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## **European travel industry demands the restoration of the 12-day derogation**

**Travel industry groups representing European tour operators, travel agents and coach operators urge EU institutions to reintroduce the 12-day driving derogation on the basis of the amendments voted by EU Parliament.**

Brussels – The European Tour Operators Association (ETOA, [www.etoa.org](http://www.etoa.org)), the European Travel Agents' and Tour Operators' Associations (ECTAA, [www.ectaa.org](http://www.ectaa.org)) and the International Road Transport Union (IRU, [www.iru.org](http://www.iru.org)) jointly call on the European Parliament and the Council to reach an agreement on the re-introduction of a 12-day continuous driving derogation to EU Driving and Rest Time Rules without any further delay.

Indeed, the publication of the Council common position on the European Commission proposal for a Regulation on access to the international market for coach and bus services in the EU opens the way for a speedy agreement on the 12-day driving derogation for international coach tourism in the EU.

ETOA, ECTAA and IRU strongly urge the Council and the Parliament to base their agreement on the 12 days derogation proposed in the European Parliament amendment of 5 June 2008 (enclosed).

Tom Jenkins, ETOA's Executive Director, said: "The loss of the 12-day rule cut drivers rest time at home, forced up prices and made the logistics of running tours a nightmare. This was a triple blow against the safest and most environmentally friendly form of transport. The longer we wait, the more damage this law causes. As soon as the derogation is introduced, we can start selling coach tours in long-haul markets with confidence."

Roman Skrabanek, Vice-President of ECTAA and owner of a coach tour operator said: "The 12 day derogation will be beneficial to all the European travel industry and in particular to small and medium-sized coach tour operators who have suffered a lot from the extra costs generated by the requirements of an additional driver".

Graham Smith, IRU's Vice President, said: "For the European coach industry, the urgent re-introduction of the 12-day derogation is a litmus test for all EU institutions on their will to create a genuine business-friendly environment for coach tourism in Europe. Indeed, the amendment adopted by a large cross-party majority in the European Parliament plenary, which reflects entirely the social partners' memorandum of May 2008, is an extremely good basis for a future agreement between Parliament and Council."

See IRU's dedicated webpage on the 12-day derogation at [www.iru.org/index/en\\_12days\\_index](http://www.iru.org/index/en_12days_index).

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