

## Europeans on Holiday.

### The Tourism Policy of the European Economic Community and the Integration Process

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Actually, the role of tourism in the making of Europe has not been completely investigated as of yet, although historians have recently overcome the narrow boundaries of a strictly political and institutional approach by opening up to the social, economical and cultural aspects of the European integration.<sup>1</sup> Besides, some scholars remain sceptical about the relevance of tourism to the European integration process: among them Rob Kroes, without denying that tourism has acted “as a new International, unifying Europe as one large space for holiday makers to fill”, pointed out that it simply represents

“an epiphenomenon, a dependent variable more than a force in its own right, and not truly capable of weaving countries solidly into the larger cultural space of Europe”.<sup>2</sup>

Otherwise, Alan Milward in his masterpiece claimed that most of the contacts among Western societies after 1945 were caused by tourism, which also fostered a “sense of community” among European citizens thus strengthening the integration process.<sup>3</sup>

This research takes cues from Milward’s remarks with a view to achieve a deeper understanding of the mutual interactions between the making of Europe and the spread of mass tourism. More specifically, this contribution investigates when and how the EEC addressed tourism as a field of action, to what extent a common frame for tourism was created (if any) and what were its failures and limitations.

1. L. WARLOUZET, *Dépasser la crise de l'histoire de l'intégration européenne*, in: *Politique européenne*, 2(2014), pp.98-122.

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2. R. KROES, *Them and Us: Questions of Citizenship in a Globalizing World*, University of Illinois Press, Urbana, 2000, p.12.

3. A.S. MILWARD with the assistance of G. BRENNAN and F. ROMERO, *The European rescue of the nation-state*, Routledge, London, 2000 (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.), p.13.

## Come fly with me: tourism in post-war Europe

After the Second World War, the recovery of tourism in most of the European countries benefited from the financial aid of the Marshall Plan.<sup>4</sup> Besides, tourism flows from the United States played a key role in the recovery of post-war Europe, being supported by US national authorities in order to create a “middle-class atlantique” as a soft power tool in the early stages of the Cold War.<sup>5</sup> Apart from the financial help from the United States, professionals and European politicians displayed an early commitment to the cause of tourism recovery, by organising congresses and planning future initiatives even before the war had ended.<sup>6</sup> Thus, during the so-called *Trente glorieuses* of mass consumption (1945-1975) the hospitality industry grew at a dramatic pace, as a consequence of political, economic, and cultural factors, including the extension of workers' annual paid holidays in most of the Western countries; the increase of household expenditures on leisure; the travel facilitations brought by the improvement of transport technologies (particularly in air transport) and the coming into force of international agreements on cross-border journeys; the spread of new tourism supply models, offering cheap accommodation and packaged tours; the shift in consumers attitudes, who started to deem tourism a basic need, apt to increase their sense of belonging to a same “consumers community”.<sup>7</sup>

Consequently, public authorities and private associations at both national and international level showed greater awareness about the social and political potentialities of tourism, which was supposed to shape individual behaviour and foster mutual understanding among nations.<sup>8</sup> Moreover, the spread of European tourism relied at large extent on political and economic integration, which was achieved through the establishment of the first European Communities (ECSC, EFTA, EEC). Thus, European integration brought facilitations to travel and trade, infrastructure investments,

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4. G. BISCHOF, *Conquering the foreigner: the Marshall Plan and the revival of postwar Austrian tourism*, in: G. BISCHOF, A. PELINKA, D. STIEFEL (eds), *The Marshall Plan in Austria*, Transaction Publishers, New Brunswick NJ, 2000, pp.357-401; M. CRONIN, *Next to Being There: Ireland of the Welcomes and Tourism of the Word*, in: M. CRONIN, B. O'CONNOR (eds), *Irish tourism: image, culture, and identity*, Channel View Publications, Clevedon, Buffalo N.Y., 2003, pp.179-195; C. ENDY, *Cold War Holidays: American Tourism in France*, University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 2004; B.A. MCKENZIE, *Remaking France: Americanization, Public Diplomacy, and the Marshall Plan*, Berghahn Books, New York-Oxford, 2005.
  5. N. FOUCHÉ, *Le tourisme américain en France: un enjeu de relations internationales*, in: *Matériaux pour l'histoire de notre temps*, 87(2007), pp.96-106, here p.98; on this topic, see also: C. ANDERSON, *Cold war consumer diplomacy and movie-induced Roman holidays*, in: *Journal of Tourism History*, 3(2011), pp.1-19.
  6. In February 1945 the FIAV (Fédération internationale des agences de voyages) met in Paris to gather attention from the Allied powers about the needs of the tourism sector (S.n., *Studi e Proposte per una riforma della legislazione turistica nazionale. Convegno degli Enti Provinciali per il Turismo dell'Alta Italia (Milano 7-8 novembre 1945)*, Stamperia Conti, Bergamo, s.d., p.5).
  7. B. TOMKA, *A Social History of Twentieth-Century Europe*, Routledge, London, 2013.
  8. The most relevant instance is represented by the *United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (1948), which enshrines “the right to rest and leisure, including limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay”.

common standards and regulations and, last but not least, mutual knowledge among member states' citizens that enhanced the tourism industry to different extents, according to the peculiar conditions of each destination and the global trends in the tourism market.

It must be pointed out that a counterfactual analysis reveals that some extra-EEC European destinations, such as Spain, Greece, faced a huge increase of international tourism arrivals in the *Trente glorieuses*, thanks to the overall growth of the leisure industry.<sup>9</sup> Nonetheless, tourism offered a powerful contribution to intra-European travel, which is responsible for the almost unstoppable growth of this sector in the member states (extra-European demand has been affected by significant fluctuations across the decades); furthermore, the EEC bodies supported the emergence of brand-new models of holiday, challenging the high-impact of mass vacation, as it will be explained in the following paragraphs.

### A ticket to ride: tourism issues in the first stage of European integration

Until the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty in 2009 tourism was not recognized explicitly as a field of action for the European Community. Nonetheless, debate on leisure travel sparked inside the EEC since the early 1960s, while tourism gathered funding and other forms of tangible intervention not earlier than the mid-1970s, following the establishment of the European Regional Development Fund.

Broadly speaking, the Commission displayed major concerns over tourism, due to its broad competence on economic and social matters. Thus, in 1963 the Commission issued a “Projet d’inventaire des problèmes du tourisme à l’échelle communautaire”, but it didn’t turn into effective measures in the following years.<sup>10</sup> Hence, throughout the 1960s it is hard to say that the Commission targeted tourism as a priority area, as its action was limited to monitoring the member states intervention in this sector to avoid unfair competition (which was eventually excluded in most of the cases brought to its attention by the MEPs).<sup>11</sup> Many factors hampered the establishment of a true tourism policy by the EEC, major obstacles being posed by the Council, which periodically put into question the competence of the Community on tourism until 1984. Besides, the continuous growth of tourism from and to Europe in the 1960s may also explain its scarce relevance in the EEC policy agenda, which

9. L. SEGRETTO, C. MANERA, M. POHL (eds), *Europe at the seaside: the economic history of mass tourism in the Mediterranean*, Berghahn Books, New York, 2009.

10. Supersingly, it was impossible to find a copy of the 1963 *Projet d’inventaire* to date (when the problems of tourism were tackled again in 1970, as it will be displayed below, the Comité des représentants permanents – COREPER asked for a copy of the former *inventaire*, which was not sent however).

11. HAEU [Historical Archives of the European Union], Box PE0-8781, Question posed by Käte Strobel (one of the first female members of the Assembly of the three communities), object: Développement de l’industrie du tourisme, 02.09.1965.

focused on those sectors requiring financial aid and political support to cope with global competitors (agriculture above all).<sup>12</sup> Nonetheless, the spread of mass holiday was sharpened by regulations and agreements on free movement and the adoption of common standards in the transport system, professional qualification, travellers protection, which were set in view of the completion of the customs union (1968).

A significant turning point occurred in 1970, when the representatives of the member states tried to turn the Commission's attention to the troubling aspects of tourism development. Thus, on 2 June 1970, on the initiative of the Belgian government the member states Ministers and governments officials in charge of tourism-related affairs met in Val Duchesse (Belgium) in order to

“définir les problèmes importants que pose l'expansion du tourisme et les moyens à mettre en oeuvre pour les résoudre sur base de la collaboration existant entre les pays membres de la CEE”.<sup>13</sup>

On behalf of the Belgian delegation, Arthur Haulot, a leading figure in European tourism, pointed out that since the issue of the “Projet d'inventaire des problèmes du tourisme in 1963”, the EEC institutions had put little efforts to address tourism deficiencies.<sup>14</sup> On concluding the meeting, the participants committed themselves to promote the establishment of a permanent mechanism dealing with tourism towards their respective governments, “conscients de l'importance du rôle économique, social et culturel que joue le tourisme dans le cadre de la Communauté Européenne”.<sup>15</sup>

Hence, the Val Duchesse meeting not only reaffirmed the economic importance of tourism, but it also outlined its social and cultural meanings, by reference to its redistributive effects in the underdeveloped areas of the MEC and the contribution to travellers health improvement and cultural enrichment, as it was affirmed in a Memorandum sent to the Coreper and to the Commission that tourism is a

“facteur d'équilibre social et de meilleur répartition des richesses pour ceux qui le vendent, un facteur de santé et de culture pour ceux qui le pratiquent [...] un facteur authentique et puissant d'intégration des peuples dans la Communauté”.<sup>16</sup>

The memorandum also stated that, despite the progress in European integration, a common tourism market was still far from being achieved; besides, national govern-

12. M. DUMOULIN (ed.), *The European Commission 1958-72. History and Memories*, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg, 2007.

13. It is worth pointing out that the meeting was not a Council session, since it stemmed from the initiative of the Belgian government; by the way some delegates from the Commission took part in it.

14. Arthur Haulot (1913-2005) was a Belgian journalist, writer and radio announcer; he survived detention in concentration camps during WWII and then engaged in politics, becoming Chief of the Belgian general Commission for tourism (D. HEISER, S. TABERNER, *My Shadow in Dachau. Poems by Victims and Survivors of the Concentration Camp*, Camden House Publishing, New York, 2015).

15. HAEU, Box CM2/1970-1322, Réunion des Ministres du tourisme des CE, Bruxelles pour définir les problèmes communs que pose l'expansion du tourisme et les moyens à mettre en oeuvre pour les résoudre sur base de la collaboration existant entre les pays membres de la CEE, 02.06.1970.

16. Ibid. Tourism revenues in the Six increased by 150% between 1958 and 1968.

ments had put little efforts to mitigate tourism seasonality and enhance vocational training in this sector. According to the memorandum, the Commission and the national tourism boards were due to cooperate in order to set travel facilitations, uniform sectoral regulations and joint promotional campaigns. The Ministers gathered in Val Duchesse also asked for a “permanent mechanism” (“mécanisme permanent”) dealing with tourism issues inside the EEC, which was eventually established by the COREPER in the form of an *ad hoc* group under its competence, made by senior national officers.<sup>17</sup> This group was eventually set inside the COREPER in 1971, but it didn’t provide effective pro-tourism measures and it stopped operating quite soon.

Nonetheless, in view of the work of this Group, the Commission submitted to the Council an updated “Projet d’inventaire des problèmes du tourisme”, which highlighted the most challenging aspects of the travel industry as follows:

- General problems: tourism advertising, tourism seasonality, staggering holidays, aspects of regional and rural policy concerned by tourism, social tourism;
- Tourism businesses (restrictions to the freedom of establishment and freedom to provide services, tourism and transport, financial aid), problems concerning business activities (workers qualification, tourism supply);
- Problems faced by tourists themselves (border formalities), social security (right to medical assistance);
- Problems related to information.

In spite of the Commission commitment, the European Council reiterated its disinterest in tourism affairs when asked for information by a Parliament question about its efforts to boost intra-European tourism.<sup>18</sup>

### **A little less conversation, a little more action: how tourism got increasing attention and funding in the second half of the 1970s**

In the early 1970s the tourism sector in the EEC was affected by the first effects of a crisis which stemmed from the end of the golden age of European economy on the one hand, and was caused by significant shifts in tourist behaviour at global level on the other.<sup>19</sup> As a consequence, extra-EEC destinations, offering cheaper accommo-

17. HAEU, Box CM2/1970-98, 572ème réunion du Comité des représentants permanents, Bruxelles, from 14.06.1970 to 16.10.1970; Box CM2/1970-1322, Réunion des Ministres du tourisme des CE pour définir les problèmes communs que pose l’expansion du tourisme et les moyens à mettre en œuvre pour les résoudre sur base de la collaboration existant entre les pays membres de la CEE, 02.06.1970.

18. HAEU, Box PE0-6981, Question posed by Geoffrey de Freitas to the European Council, Objet: Tourisme intercommunautaire, 14.09.1977; in reply to this question, the Council stated that it had not dealt with the issues mentioned by de Freitas as of yet.

19. N. CRAFTS, G. TONIOLO, ‘Les Trente Glorieuses’: *From the Marshall Plan to the Oil Crisis*, in D. STONE (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Postwar European History*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2012, pp.356-378.

dations which met the brand-new requirements of the demand, competed successfully with European destinations to attract international tourists. The political and economic élites therefore asked for effective support from the Common institutions to adjust the EEC tourism supply according to the emerging travel trends. Such issues became object of an in-depth debate at the Congress “Il turismo e la CEE”, held in Roma and Palermo, October 3<sup>rd</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>, 1974 on the initiative of the Italian Committee of the United Nation's World Tourism Organisation – UNWTO.<sup>20</sup>

The Congress saw the participation of some well-known figures of European politics, including Arthur Haulot, who recalled the milestones of the tourism policy set by the EEC since 1958, when the Italian representatives unsuccessfully asked to extend the newly born common market to the tourism sector (the proposal was initially approved and made the object of a formal document, albeit without effective outcomes). According to Haulot, tourism was enhanced indirectly by economic integration until 1970, when, thanks to a Belgium initiative (i.e. the Val Duchesse meeting), debate on tourism had shifted “from the administrative realm to the political one”; nonetheless, the Coreper, after having examined the updated “Projet d’inventaire des problèmes du tourisme”, had not taken effective measures.

While Haulot’s intervention put emphasis on the administrative and institutional obstacles hindering tourism development, most of the participants to the Rome Congress focused on environmental issues: among them, the socialist MEP Libero Della Briotta outlined that tourism could foster convergence in the Community but the “price” of tourism development consisted of unbalanced development and environmental degradation. Not differently from Briotta, the MEP Hans Edgar Jahn pointed out that rarely tourism policy devoted attention to natural heritage preservation.<sup>21</sup> The Rome Congress thus showed that by the mid-1970s the quest for a sharper involvement in tourism from the EEC institutions ranged over different aspects of the travel industry and was affected by the social and environmental concerns elicited by the publication of *Limits to Growth* (1972) and the outbreak of the oil crisis which, among others, raised a greater awareness of the negative outcomes of unlimited economical development. Consistently with this trend, in 1974 the Commission was asked by the MEP Pierre Lagorce to provide detailed information about the ecological threats posed by mass holiday in the most fragile areas of the Community and the counter-measures foreseen by the EEC regional policy.<sup>22</sup> Hence, according to the Commission reply, the ERDF funds were allocated after an evaluation process that took into account both the positive and negative outcomes of each project.

20. According to the intervention made by Arthur Haulot, Achille Corona (1914-1972), former Italian Minister of Tourism and MEP, had played a key role in promoting the Congress.

21. Jahn had been appointed rapporteur by the European Parliament’s Environment Committee (A.L.R. JACKSON, *Conserving Europe’s Wildlife. Law and Policy of the Natura 2000 Network of Protected Areas*, Routledge, London, 2018).

22. HAEU, Box PE0-14195, Question posed by Pierre Lagorce, Object: *Écologie et développement du tourisme*, 07.10.1975. This question followed the protest unleashed by some oyster farmers who felt damaged by the presence of tourists in the Bassin d’Arcachon.

Despite the weak commitment to ecological issues displayed by the Commission in 1974, in the following years many initiatives were undertaken in order to assess to what extent tourism might jeopardise the natural environment and promote eco-friendly travel practices. Besides, the question by Lagorce is just one of the many instances of the increasing attention paid by the European Parliament to tourism issues during the 1970s. The huge number of questions posed by the Parliament members (13 questions on this topic were addressed to the Commission in the two years 1976 and 1977 alone) dealt with a wide range of topics, which mainly refer to competition rules, travel facilitation, allocation of funds to tourism-related projects and, of course, the overall tourism policy implemented by the Commission and the other EEC bodies.<sup>23</sup> Most of the MEPs' questions were focused on internal tourism and shed a light on the scarce cooperation and standardisation that were still affecting the European travel industry by the end of the 1970s.

In 1977 the Commission, asked by one of the Vice-presidents of the EP whether measures to foster intra-European tourism had been adopted, openly admitted that its efforts were undermined by the lack of effective means and the outdated rules that were kept in force by national governments:

“La Commission fait ce qu'elle peut. Elle n'a pas de pouvoirs précis pour développer une politique du tourisme, mais elle considère qu'il est essentiel de faciliter et de favoriser le tourisme et les contacts à l'intérieur de l'Europe. [...] c'est pas cela notre problème, ce n'est pas le manque d'imagination, c'est la capacité d'utiliser efficacement le moyen de mettre des vieilles réglementations où elles doivent se trouver, c'est-à-dire dans le panier”.<sup>24</sup>

The lack of financial tools to support tourism development, which had represented the main obstacle to a true Common tourism policy, was partly overcome in 1974 pursuant to the coming into force of the ERDF (European Regional Development Fund). Actually, at first the manifold approaches to tourism in national and regional regulations raised some interpretative doubts on the eligibility of tourism-related projects for ERDF funding, since the Fund was meant to support infrastructure investments “directly linked” with the development of industry and services.<sup>25</sup> Nonetheless, the ERDF provided huge funding to tourism-related project: in the sec-

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23. Written questions: 266/1976 by Jahn (topic: use of ERDF to support tourism infrastructures projects); 97/1976 by Vandewiele (topic: regulations on paid vacations and social tourism); 632/1976 by Müller (topic: highway sign standardisation); 966/1976 by Seefeld (topic: passport entry stamp); 40/77 Cousté (topic: passport standardisation); 131/1977 by Seefeld (topic: tourism vehicles towing travel trailer); 320/1977 by Ellis (topic: regional funding for the tourism sector); 379/1977 by Schwörer (tourism facilitations); 389/1977 by Berkhouwer (topic: Daylight saving time); 647/1977 by Osborn (topic: on setting a single time in the member states); O-37/76 by Fellermaier (obstacles to intra-European tourism); O-5/1977 by the European Parliament's Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs (topic: control over foreign currency by the Italian authorities); H-81/1977 by Seefeld (control over the currency).
24. HAEU, Box PEO-6982, Question to the Commission by Sir Geoffrey de Freitas, object: *Tourisme intercommunautaire, Que fait la Commission pour faciliter les voyages des ressortissants des États membres à l'intérieur de la Communauté?*, 13.10.1977.
25. HAEU, Box CES.VOL18-20.84, *Premier Rapport d'activité concernant le Fonds européen de développement régional, 1975*, p. 10.

ond half of the 1970s alone, 189,04 millions of ECU were allocated to 184 projects, most of them combining industrial activities and tourism (table 1).

**Table 1: ERDF Beneficiaries in the field of tourism  
(first tranche: 1975-1979)**

	Number of projects	Total projects cost / millions of ecu	ERDF contribution/ millions of ecu
Germany	42	48,96	10,04
France	33	51,00	7,79
Italy	55	59,19	10,60
Luxembourg	2	9,15	1,03
United Kingdom	52	20,74	2,99
Total	184	189,04	32,45

Source: HAEU, Box CES.VOL 18-20.84, Premier Rapport d'activité concernant le Fonds européen de développement régional, 1975

As refers to the geographical distribution of the financial aid, tourism, as the whole services sector, gathered funding mostly in those states with a weak industrial background, experiencing harsher regional development gaps (including Italy and France). More specifically, most of the awarded projects in the tourism sector were implemented in Italy, as a consequence of the many deficiencies affecting travel infrastructures and services in this country. Disadvantaged areas, such as Southern regions, significantly benefit from the ERDF, particularly after 1981, when the Commission approved a special programme to support small business, craft industries and rural tourism in the Mezzogiorno with funding from the non-quota section of the Regional Fund.

Broadly speaking, Italian tourism gathered increasing attention in the late 1970s: in 1978 the Italian Minister of tourism Dario Antonozzi and the President of Enit – the Italian national tourism board – were invited to an “exchange of views” held by the European Parliament's Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs about the impact of tourism on the EEC. In the view of the Italian Minister, the role played by tourism in the European economy had become even more significant after the increase in raw materials cost, since it gave a significant contribution to the balance of payments; nonetheless, the foreseen enlargement to Spain, Greece and Portugal was supposed to “change the main aspects of the problem” thus suggesting to tackle the inadequacies that were still affecting tourism communication and the accommodation system in some of the member countries. The intervention by Antonozzi elicited debate within the sectoral commissions, most of them asking the Commission to exert

a sharper role in order to set an effective EU tourism policy according to the art. 235 of the Treaty of Rome.<sup>26</sup>

### Should I stay or should I go? Concerns and hopes on tourism development in the 1980s

The importance of tourism in the Community was reaffirmed in 1982, when a Commission Communication set the basic guidelines for its development in the following years.<sup>27</sup> These guiding principles confirmed that after the 1970s crisis the EEC became more and more interested in the “harmonic” development of tourism and its contribution to European integration, consistently with the spread of conscious and eco-friendly consumption patterns.<sup>28</sup> Besides, intra-European tourism was deemed as a priority area because of “its indirect effect on employment” and its contribution “to balance of payments stability between the Northern European Countries and those of the South” and to “the development of the poorest regions of the Community”.<sup>29</sup> Nonetheless, the Guidelines were not meant to support the establishment of a well-defined tourism policy. On the contrary, the document suggested adopting a cross-sectoral approach by taking into account the “tourism dimension” in all those policies affecting the travel industry.

According to the study on “The European Community and Tourism” annexed to the communication, the EEC policy was supposed to improve free movement (many frontier formalities were still into force because of the limits on duty-free allowances imposed to the tourist) and the protection of tourists; achieve equal working conditions for those engaged in tourism; tackle transport issues; recognize the role of tourism in regional development; safeguard the European architectural and environmental heritage jeopardised by tourism.<sup>30</sup>

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26. HAEU, Box PE0-21560, Meeting of the European Parliament's Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs, 20-21.02.1978.
  27. COM(82), 385 final, Initial guidelines for a Community policy on tourism. Communication from the Commission to the Council, 01.07.1982.
  28. When dealing with “the importance of tourism to the Community”, the Guidelines state that “by bringing the peoples of Europe into contact, it [i.e. tourism] buttresses the edifice of European integration”.
  29. According to the Guidelines, in 1980 intra-European tourism accounted for more than 50% of overall tourist expenditure in the member countries and more than 60% of tourist revenue.
  30. Study on The European Community and Tourism, annex to the Initial Guidelines for a Community policy on tourism, Communication from the Commission to the Council.

**Table 2: Revenue from and expenditure on international tourism  
in the member states (1960-1980)**  
in millions of dollars

		1960	1970	1980
Germany	rev.	481	1,024	6,639
	exp.	679	2,493	20,827
Belgium/Luxembourg	rev.	-	348	1,810
	exp.	94	492	3,272
Denmark	rev.	107	314	1,337
	exp.	74	273	1,560
France	rev.	525	1,191	8,235
	exp.	325	1,057	6,027
Greece	rev.	47	194	1,733
	exp.	19	55	190
Ireland	rev.	119	193	611
	exp.	42	91	519
Italy	rev.	642	1,639	8,914
	exp.	92	727	1,907
Netherlands	rev.	128	421	1,640
	exp.	127	598	4,637
United Kingdom	rev.	109	1,040	6,932
	exp.	93	924	6,454

Source: Study on The European Community and Tourism, 1982, p.3.

The Communication issued in 1982 confirmed once again that the establishment of a common frame for intra-European tourism was a two-way phenomenon, since European integration brought easier frontier checks and improved travellers social security, while tourism development fostered the adoption of regulations and recommendations aimed to achieve common standards and facilitate the free movement of persons and goods. At the same time, the Communication represented a step backward in the path towards a common tourism policy, since it assigned to the member states the main tasks in the tourism sector; as a consequence, the role of EEC institutions was strictly circumscribed in enhancing the development of tourism in the member states and setting some priority areas:

“The main responsibility for tourism lies with the member states. [...] While it is true that the existence of the Community has given them a favourable context which it could im-

prove still further by adopting a number of common rules and by better coordination of its activities in the realm of tourism, it should not go too far in seeking to coordinate national policies because each of these reflects the very different situations of the member states. Nor should it try to solve problems that could better be dealt with at national or even regional level”.<sup>31</sup>

Nonetheless, a significant milestone towards the establishment of a common tourism policy was achieved in 1981, when George Contogeorgis from Greece was appointed Commissioner to tourism affairs.<sup>32</sup> Coherently with the Thorn Commission program, which tackled economic crisis, institutional deficiencies and Euroscepticism, Contogeorgis’ priorities consisted of bringing to the attention of the Council the most relevant tourism issues on behalf of the Commission and improving the effectiveness of the Commission administrative branches dealing with the travel industry.<sup>33</sup> As refers to the institutional aspects, in 1981 an interservice group on tourism was introduced, and a few years later a tourism service headed by Nicolas Moussis, deputy head of Contogeorgis Cabinet, was established under the Transport Directorate.

It is worth underlining that, according to Nicolas Moussis, the initiatives promoted by the Greek commissioner in the field of tourism, albeit challenged by some sectors of the EEC bureaucracy, found support in Émile Noël, the Commission Secretary General at the time.<sup>34</sup> According to the archives records he put efforts to improve citizens awareness about the EEC achievements in tourism issues, but they turned into effective measures only in 1990, when an international year of tourism was proclaimed, as it will be discussed below.<sup>35</sup> At the same time, Noël appeared quite sceptical about the establishment of a Committee on Tourism, which had been proposed by a parliament motion and supported by Moussis, as it could unleash competence issues and transfer the main responsibilities on tourism from the Commission to the Council.<sup>36</sup> However, in 1984 the Council, which had called into question the competence of the EEC on the travel industry since the early stage of European integration, acknowledged the Guidelines for a Community policy on tourism set two years earlier

31. *Ibid.*, p.11.

32. Giorgios Contogeorgis (1912-2009) was appointed Commissioner in the Thorn Commission (1981-1985); his portfolio included Transport, Fisheries and Tourism. He was a former Greek Minister in charge of relations with the EEC, and had actively supported the first Southern enlargement in 1981.

33. J.R. WOZNIAK BOYLE, *Conditional Leadership: The European Commission and European Regional Policy*, Lexington Books, Lanham, 2006, p.108.

34. HAEU, HistCom.2, Histoire interne de la Commission européenne 1973-1986, Transcript of Entretien avec Nicolas Moussis par Filippa Chatzistavrou à Athènes le 15 juillet 2010, p.16.

35. HAEU, Box EN-658, G. Contogeorgis et son cabinet (N. Moussis): tourisme et transports, note à l’attention de Monsieur Contogeorgis by É. Noël, 16.03.1982.

36. HAEU, Box PE1-3235, Proposition de résolution présentée par MM. Antoniozzi, Vandewiele, Battersby, Turner, Mille Brookes, Mme Louise Moreau, MM. Lega, Barbagli, J.D.Taylor, von Hassel, Mme Scrivener, MM. Vernimmen, Del Duca, Ghergo, Pedini, Colleselli, Rumor, Costanzo, Mertens conformément à l'article 25 du Règlement sur la création d'une commission parlementaire pour le développement du tourisme, 10.03.1981. The proposal was based on “the great importance of tourism for the economy, culture, social development, and peaceful internal and international relations”. See also HAEU, Box EN-658, op.cit.

by the Commission and eventually recognized tourism as “an important activity for the integration of Europe” pursuant to Article 2 of the Treaty of Rome, inviting the Commission to present proposals on this topic.<sup>37</sup>

Two years later, a Council Decision established a Tourism Advisory Committee made up of members designated by each Member State and gave it the task of facilitating exchanges of information, consultation and, where appropriate, co-operation.<sup>38</sup> Moreover, in the first half of the 1980s the European Parliament claimed once again for a stronger commitment to tourism issues by the EEC and for a greater role of the Parliament in such a field.<sup>39</sup> Broadly speaking, the MEPs proposals and concerns on tourism were influenced by global tourism trends: among others, since the late 1970s underdeveloped areas, which had kept rural and traditional features, gathered interest from an increasing share of the tourism demand. Consequently, a significant number of Parliament questions asked for measures to enhance agro-tourism, by reference to the EEC duties in promoting rural development (art. 39 of the Treaty of Rome).<sup>40</sup> Hence, tourism was supposed to boost rural development since the early stage of European integration through the direct involvement of the farmers, and yet rural tourism was targeted by specific measures only after the first attempts to reform the CAP in the 1970s.<sup>41</sup> Moreover, both the ERDF and the Mediterranean pro-

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37. “The Community shall have as its task, by establishing a common market and progressively approximating the economic policies of the member states, to promote throughout the Community a harmonious development of economic activities, a continuous and balanced expansion, an increase in stability, an accelerated raising of the standard of living and closer relations between the States belonging to it”. Council Resolution on a Community policy on tourism, 10.04.1984, *Official Journal*, JOC\_1984\_115\_R\_0001\_01.
38. Council Decision of 22.12.1986 establishing a consultation and cooperation procedure in the field of tourism, 86/664/EEC.
39. HAEU, Box PE1-19143, Question n° 34 (H-0167/79) de Mme Brookes à la Commission: Aides et subventions financières au tourisme, 1979; Box PE1-7613, Question écrite n° 0354/80 de M. Vandewiele à la Commission européenne: Législation des congés payés et du tourisme social dans la Communauté, 1980; Box PE1-7614, Question écrite n° 0355/80 de M. Vandewiele au Conseil des ministres: Législation des congés payés et du tourisme social dans la Communauté (1980); Box PE1-9437, Question écrite n° 2178/80 de M. Albers à la Commission européenne: Tourisme, 1980; Box PE1-4398, Proposition de résolution présentée par les députés Antoniozzi, Romagnoli, Moreau "et autres" conformément à l'article 47 du Règlement sur les initiatives communautaires en faveur du tourisme, 1982; Box PE1-21459, Question n° 23 (H-0253/82) de M. Antoniozzi à la Commission: Programme de la Communauté en faveur du tourisme, 1982; Box PE1-13571, Question écrite n° 2005/82 de M. Battersby (ED – GB) à la Commission: Tourisme, 1982; Box PE1-14105, Question écrite n° 135/83 de M. Battersby (ED – GB) à la Commission: Tourisme, 1983; Box PE1-14987, Question écrite n° 1017/83 de M. Lord O'Hagan (ED – GB) à la Commission: Tourisme, 1983; Box PE1-5547, Proposition de résolution déposée par les députés Almirante, Buttafuoco, Petronio e.a. conformément à l'article 47 du Règlement sur les mesures d'aide dans le secteur du tourisme, 1984.
40. HAEU, Box PE1-9059, Question écrite n° 1800/80 de M. O'Hagan Lord à la Commission européenne: Tourisme, 1981; Box PE1-13282, Question écrite n° 1716/82 de M. Costanzo (PPE – I) à la Commission: Promotion du tourisme rural, 1982; Box PE1-5046, Proposition de résolution présentée par MM. Costanzo, Barbagli, Colleselli, Giummarra, Stella, Del Duca, conformément à l'article 47 du Règlement sur l'aide communautaire au tourisme en milieu rural, 1983.
41. Communautés Européennes, Second programme de politique économique à moyen terme, in: *Journal Officiel des Communautés européennes*, 30.05.1969, art. 31.

grammes, issued since 1981 to address Southern enlargement, underpinned rural tourism to integrate farmers' income and reduce regional development gap.<sup>42</sup>

At the same time, in the 1980s social tourism, which seemed outdated in the golden age of mass holiday, regained attention from the MEPs and became object of a report issued by the EP Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport in 1983. The report suggested some measures to relaunch social tourism, which fell within the scope of the EEC, such as enabling unemployed people and low-wage workers to afford leisure travel; promoting mind-openness and hospitality culture through education; removing obstacles to free movement that were still hampering intra-European tourism; establishing a true common market in the tourism sector; exploiting thoroughly the occupational potentialities of tourism; preserving natural and social heritage from the impact of mass holiday.<sup>43</sup>

### **Shock of the lighting: failures and achievements of the EEC tourism policy since the Nineties.**

The huge debate on the multifaceted aspects of tourism displays that by the end of the 1980s the time was come for the EEC to focus on the most neglected aspect of tourism policy, that was the information activity. Thus, the European Year of tourism (Année Européenne du Tourisme – AET) was proclaimed in 1990 by the Council pursuant to the EP resolution of 22 January 1988 on facilitation, promotion and financing of tourism. This event took cues from the economic and social role of tourism and was meant to relaunch this sector in view of the completion of the Common Market in 1993, by promoting “greater knowledge among the citizens of the member states, particularly young people, of the cultures and lifestyles of the other member states”; “a better distribution of tourism over time and location while respecting the quality of the environment, particularly by encouraging the staggering of holidays and the development of alternatives to mass tourism, and of new destinations and new forms of tourism”; “intra-Community tourism, particularly by facilitating the movement of travellers and tourism from third countries to Europe”.<sup>44</sup>

Yet, the European Year of Tourism, in spite of the huge investments (5 million ECU) and plenty of actions and events planned throughout 1990, was barely a symbolic initiative, which achieved limited outcomes. Moreover, the Court of Auditors,

42. H. SILVIS, R. JONGENEEL, *The Reforms of the Common Agricultural Policy*, in: *International Handbook on the Economics of Integration*, vol. III, Edward Elgar Publishing, Cheltenham, 2011, pp.203-224; G. STATHAKIS, C. KASIMIS (eds), *The Reform of the CAP and Rural Development in Southern Europe*, Routledge, London, 2017; G. LASCHI, *Expectations of sustainability and unsustainable in reality: Sustainable development in the CAP, 1957-2008*, in: *Journal of European Integration History*, 1(2018), pp.31-57.

43. HAEU, Box PE1-18032, Politique communautaire du tourisme, 1983.

44. Council Decision of 21.12.1988 on an action programme for European Tourism Year, 89/46/EEC, *Official Journal*, 21.01.1989.

once required by the Parliament to provide a report on the use of funds allocated in the 1990 budget for this event, found out significant improprieties and mismanagement by the organising Committee. According to the Auditors, the programme was “irréaliste, trop ambitieux[x] et coûteux[x] par rapport aux possibilités de l'AET” as it set goals that could not be achieved within one single year, such as staggering holidays, establishing sustainable travel patterns etc.<sup>45</sup>

By the way, after the entry into force of the Maastricht Treaty, the Common tourism policy gained new impetus and in 1995 a Green paper on tourism was issued by the Commission. The Green paper was partly the outcome of the debate among national authorities which began in 1990 at an informal meeting of the EEC Tourism Ministers in Milan, followed by the adoption of a Resolution on a Community policy for tourism from the European Parliament (15 July 1991).<sup>46</sup> More specifically, the Green Paper aimed to

“describe the actions currently being carried out by the Community in the field of tourism and the instruments it already possesses for this purpose; conduct a more in-depth examination of the value added brought by the implementation of a policy at Community level; present the prospects for progress in this field, bearing in mind the options which could be envisaged for defining the future role of the Union in the field of tourism”.

Not surprisingly, the Green paper put emphasis on the positive outcomes of the integration process for tourism and the contribution of this sector to economic and social cohesion, sustainable development and the European identity, this latter goal being quite a novelty stemming from the new wave of Europeanism boosted by the Maastricht Treaty. However, the Green paper pointed out that the Maastricht Treaty mentioned explicitly tourism in the article 3 but it did not set specific objectives and implementation procedures for Community measures, as it was the case for other relevant sectors.<sup>47</sup>

Despite the gaps in the Maastricht Treaty, throughout the 2000s the new wave of international terrorism threatening international travels, along with long-dating factors, such as the economic importance of the hospitality sector, pushed the member states to enhance cooperation in tourism. Hence, in 2001 the Commission Communication working together for the future of European tourism was meant to foster cooperation between the Union and the national authorities, thus marking a turning point compared to the former approach, which acknowledged the exclusive competence of the member states in a vast array of tourism issues. Brussels commitment to consolidate cooperation among the member states contributed to the institutionalisation of tourism policy in the Lisbon Treaty (2009), albeit excluding the full convergence of national regulations:

45. HAEU, Box CCE-6823, F. Capitani, P. Kommes, D. Papadopoulos, Rapport spécial concernant les dépenses relatives à l'année européenne du tourisme, 1993, p.14.

46. COM(95), 97 final, Commission Green paper: The role of the Union in the field of tourism, 04.04.1995.

47. The Maastricht Treaty amended the art. 3 of the Rome Treaty by including in the activities of the European Union “measures in the spheres of energy, civil protection and tourism”.

“1. The Union shall complement the action of the member states in the tourism sector, in particular by promoting the competitiveness of Union undertakings in that sector.

To that end, Union action shall be aimed at:

- a) encouraging the creation of a favourable environment for the development of undertakings in this sector;
- b) promoting cooperation between the member states, particularly by the exchange of good practice.

2. The European Parliament and the Council, acting in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure, shall establish specific measures to complement actions within the member states to achieve the objectives referred to in this Article, excluding any harmonisation of the laws and regulations of the member states”.<sup>48</sup>

The European tourism policy became the object of the Commission Communication Europe, the world's No. 1 tourist destination – a new political framework for tourism in Europe (June 2010), aimed to set out a new strategy and action plan for EU tourism. The Communication identified four priority areas, which consisted of boosting the competitiveness in the European tourism sector; promoting the development of sustainable, responsible, and high-quality tourism; consolidating Europe's image as a collection of sustainable, high-quality destinations; maximising the potential of EU financial policies for developing tourism.

## Conclusions

In the first stage of European integration, different institutional bodies and associations dealt with tourism in a broader sense, as much as tourism was deemed a basic income source in post-war recovery and a field of political cooperation. As refers to the EEC, the Commission played the most relevant role, by focusing on three main aspects: the economic outcomes of tourism, by particular reference to the redistributive effects of tourism expenditures within the Community; its contribution to the personal growth of the citizen and, most ambitiously, to the building of a European identity; lately, the opportunities brought by tourism in the quest for alternative, sustainable development patterns after the end of the *Trente glorieuses* of mass consumption.

Since the 1970s, cooperation in the tourism sector was supposed to underpin rural and regional development, becoming object of several measures aimed at facilitating intra-European travel and supporting private investment. On his side, the Council put the brakes on the establishment of a common tourism policy until the mid-1980s, which seems consistent with the competence disputes that arose between the objective/instrumental approach applied by the Commission in trade policy and social is-

48. Treaty of Lisbon amending the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty establishing the European Community, 13.12.2007, article 176b.

sues and the subjective/purposive approach affirmed by the Council.<sup>49</sup> In spite of the Council's attitude, the Commission was spurred on by the European Parliament and by different sectors of the civil society to foster cooperation among the member states in the tourism sector. Even if a true tourism policy was set only in the 1980s, the EEC action to foster intra-European tourism seems to have bridged the gap between a Europe arbitre and a Europe volontariste, to the extent that it implied a twofold goal: removing obstacles to the free movement of persons and achieving common standards in tourism services on the one hand, and supporting actively the travel industry through funding and facilitations on the other.<sup>50</sup>

To put it another way, European governments were mainly concerned with safeguarding the tourist interest, thus asking for uniform regulations and the improvement of the tourism supply and the traveller social security across the Community. This could explain why the countries of origin of the most relevant tourism flows (Belgium, Germany, Netherlands, later the United Kingdom) were the main supporters of a common tourist policy, while the countries of destination (Italy, France) played a secondary role. Since the mid-1970s, however, the countries of destination could get access to the financial tools provided by the ERDF and other programmes, particularly those aimed to foster internal cohesion after the Southern enlargement. Then, along with the concerns for the safety and the comfort of the tourist, global competition was a major driver of EEC intervention on tourism.

Broadly speaking, in the golden age of mass consumption tourism was shaped by a small number of patterns (seaside tourism, city sightseeing etc.) that increased competition among regions offering comparable tourism supplies, particularly as refers to Mediterranean destinations. Competition in the tourism sector harshly increased after the economic and financial crisis of the 1970s and, along with other factors (decline of mass tourism models, terroristic threats) the dramatic growth of tourism in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century declined, thus eliciting reaction at European level. Therefore, each step towards the adoption of a common tourism policy can be interpreted as an answer to a crisis: in 1963, when the first inventory of tourism problems was published, intra-European tourism flows were facing a slight decrease (it was quite relevant in Italy) as a consequence of an overall economic downturn, without mentioning the empty chair crisis. Not differently, after the oil crisis the European Parliament drew growing attention to tourism and soon after the end of the most challenging decade in post-war Europe the Commission resumed struggling to set a true Common tourism policy, eventually supported by the Council in 1984, right after another financial crisis that affected the global economy in the previous year. Thus, research on the EEC tourism policy seems to confirm established

49. J. ORBIE, H. VOS, L. TAVERNIERS, *EU trade policy and a social clause: a question of competences?*, in: *Politique européenne*, 3(2005), pp.159-187.

50. L. WARLOUZET, *Les identités économiques européennes en débat dans les années 1960: "Europe arbitre" et Europe volontariste*, in: *Relations Internationales*, 139(2009), pp.9-23.

historiographical theories claiming that each step towards a closer European integration was conceived as a response to a crisis.<sup>51</sup>

However, there is a risk to overrate the achievements of the Commission and the other subjects pertaining to the European integration process. Firstly, European integration paved the way for the enhancement of intra-European tourism along with other factors, first of all national tourism policies and the undertaking of private entrepreneurs and local communities. Moreover, the inter-sectoral character of tourism and the absence of a single coordinating body undermined the effectiveness of the Community action to the extent that most of the actions carried out between 1957 and 1990 consisted of debates and surveys, with limited outcomes; besides, many initiatives launched by the EEC bodies turned into downright failures, the international year of tourism in 1990 representing a typical instance. In addition to that, the efforts to improve free movement proved more effective than those aimed to achieve common standards in social security, transport etc., as the first concerned national authorities while the latter involved different branches of the private sector.

Nonetheless, as it is underpinned by the archival records, tourism acted as a factor of stabilisation, coherently with the aim of the whole integration process, by adjusting the balance-of-payment and reducing the development gap between Central and Northern Europe and the Mediterranean regions; more recently, tourism overturned unequal urban-rural relations (it is also the case with marginalised regions, neglected from industrialisation) by means of agro-tourism and green tourism.<sup>52</sup> As far as the regional dimension is concerned, it must be outlined that also the EFTA set a tourism policy, which was even more coherent and effective compared to the EEC one, thus allowing to reinterpret the overall development of European tourism in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in the light of increasing integration and cooperation.

Hence, plenty of issues elicited by the research topic forced us to focus on the EEC activities and provide a very brief overview on the overall dimension of the tourism growth. Future research could apply a multi-level approach, evaluating the role played by national or transnational interest groups to raise concerns about the economic and social aspects of leisure travel, given that non-institutional actors and corporate bodies gave a significant contribution to the integration of tourism policy (among others, the CCRE acted as the spearhead of the tourism cause at least until the end of the 1960s). Furthermore, research on the relations among technicians, officers and politicians, a topical issue in current institutional history, could shed light on the role played by Noël and other leading figures in the European tourism poli-

51. L. KÜHNHARDT, *European Integration: Challenge and Response. Crises as Engines of Progress in European Integration History*, ZEI Discussion Papers C. 157(2006).

52. F. PETRINI, *Uneven Development and Stabilization: the Engines of European Integration*, paper presented to the 1<sup>st</sup> HEIRS-RICHIE Conference *Capitalism, Crises and European Integration: from 1945 to the present* (Florence, 26-28.05.2016).

cy.<sup>53</sup> It would be worth investigating the impact of European integration in the field of tourism at national and local level, recurring to counter-factual analysis to assess whether the establishment of the EEC created peculiar conditions for tourism enhancement. International aid for the development of the travel industry represents another growth area for historiography, as the available sources report significant projects financing in the ACP countries, thus underpinning recent studies about the international relations of the Community as an important key to interpret the whole integration process.<sup>54</sup>

Broadly speaking, future research aimed to illuminate the changing meanings of tourism is supposed to reinterpret the whole integration process according to the “social” perspective that is gaining momentum after the crisis of “traditional” European integration history. Beside the narrow boundaries of a merely institutional and political history, attention should be paid to the two-way interaction between the European integration process and the major changes in European society. Through the prism of tourism policy, the European integration process can be seen as a product of mass society, to the extent that the limited goals set by the functionalist approach were overturned by the increasing needs, requirements and hopes of European citizens, who got more and more familiar with the tourism practice. On the other hand, European integration created conditions for the spread of mass consumption patterns, thus supporting the globalisation of social practices, including holiday and leisure travel. Nonetheless, such a fascinating hypothesis could be fully investigated through comparative, collaborative and multidisciplinary research, which might take into account the overall history of the European integration process.

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53. B. RITBERGER, *Which institutions for post-war Europe? Explaining the institutional design of Europe's first community*, in: *Journal of European Public Policy*, 8(2001), pp.673-708; I. DEL BIONDO, L. MECI, F. PETRINI (eds), *Fra mercato comune e globalizzazione. Le forze sociali europee e la fine dell'età dell'oro*, Franco Angeli, Milan, 2010.
54. G. LASCHI (ed.), *The European Communities and the World*, Peter Lang, Oxford, 2014.