

## **Summary**

IAAPA attended the European Commission Operators' Forum (mass entertainment / events sub-group) and delivered a presentation on the key security challenges parks and attractions face.

On the New Deal for Consumers proposals, work on the file is continuing, while businesses agree on their position, which will focus on the lack of safeguards to ensure the collective redress system is not abused.

On tourism, the upcoming Austrian Presidency of the Council of the EU published its programme, placing emphasis on tackling illegal migration. This is a top priority for the Austrian presidency, suggesting it is likely to be very sensitive on initiatives aiming to facilitate access to Europe, such as the proposal for an updated visa code.

Finally, the tours and activities sector is still facing some difficulties adapting to the digital age.

## **Safety and security**

### **IAAPA presents at European Commission Operators' Forum on security challenges**

Source: Event attendance – 18.06.2018

On 18<sup>th</sup> June IAAPA representatives attended the European Commission Operators' Forum mass event / entertainment sub-group meeting. IAAPA delivered a presentation on the security challenges its members face, using a case study by the Tomorrowland music festival to highlight the issues members have previously raised.

The following issues were highlighted:

- **Site Boundary:** Where does the operator's responsibility end and the security services responsibility start?
- **Information Sharing:** It is not always clear what level of information can be received through official channels.
- **Background Checks:** When employing new staff there are several restrictions on background checks.
- **Disjointed decision making:** Decision making in relation to the appropriate response from the Emergency Services needs to be made at a local level.
- **Leadership:** No clear leadership on the part of authorities leading to bureaucratic bottlenecks, which prevent solutions from being implemented quickly.
- **Urban Explorers:** Thrill seekers who break into attractions in order to climb rides and buildings, diverting resources and potentially publicizing security weaknesses.

The presentation was very well received by Commission officials, Member State representatives and other participants. IAAPA has invited European Commission officials to attend the next security sub-committee meeting to get a more hands-on experience on these issues.

Other topics discussed during the Forum's meeting were the changing modus operandi of terrorists and the Commission's work on the better protection of public spaces, as well as issues around security checkpoints.

## **General**

### **New Deal for Consumers: Rapporteurs appointed, as business position crystallises**

Source: Intelligence gathering

Following disagreements on which committee should take the lead on the New Deal for Consumers legislative proposals (included in last month's report), the

work has now been divided between the Committee on Internal Market and Consumer Protection (IMCO) and the Committee on Legal Affairs (JURI). IMCO is leading on the proposal on the enforcement and modernization of EU consumer protection rules and JURI on the part on representative actions (known as the collective redress proposal).

Business groups have been highly critical of the collective redress proposal, particularly the safeguards to ensure the “qualified entities” system is not abused, creating a “US-style litigation culture”. The main business groups are coalescing around the position that the provisions on what criteria qualified entities must meet and how collective action works should be strengthened. The focus is particularly on what are perceived as very generic and lax requirements for an entity to become qualified; on whether consumers should opt in or out of a collective action; and on how compensation should be managed.

A first draft of the IMCO report on consumer rules is expected to be published on 20<sup>th</sup> July. IMCO is expected to vote on its report on 22<sup>nd</sup> November. JURI has not yet published its expected timeline.

### **Tourism and culture**

#### **Austrian Presidency programme puts migration and border security at the centre**

Source: [Austrian Presidency](#)

The upcoming Austrian Presidency of the Council of the EU has published its programme for the period July-December 2018, outlining its key priorities. Their number one priority is “A Europe that protects”, and particularly security and migration (and the fight against illegal migration). The Presidency’s goals are:

- A reformed Common European Asylum System;
- A strengthened European Border and Coast Guard Agency FRONTEX; and
- Closer cooperation with third countries to ensure effective return policies and to provide assistance to those in need of protection before they enter the EU.

The emphasis on border security suggests that the Austrian presidency will be sensitive to initiatives seeking to facilitate access from citizens of third countries into the EU. For example, the programme notes that that Presidency will push for linking visa policy to the degree of third country cooperation in the return of migrants. These indicators could mean that the Presidency will not be especially supportive of the proposal for a revised visa code, whose aim is to make it easier for tourists to get visas for EU countries.

#### **Challenges in moving online for the tours and activities sectors**

Source: [Skift](#) – 12.06.2018

Skift has [reported](#) that the tours and activities sectors have been facing some challenges in moving more of their offline transactions online. Industry figures note that a large part of sales in these sectors take place offline, with people handing over cash, but efforts are being made to change that.

Until fairly recently the size of the market was underestimated, with latest figures suggesting that for every euro spent on accommodation, three euros are being spent on some sort of activity.

The booking model for activities is still considered as sub-optimal, with a key issue being the ability to make an instant transaction, as well as questions around the readiness of these often small businesses to make the move to the digital world.

### **EU events**

- 10 Jul: AmCham Consumer Affairs Committee plenary
- 27 Sep - World Tourism Day & European Tourism Day, Brussels
- 1-2 Oct - ETF in Vienna