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EIN-A4

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EIN Seminar on “Smart Tourism in Smart Cities: How new technologies can boost tourism, create value and, at the same time, respect the citizen in the context of “smart city”

Introduction:

- **Paulo Rangel MEP**, Vice-Chairman of the EPP, Vice-Chairman of the EPP Group in the European Parliament, EIN Chairman

Speakers:

- **Miguel Castro Neto**, Assistant Professor and Deputy Director, NOVA IMS School, Universidade Nova de Lisboa
- **Pedro Geraldes**, Entrepreneur, App Smart Tourism
- **Anna Athanasopoulou**, Head of Unit, Tourism, Emerging & Creative Industries, European Commission

Conclusions:

- **Cláudia Monteiro de Aguiar MEP**, Member of the Committee on Transport and Tourism
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- Changes in our way of life and the new mobility reality in Europe started to create a network of cities, which caused new cities to gain identity and relevance at an European level.
 - For many years, smart cities have been pushed forward by technology. How does this digital transformation process can change the way we plan and manage our cities, improving the quality of life for its residents but also improving tourist experience?
 - Digital technologies are providing ways to make cities better places to live and at the same time to visit.
 - This transformation is not only changing how we do things, but more importantly, the things we are able to do.
 - We can no longer speak about tourism without new or advanced technologies. In fact, digital technologies are influencing profoundly different sectors of the tourism value-chain, and will continue to do so in ways that are difficult to predict. This is valid for tourism businesses, destinations and travellers.
 - We have been seeing new different models emerging in our increasingly digitised economies in business to business, business to citizen, but also citizen to citizen.
 - Very few tourism companies in the EU are taping the full potential of innovation. Part of it because 90% of them are SMEs. Moreover, one can say the same about European cities as very few of them practice smart tourism or apply these technologies to improve quality of life.
 - The city as a platform for smart tourism: In order to change the way we think about smart cities and smart tourism, we need to have an integrated vision of data usage, using it not only when managing cities, but also in policy making.
 - This can be done by taking advantage of collective intelligence (direct input of the citizens on the management of the city (e.g. participative budget or “Fix my street” app) and public open data (data provided by the citizens).
 - Public open data can increase transparency and citizens’ engagement, while boosting economic development and smart tourism by providing companies information on market needs and trends. At the same time, open data access will allow policy makers to build more reality-based responses to their citizens’ needs. Cities are building coordination centres to quickly monitor and solve identified problems, but also to predict future challenges and anticipate solutions.
 - A better use of technological developments and data usage can provide tourists augmented visit anticipation, better internet access supply, context information provision and dynamic visit management (e.g. managing pressured touristic interest points, inducing tourist’s behaviour).
 - From a business perspective, this will open new opportunities, increase revenues for hotel industry and other services (e.g. marketing), and allow a better management of market supply/demand.
 - Finally, local governments will also benefit from data-driven tourism by improving tourist flows while managing the pressure caused on its territory, boosting local economy and general well-being.
 - The EC has been supporting cities through direct funding under the cohesion funds and the EU fund for strategic investment (under the European regional development fund, more than 3.5 billion euros have been allocated to invest in tourism alone).
 - At the same time, the EC is trying to create a community of digital cities through targeted support measures: EIT Digital initiative aiming to mobilise a pan-European ecosystem of almost 200 European corporation, SMEs, Start-ups, Universities and research institute; and the Digital Cities Challenge, which invite cities in Europe to improve the life of their citizens through the development and implementation of digital policies.
 - However, smart tourism is not only about the digital challenge. On the preparatory action “European Capitals for Smart Tourism”, a European city has to fill four categories in order to become one - digitalisation, accessibility towards different social groups, sustainability (in environmental, economic and social cultural terms), and cultural heritage.
 - Policy making needs to focus on helping the European tourism industry absorbing the capabilities offered by new technologies; support SMEs coping with the digital transformation; and make sure that European destinations are able to compete at the global level.

The ‘EIN-A4’ represents a summary of EIN seminar initiatives. The views expressed do not necessarily reflect the EPP Group political line.