First Name Surname, European Parliament

Rue Wiertz 60  
B-1047 - Brussels

RE: Congratulations from the business travel sector and recommendations

Brussels, 26 August 2024

Dear MEP Surname,

We would like to extend our heartfelt congratulations on your election as a Member of the European Parliament for the mandate 2024-2029. As the voice of the business travel industry, [BT4Europe](https://bt4europe.com/) and the [Global Business Travel Association (GBTA)](https://www.gbta.org/) both represent the interests of business travel professionals on the user and supplier side. We would like to take this opportunity to wish you every success in your new role serving the EU’s citizens and interests.

Business travel, which is the core of our activities, is effectively travelling for work – for a meeting; to deliver a service; to attend a conference and even to leave your constituency to represent citizens in Brussels. It’s an integral part of ‘doing business’ and of how organisations work. The business travel sector has gone through major challenges in the past five years, having faced disruptions including the Covid-19 pandemic and global instability due to the wars in Ukraine and in the Middle East. Despite this, the sector is taking responsibility for becoming more sustainable and efficient and is a key contributor to a connected and united Europe. It is estimated that about 2 million European employers send 34 million business travellers on 300 million business trips every year, totalling a €120 billion in spending.[[1]](#footnote-2) The sector’s contribution to the Union’s economy is substantial, even without considering the myriad of business opportunities that it enables and its intangible contribution to European unity.

We would like to present to you the priorities of our sector for the five years to come, hoping that you can take them into consideration in your work as a European legislator. You can find more detailed information about these in the policy documents we presented before the elections, which are also attached to this letter.

First, in this new mandate, we believe the EU should continue its path towards more sustainable travel, building on the Green Deal. Specifically, business travellers should be empowered to identify the most sustainable options by providing clarity and transparency on emissions accounting and reporting. To this end, the EU should establish a common framework for the accounting of CO2 emissions from transport. At the moment, several methodologies exist, making comparability difficult – the ongoing negotiations on the [CountEmissionsEU Regulation](https://oeil.secure.europarl.europa.eu/oeil/popups/ficheprocedure.do?reference=2023/0266(COD)&l=en) could be a way to solve this issue. In connection to this, travel providers should display at the point-of-sale the CO2 footprint of their service, allowing travellers to choose with all the information at their disposal.

Second, travel mobility should be facilitated via the digitalisation of travel procedures: from ID cards and passports, to travel tickets and visas. This would reassure passengers that their travel documents are in order and would reduce the bureaucratic burden on companies. The Commission [consultation](https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/13514-Travel-digitalising-travel-documents-to-make-travelling-easier_en) on this issue should provide the opportunity to make progress on this issue.

Third, the EU must swiftly adopt the new [EU passenger rights rules](https://transport.ec.europa.eu/news-events/news/passenger-mobility-package-2023-11-29_en) presented last year and ensure that all the necessary information about the trips is always available for passengers. It should also make refunds in the event of cancellations easier to obtain. The revised rules must also consider business travellers’ employers. A more robust passenger rights framework will facilitate citizens’ mobility, allowing people to easily connect and businesses to grow.

Fourth, the new Parliament should work to modernise the travel distribution ecosystem by unlocking the potential of multimodal business travel: the ability to combine different transport options within one ticket and including greener transportation options is a high priority for all cross-border travel in Europe. Multimodal trips have been shown to substantially reduce emissions from travel and to increase the efficiency of trips by allowing passengers to enjoy the advantages of different modes. The Parliament should put pressure on the Commission so that it moves forward with its plans for a [Multimodal Digital Mobility Services (MDMS)](https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/13133-Multimodal-digital-mobility-services) regulation. This would make it more likely for business travellers to consider more sustainable yet efficient choices when booking their trips.

Finally, the EU should consider an exemption for business travel from the A1 form requirement under [Regulation 883/2004](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A32004R0883) on the coordination of social security systems. This has been a longstanding request from the business travel community as it creates unnecessary costs for corporations as well as travellers. This form was intended for posted workers to be able to prove that they are subject to the social security rules of their home country and do not have to pay social security to the country they are working in temporarily. Unfortunately, no exemption was made for business trips, adding an unnecessarily barrier for seamless business travel in Europe.

BT4Europe and GBTA have been key partners for the EU during the past mandate, contributing to several consultations on the decarbonisation of aviation, passenger rights, and multimodal modal travel among other topics and have joined initiatives such as the EU Tourism Manifesto and the Friends of MDMS.We remain open to sharing our views and concerns to support the work of the European Parliament during this new parliamentary term. You can find our two policy documents with more detailed policy suggestions and [here](https://bt4europe.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/BT4Europe-Manifesto-May24.pdf) (BT4Europe) and [here](https://www.gbta.org/wp-content/uploads/Europe-Advocacy-Report-Final-3-22-2.pdf) (GBTA).

We express again our congratulations and remain at your disposal should you have any questions. We look forward to continuing our cooperation with you for the next five years.

Yours sincerely,

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Patrick W. Diemer,  Chair of the Board of BT4Europe | Suzanne Neufang  CEO, Global Business Travel Association (GBTA) |

1. BT4Europe’s 2024 Manifesto: Thematic priorities for 2024-2029 (https://bt4europe.com/position-papers) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)