



## European travel agents and tour operators meet in vibrant Thessaloniki

***ECTAA has chosen Thessaloniki for its semi-annual meeting to showcase the destination and discuss important challenges of the industry.***

Brussels, 23 November 2022. Greece is a year-round destination and this should be known says ECTAA, the association of the travel agents and tour operators in Europe. Putting words into action, the association is holding on 24 and 25 November its autumn meeting in Thessaloniki, with the support of FedHATTA (Hellenic Association of Travel Agents and Tourist Agencies), the Greek National Tourism Organisation and the Central Macedonia and the City of Thessaloniki.

Said Frank Oostdam, President of ECTAA: “Athens and the South Aegean archipelago are the ‘traditional destinations’, but Greece is so much more! Customers are eager to travel more sustainably, to leave the beaten tracks and reconnect with culture and nature. Our role as travel advisors is to guide customers to new places, discover unknown gems, enjoy with both curiosity and respect. In that respect, Greece offers a world of possibilities”.

Delegates from 30 countries will discuss during the two-day meeting travel trends and important developments at European policy level. “We are very much aware that there is a climate emergency and the industry needs to act to make travel more sustainable” added Frank Oostdam. To this end, a range of high-level speakers will provide insight into the changing customer demands for sustainable travel, tools to calculate and display the carbon footprint of holiday packages at point of sale as well as sustainable policies and best practices implemented by destinations.

Delegates will also discuss how to overcome the challenges of labor shortages. According to WTTC, the World Travel and Tourism Council, the shortages are most acute in the travel agency segment. Speakers have been invited to share their view on how training, reskilling and upskilling schemes aimed at equipping workforce with new and improved skills can help the retention of and recruitment of new staff. Said Eric Drésin, Secretary General of ECTAA: “More efforts need to be done to close the skills gap in our industry and some ECTAA Members will be showcasing innovative best practices in addressing these key challenges”.

-ENDS-

## **About ECTAA**

ECTAA represents some 123,000 travel agents and tour operators in Europe, which provide consultancy and sell transport, accommodation, leisure and other tourism services as well as combined products to leisure and business customers.

For more information, please contact:

Mr Eric Drésin, Secretary General

ECTAA - Group of National Travel Agents' and Tour Operators' Associations within the EU

Rue Dautzenberg 36, B-1050 Brussels

Office tel: +32 2 644 34 50 / e-mail: [edresin@ectaa.eu](mailto:edresin@ectaa.eu)