



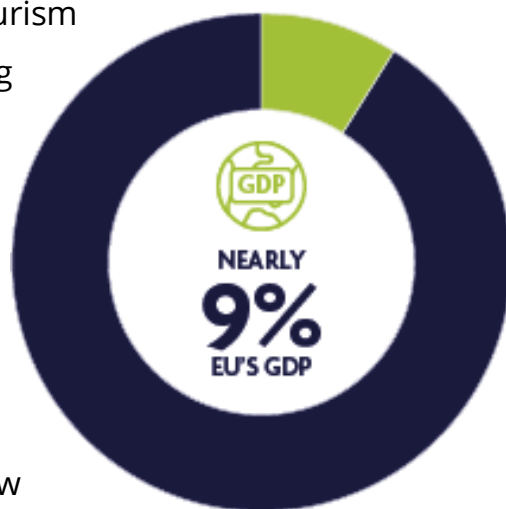
# CALL TO ACTION FOR THE NEXT EUROPEAN POLITICAL CYCLE

WORLD TRAVEL AND  
TOURISM COUNCIL

The political cycle 2019-2024 has arguably been one of the most turbulent for the EU. Incoming in 2019, there were promises of a geopolitical European Commission, a “man on the moon” moment with the announcement of the European Green Deal and even legislation on Artificial Intelligence within 100 days.

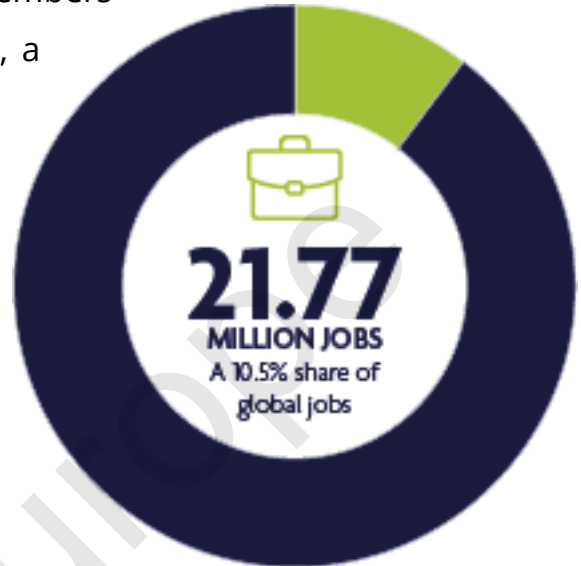
Within months of these pledges being made to the citizens of Europe however, the EU saw the UK leave the Union and we faced a global shutdown as the COVID-19 pandemic ripped around the world. This brought true devastation to the people working in the Travel & Tourism sector. Last year, Travel and Tourism contributed nearly 9% of the EU's GDP, providing people with 21.77 million jobs (a 10.5% share of global jobs). It was also responsible for EUR 384.7 billion of international visitor spending, and EUR 809.2 billion for domestic visitor spending (i.e. tourism within the EU).

As COVID-19 began to come under control, we then saw the start of the devastating war in Ukraine, with a knock-on effect on energy prices. This hit the core of how our sector operates, from cruises to airplanes to hotels - keeping on the lights and keeping people warm. An increase in inflation also added to employment costs in a sector that was only just starting to



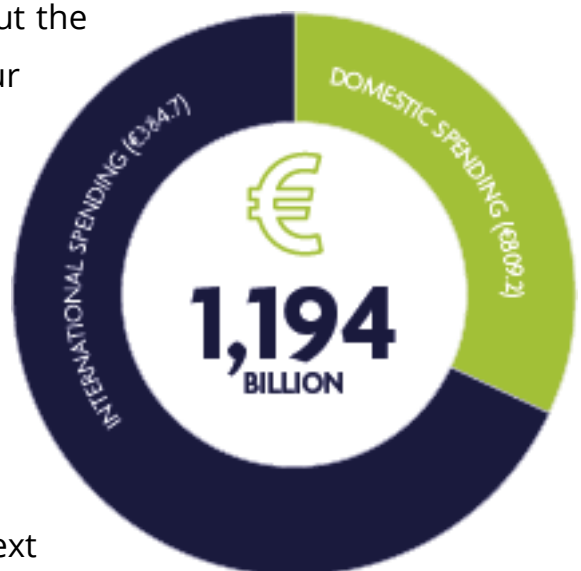
recover from a global pandemic. For a sector responsible for 1 in 10 jobs in the EU prior to the pandemic, this again negatively impacted our sector.

In addition to the global challenges, our members increasingly had to be aware of, and engage in, a plethora of legislation coming from the European Commission. Our members welcome and support the aims and ambitions of the Fit for 55 package and are striving to reduce their environmental impacts. Our members have dedicated much time and resources to working with decision-makers to bring this package to reality.



As we start to look ahead to the next political cycle, we need to ensure that a pragmatic approach is taken to implementation. In this respect, we have three key asks of the next European Commission, set out below. These asks will not happen without the right people, being in the right jobs, as the labour shortages in our sector must be addressed.

Alongside these three key asks, it's also important that we see continuity between political cycles, and that any work on files that haven't yet been published – including the forthcoming proposal on the Digitalisation of Travel Documents – is taken forward into the next political mandate.



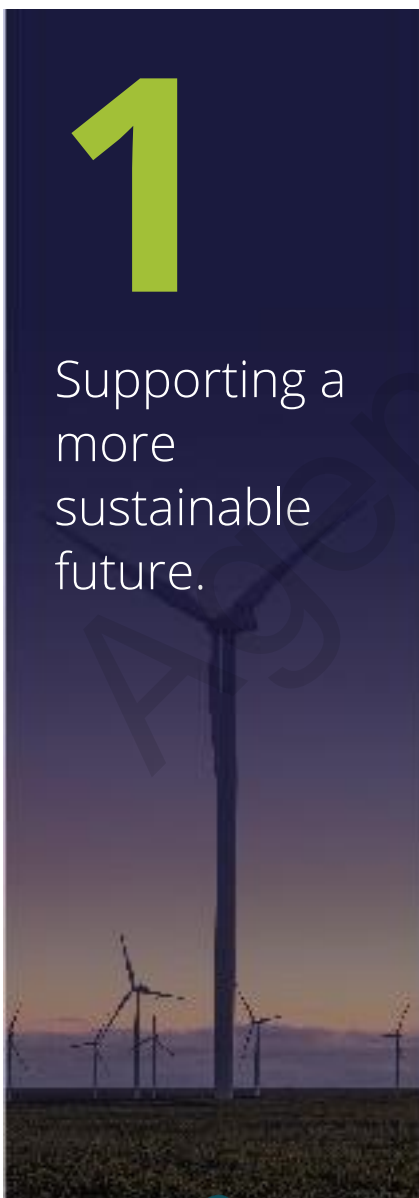
Call to Action:

# Priority Setting for the EU, 2024 - 2029

As we face the start of a new political cycle, and as the representatives of the private travel and tourism sector, we call upon decision-makers to focus on three main areas of work in the 2024-2029 term:

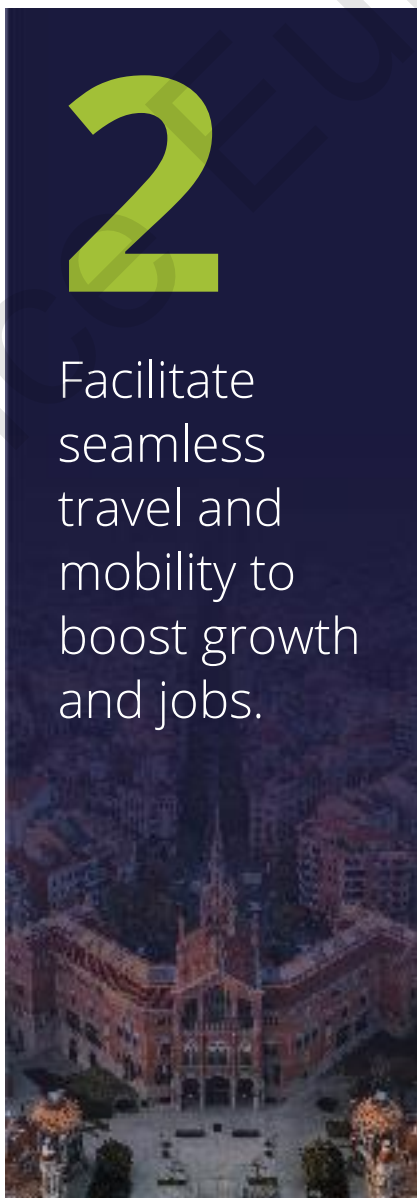
1

Supporting a more sustainable future.



2

Facilitate seamless travel and mobility to boost growth and jobs.



3

Embrace the digitalisation of the Travel and Tourism sector.



# 1 Supporting a more sustainable future.

The travel and tourism sector had to be engaged in many files stemming from the Fit for 55 package, including files spanning from emissions and fuel used in airplanes, cruise ships, and infrastructure deployment for clean and renewable energy. We support their aims and ambitions, and our Members are dedicated to ensuring a smooth rollout of the requirements needed to ensure compliance.

**In the next political term, we call upon the Commission to continue this drive forward in a pragmatic and reasonable manner, in particular:**



Making sure that the European Union remains competitive in the travel and tourism sector, including placing a greater emphasis on its socio-economic impact.



Ensuring environmental legislation (e.g. Green Claims proposal and ESG reporting requirements) takes into account the realities and needs of the Travel and Tourism sector.



Allowing time for existing policies to demonstrate they're actively decarbonizing the sector before introducing new regulations (incentivising the use of sustainable alternative fuels rather than introducing new taxes)



Ensure that support, both financial and political, is provided for the increased need for, and use of, sustainable alternative fuels and that this is directed particularly towards hard-to-abate sectors such as aviation and maritime transport which provide essential connectivity for travel. (Fuel suppliers need to be incentivized to increase supplies of sustainable fuels.)



Provide measures to account for the social impact that the implementation of green legislation will have on the travel and tourism sector: travel should not be a privilege of the rich or digitally savvy; employment should not be sacrificed; knowledge should be shared; and people should be able to access a range of transport modes that best suit their travel needs.



The sector needs space to recover from the effects of the pandemic. Additional reporting requirements should not be overly onerous and time-intensive.



Policy impact assessments should be carried out on the implementation of green and environmental files on our sector – taking into account the need to transition to a green and more sustainable sector in an economically feasible way.



Support should be provided to ensure the travel and tourism sector – from the world's biggest corporations to smallest SMEs – continue their individual journeys to reach net zero emissions targets.

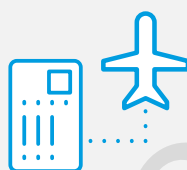
## **2** Facilitating seamless travel and mobility to boost growth and jobs.

Research by WTTC has consistently demonstrated that the more seamless a travelers' journey can be, the more this leads to increased growth, jobs and inbound tourism. The EU currently has a visa-free regime in place with 61 non-EU countries, two special administrative regions of China (Hong Kong and Macao) and one territorial authority that is not recognised as a state by at least one EU member state (Taiwan). WTTC encourages the EU to continually look at, and where appropriate, allow visa-free travel to the EU.

**In the next political term, we call upon the Commission to continue this drive forward in a pragmatic and reasonable manner, in particular:**



Continuously driving the openness to countries that prove reliability to be granted visa-free status to Schengen.



To rollout in a sensible manner the agreed Entry-Exit System and flowing from that, ETIAS.



To continue to work on removing restrictions and barriers to travel and mobility.



Ensuring that travellers who are not digitally savvy are not left behind in the digital transition.



Ensuring that a push for green and sustainable transport modes doesn't come at the detriment of ease of access – in terms of location, affordability, and pre-travel requirements.



Address the weaknesses shown during the COVID-19 pandemic, by ensuring swift finalisation of legislation that will have a positive impact on the traveller journey while contributing to the continued competitiveness of the industry.

# 3 Boosting the digitalisation of the Travel and Tourism sector.

Across industries and sectors, digitalisation is increasing efficiencies, reducing costs and creating opportunities for the development of new services and products. The Travel and Tourism sector is no different. From online bookings for flights, accommodations, tours, and activities, to online comparisons and reviews, the next political term should welcome and embrace the digitalisation of the Travel and Tourism sector.

**In the next political term, we call upon the Commission to continue this drive forward in a pragmatic and reasonable manner, in particular:**



Working towards an approach to regulation of technologies, such as Artificial Intelligence, which allows for the valuable role technology can play in increasing and improving border crossings (e.g., biometrics use at airports to improve boarding efficiencies).



Ensure that data on and within the travel and tourism sector, including via the Commission's data spaces, is shared to ultimately benefit the traveller experience.



Pursue policies that allow for contactless travel, learning from the experiences of COVID-19 and ensuring that this kind of travel is ready in case of a future pandemic. Not only is contactless travel more hygienic, but it is also safer and more efficient.



Ensure that the Payments and Services Regulation facilitates the success of the tourism sector, ensures harmonisation across jurisdictions, and leads to greater clarity for businesses and consumers.



Ensure the Digitalization of Passports becomes a reality, including for visa applications, electronic boarding passes and the streamlining of check-in processes (both at e.g., airports/ports and hotels).



Underpinning all of this, of course, is our people.

In order for all of the above to work, we need to attract the right talent, and that make sure that the people working in the travel and tourism sector are fully supported to achieve their potential.

Thank You