

EU Intelligence Report

June 2017



KEY HIGHLIGHTS

TOURISM

[Success for the 3rd IAAPA EMEA Government Relations Summit focusing on innovation](#)

[ETIAS: European Parliament publishes draft report and Council adopts its position](#)

EMPLOYMENT

[Better protection for workers from cancer-causing substances: Council reaches agreement](#)

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Brexit

Surprise UK election result looms heavily over start of Brexit negotiations

United Kingdom

The Brexit negotiations formally started on the 19th June, just under a year after the UK voted to leave the EU. At the preliminary negotiations, it was decided that the details of the UK's exit arrangement from the EU will first be discussed, with the future trade relationship between the UK and the EU being addressed only after this.

The negotiations opened in the aftermath of a surprising election result, in which incumbent Prime Minister Theresa May's Conservative Party lost its majority in the UK Parliament, despite earlier expectations that it would dramatically increase its majority. The result has created speculation that May will soften her stance on Brexit, although this remains to be seen. In the meantime, the Conservatives have reached an agreement with the small Northern Irish Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), allowing them to remain in government.

It is expected that negotiations will take place in one-month cycles of preparation, negotiation, de-briefing and reporting.

Tourism Policy

Success for the 3rd IAAPA EMEA Government Relations Summit focusing on innovation

IAAPA EMEA

On the 21st June, the 3rd annual IAAPA EMEA Government Relations Summit took place in Brussels. This year's successful Summit focused on the theme of innovation, an enabler of growth for the whole European tourism sector and for parks and attractions in particular.

The Summit created an opportunity for EU policy makers, key stakeholders and industry to exchange views on the different facets of innovation and how it can enhance the park experience. Discussions ranged from the use of digital content, to the design of new rides and the role of copyright. Finally, participants debated whether the European business and regulatory environment helps or hinders innovation.

As in previous years, the summit attracted many key stakeholders for the industry, including keynote speakers István Ujhelyi, Member of the European Parliament, and Iuliana Aluas, Acting Head of the Tourism Unit in the European Commission's Directorate General for Internal Market, Industry,

Entrepreneurship and SMEs. Industry panellists included representatives from Liseberg, Disneyland Paris, PortAventura, Efteling, La Boite aux Enfants, Leolandia, Särkänniemi and also manufacturers such as Vekoma and Mack Rides.

ETIAS: European Parliament publishes draft report and Council adopts its position

European Parliament

Council of the EU

June has seen a number of key developments concerning the European travel information and authorisation system (ETIAS) file, with the European Parliament publishing its draft report and the Council adopting its negotiating position.

On 8th June, [draft report](#) for the Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE) Committee of the European Parliament was published. The document does not make any mention of issues such as the fee associated with ETIAS or the validity period, which is good news for the industry. As a note, the draft report introduces an exclusion from the scope for carriers transporting groups overland by coach.

Meanwhile, on the Council side, a [general approach](#) was agreed on 9th June. This general approach outlines the Council's negotiating

position for upcoming negotiations with the Parliament. The key elements of the Council position include a validity period of three years and inclusion in the scope of visa-exempt third country nationals, as well as those who are exempt from the airport transit visa requirement.

IAAPA, with the Network of European Private Entrepreneurs in the tourism Sector (NET), has been active in advocating for the interests of the tourism sector in Brussels, and has shared its position with the rapporteur and shadow rapporteurs at the Parliament level.

If ETIAS will be too complicated or expensive, it would diminish Europe's competitiveness in global tourism. To avoid any negative impact of this kind, NET has called for an efficient, simple, inexpensive, proportionate travel authorisation system, which does not hamper the tourism experience for travelers coming to visit Europe nor the operations of tourism enterprises.

Visa code recast remains blocked by humanitarian visas issue

European Parliament
Council

On the 8th June, the European Parliament's Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home

Affairs (LIBE) heard a presentation on the state of play of trialogue negotiations concerning the Union Code on Visas from the rapporteur for the file.

In his presentation, MEP López Aguilar was critical of the unwillingness of the Council in finding a compromise and noted that the file is now blocked because of the disagreement on whether or not to include provisions for a humanitarian visa. The call for inclusion of humanitarian visas comes from some groups in the European Parliament, in particular the Socialists, while the Commission and Council are arguing this is not the right legislative framework to deal with such issue.

There has been some hope for progress on the file through a joint commitment from the Commission, the Parliament and the Council to address the issue of humanitarian visas in another initiative, but it has proven difficult to secure final agreement on this initiative. So far, progress on this important file for the tourism industry remains blocked.

Maltese Presidency reports on its progress on the European Accessibility Act

Council

On the 16th June, the Maltese Presidency presented a [report](#) on its progress on the

[proposal](#) for a European Accessibility Act to the Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council. It had earlier been hoped that the Council could achieve a general approach on the file during this Council session, but progress has been slower than expected.

The key focus in the progress report concerned clarifications to the scope of the Accessibility Act, in particular with a focus on ensuring that the proposed Directive was targeted at a specific group of goods and services. However, there is no suggestion that the scope of the proposal be extended to include tourism, in a positive sign for the industry.

Moving forward, the Parliament will now wait for the Council to adopt a general approach (potentially on 23 October), in order to begin interinstitutional negotiations.

Employment/ Labour skills

New Skills Agenda: CULT and EMPL Committees adopt report

European Parliament

On the 21st June, the Culture and Education (CULT) and Employment and Social Affairs (EMPL) Committees of the European Parliament voted to adopt their [report](#) on a new Skills Agenda for Europe at a joint meeting.

The document makes a number of recommendations to both the European Commission and the Member States in order to improve the provision of skills for the European workforce. For example, it calls on member states to work to achieve a better alignment between the skills provided by education and those needed in the workforce, through the expansion of measures such as dual systems, which combine vocational education and company-based apprenticeships. In addition, the report calls for renewed emphasis on digital skills, and calls on the Commission to develop a pan-European skills forecasting tool.

The report will now be scheduled for the consideration of the plenary session of the European Parliament. The file is an own-initiative report of the Parliament, which means that it is legally non-binding, but is an attempt by the Parliament to influence the agenda of the Commission.

Better protection for workers from cancer-causing substances: Council reaches agreement

[European Parliament](#)
[Council of the EU](#)

On the 28th June, the Council and the European Parliament reached [a provisional agreement](#) on a proposed directive aimed at guaranteeing the

protection of more than 4 million workers from exposure to carcinogens or mutagens in the workplace.

The file is a revision of the 2004 directive, and sets exposure limits for a further 11 carcinogens. There will be minimum requirements for eliminating and reducing all carcinogens and mutagens and employers will have to identify and assess risks to workers and prevent exposure where risks exist.

A further package of proposed limit values is expected to be adopted by the Commission at the beginning of 2018.

Consumer Issues

Geo-blocking: Maltese Presidency fails to secure agreement

[European Parliament](#)
[European Commission](#)
[Council of the EU](#)

The Maltese Presidency failed in its ambition to secure a final agreement on the geo-blocking [proposal](#) before the close of its six-month presidency of the Council at the end of June. During the most recent trialogue negotiation between the Parliament, Council and Commission, which took place on the 27th June, the Council and the Parliament did not reach

agreement on a number of key issues, particularly on the inclusion of copyrighted content like music and e-books in the scope of the proposal. The Commission's original proposal did not include this kind of copyrighted content, but Parliament sought to introduce it through their position. So far, this has proven an irresolvable issue for the co-legislators.

Despite the ongoing disagreements, it is very likely that the possibility to offer different prices and terms and conditions over the same territory will be approved, as this is included in both the [Parliament](#) and [Council](#) positions.

Moving forward, trialogue negotiations will continue, and a final agreement on the file is now expected during the Estonian Presidency, which will run from July to December 2017.

MEP Questions and Answers

[MEP Question on European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018](#)

Socialist MEP [Siôn Simon](#) (the UK), asked the Commission about the plans for a European Year of Cultural heritage in 2018, and in particular how the Commission plans to spend the €8 million budget for the initiative.

[Commission answers EP question on Geo-blocking](#)

Commission Vice-President for the Digital Single Market Andrus Ansip answered the [question](#), by [Jiří Pospíšil](#) (EPP, the Czech Republic), who was enquiring about what reactions the Commission had received from commercial service providers and from the media to the [proposal](#) on geo-blocking. The Commission Vice-President stated that the Commission is in regular dialogue with stakeholders of all kinds in relation to the geo-blocking proposal, and that it has received a mixture of positive and negative feedback from stakeholders.

[Commission answers question on Visa reciprocity mechanism with the US](#)

Justice, Home Affairs and Migration Commissioner Dimitris Avramopoulos answered the [question](#), by [Jiří Pospíšil](#) (EPP, the Czech Republic), in which he asked what measures the Commission intends to take to address the issue of EU-US visa reciprocity, and whether it had any studies to support its policy decision in this matter. The Commissioner stated that there was a study in April 2016, in addition to a more recent study carried out by the World Travel and Tourism Council.

[Commission answers question on Removing visa requirement for travel to the USA for the citizens of certain EU Member States](#)

Commissioner Avramopoulos answered the [question](#) by [Claudia Tapardel](#) (S&D, Romania), in which she asked what the Commission intended to do to ensure full visa reciprocity between the US and the EU. The Commissioner answered that the issue of the visa waiver has been on the agenda of all communications between relevant EU and US officials, and that a recent [communication](#) on 2 May 2017 outlines the Commission's current position in relation to this issue.

Events

July

-11: European Parliament Tourism Taskforce Meeting, Presentation by Internal Market Commissioner Bienkowska of Tourism policy

October

-19: European Tourism Forum, Estonian Presidency and the European Commission, Tallinn (Estonia)

November

-28- 29 November: European Tourism Day, European Commission, Brussels