover of € 15.5 billion and employed 330,000 people.



Investing in people and innovation – a condition for sustainable and competitive growth

Due to seasonality and lack of career opportunities the coastal tourism sector is not attracting or maintaining enough skilled personnel, which can lead to problems in service quality and hamper competitiveness. The sector needs well qualified professionals who are service minded and speak several languages. It also needs dynamic entrepreneurs to promote professional approaches amongst local enterprises, administration and stakeholders.

The Europe-wide online platform **TourismLink** connects small businesses with travel agents and tour operators. The overall aim is to increase the competitiveness of SMEs across Europe in today's digital marketplace.

The **SubArcheo project** developed new distance-learning methodologies and materials for the training of Underwater Archaeologists and Guides in coastal areas around the Mediterranean. This project helps to develop courses and facilitate the re-skilling of fishermen whilst also supporting the protection of social and cultural heritage.



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Make it sustainable!

The natural resources and beauty of coastal areas have made them popular destinations for visitors. A healthy natural environment is a huge asset but tourism generates lots of pressures on local environment and ecosystems, such as higher water use, increased waste generation and accumulated emissions from air, road and sea transport in peak seasons.

The **Natura 2000** is an EU-wide network of nature protection areas, established under the 1992 Habitats Directive, aimed at ensuring the long-term survival of Europe's most valuable and threatened species and habitats, including in the marine environment. Successful management of the sites allows their enjoyment as part of holiday experiences and their conservation for all future users.

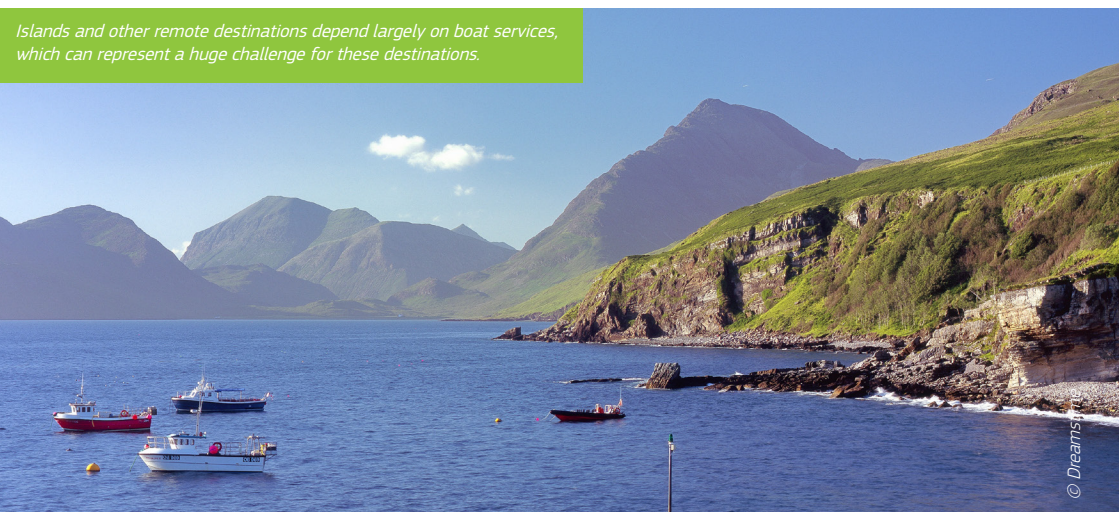
The **EMAS Easy MOVE-it!** project applies the EU Eco-Management and Auditing Scheme to regional tourist products or services, and encourages SMEs to seek excellence in terms of environmental performance. Tourism SMEs join to create competitive service packages, linking cultural, economic, ecological and social aspects, and thus forming a value chain in a region. The pilot applications cover various types of destinations and clusters in 6 EU Member States: Belgium, Germany, Spain, Bulgaria, Cyprus and Estonia.

Innovative offer, quality, connectivity

Many tourists nowadays seek a unique and customised experience rather than the more traditional type of “sun-and-sea” package holiday. These changes on the demand side require reaction and adaptation by operators and destinations. The sector should develop new products promoting attractiveness and accessibility of coastal and marine archaeology, maritime heritage, underwater tourism and eno-gastronomic activities, among other innovative activities.

The high quality of products and services is an essential source of competitive distinction. Tourists want to rely on high-quality services, consistently assessed, across the EU. The **European Tourism Quality Principles** published in 2014 by the European Commission aim to increase consumer confidence and the reliability of tourism services and products in Europe.

Islands and other remote destinations depend largely on boat services, which can represent a huge challenge for these destinations.



The initiative “Greek challenge” is following a new approach promoting sailing, by engaging in partnerships with businesses and universities to develop customised programmes. The project aims to bid for and host international sailing regattas, therefore contributing to the building of new, multifunctional infrastructure, extending the tourist period and introducing new know-how in the sailing sector. By using and enhancing maritime tourism knowledge, the consortium identifies the locations for regattas in an environmentally sustainable manner, examining what benefits such events would bring on a cultural, economic, infrastructure and social level.

Funding opportunities

Coastal economies are particularly vulnerable to economic, financial and political changes as they are mainly made up of SMEs and micro enterprises. Due to the economic crisis most tourism SMEs have problems accessing credit for investments and innovation. The EU funds under the **financial framework 2014-2020** and other EU instruments can help to finance project planning and implementation for the sector to take up the challenges and invest in modernisation and innovation.

Funding opportunities for coastal tourism in Europe

The **European Structural and Investment Funds** can co-finance sustainable tourism investments linked to ICT, entrepreneurship, SME's competitiveness, energy efficiency, employment and labour mobility, etc., and can promote the exchange of good practice, transnational networks and clustering.

Horizon 2020 is the financial instrument for the EU's research and innovation strategy, with Blue Growth as one of its focus areas. The **COSME** framework programme aims to enhance SME competitiveness, increase tourism demand, diversify offer and products, and enhance quality, sustainability, accessibility, skills and innovation.

The **Creative Europe** programme supports synergies between cultural and nature tourism, including coastal and maritime heritage. The **Erasmus+** programme helps in terms of employability, new sector curricula and innovative forms of vocational teaching and training.

The **LIFE+** programme can co-finance innovative projects affecting coastal and maritime tourism and resource efficiency. The Proposal for the **7th EU Environment Action Programme** is also linked to coastal and maritime tourism. In addition, the **European Investment Bank** provides SMEs with financing for investments in tourism and/or in convergence regions.



The European strategy communication's 14 actions

The European Commission will:

1. Strive to close gaps in tourism data availability, in particular coastal and maritime.
2. Develop a coastal and maritime focus, where appropriate, in EU tourism initiatives, including in promotional and communication campaigns.
3. Promote a pan-European dialogue between cruise operators, ports and coastal tourism stakeholders.
4. Support the development of transnational and interregional partnerships, networks, clusters and smart specialisation strategies.
5. Assess the need for EU action on qualification requirements for professional yacht skippers and recreational boating.
6. Assess the need for EU action on provisions for nautical tourism safety equipment.
7. Stimulate innovative management schemes through the ICT and the Tourism business portal.
8. Promote ecotourism, using the European Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS) and EU Ecolabel indicators and encourage linking to other sustainability actions.
9. Promote implementation of the Protocol to the Barcelona Convention on Integrated Coastal Management and the relevant Council Recommendation, and promote Maritime Spatial Planning and Green Infrastructure, to ensure the sustainable development of EU coastal areas.
10. Promote strategies on waste prevention, management and marine litter to support sustainable coastal and maritime tourism.
11. Encourage the diversification and integration of coastal and inland attractors, including through transnational thematic itineraries like cultural, religious or ancient trade routes.
12. Contract a study on how to improve island connectivity and design innovative tourism strategies for (remote) islands.
13. Contract a study to identify innovative practices for marina development.
14. Develop an online guide with an overview of the main funding opportunities available for the sector (particularly SMEs).

In addition the Commission will formulate recommendations for Member States, regional and local authorities, industry and stakeholders, in order to enable coastal regions and businesses to tackle the challenges and to exploit the opportunities for growth and jobs sustainably.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

http://ec.europa.eu/maritimeaffairs/policy/coastal_tourism/index_en.htm

http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/tourism/index_en.htm

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