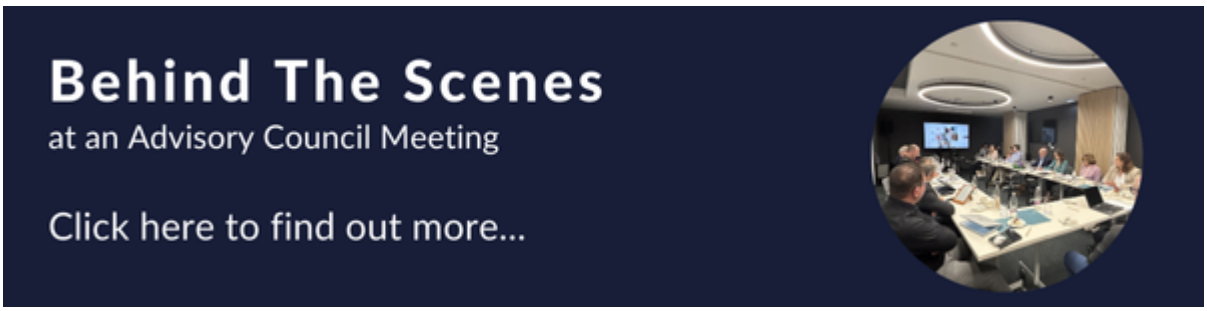
The power shut downs in many cities across Spain and Portugal at the end of April caused havoc but it didn't stop ETOA representatives from attending the Arival event in Valencia, where they met members and learned important insights from a valuable partner.

The beginning of May saw ETOA team members travel to Lubijana for Advisory and Board meetings, where future plans for continued success were discussed as well as new ideas and strategies.

In this newsletter, you'll also find more information on:

- Operational updates
- Sustainability
- What's happening and ETOA Out and About
- Celebrating our members
- Insight, Research & Webinars

Peep behind the curtain!



Ever wondered what happens at an ETOA Advisory Council meeting? In May, the board and the Advisory Council was hosted by Lublijana - a truly spectacular destination. Our president, Adele Youngs gives you an inside peek. See the video here.

Operational Updates

Visas & Borders

Entry/Exit System (EES) - The European Council and Parliament have provisionally agreed to allow Schengen Area member states to gradually implement EES over 6-months (expected between October 2025 and April 2026). Updates will be shared on our website. Passport stamping for non-EU/non-EFTA nationals visiting the Schengen Area will continue until EES is fully implemented.

EU-UK Joint Statement May 2025 – The EU and UK have announced a new strategic partnership covering travel-related issues:

- **Youth Mobility Scheme**: A new agreement is being developed to allow young people (likely aged 18–30/35) to live and work across borders. The scheme will be time-limited and capped, and is separate from the Common Travel Area for British and Irish nationals.
- **British Nationals & EU e-gates:** British nationals can currently use EU e-gates at some countries' discretion. However, until the Entry/Exit System (EES) is fully implemented, their passport must still be stamped when entering the Schengen Area. Biometric data collection will still be required when EES is introduced.

Tax & Tourism

Norway – The Norwegian government has proposed a bill to allow municipalities to charge a tourist tax on paid overnight stays, with a parliamentary debate scheduled for June 2025.

Santiago de Compostela – The City Council initially approved the implementation of a tourist tax. The start date is to be confirmed (potentially in summer 2025).

Heidelberg - New overnight stay tax proposed to be implemented from 1 July 2025.

Destination Access

Spain – **Barcelona** will soon implement new measures regarding coach access, including an increase in bus permit costs and new drop-off zones.

Bibury, Cotswolds – New coach access arrangements are being trialled for at least a month in Bibury. The existing coach parking bays have been closed and replaced with drop-off/pick-up bays

(up to 10 minutes) at the same location shared with public buses. Coaches should enter from the east (via Burford) for drop-off. To park, coaches may use Cirencester services while closer options are being explored.

Bourton-on-the-Water, Cotswolds – The new temporary arrangement allowing coaches to drop-off/pick-up on Meadow Way has been delayed due to infrastructure issues. An anticipated start date has not yet been announced.

Edinburgh – Johnston Terrace is currently not accessible by coaches while road works are ongoing at the Lawnmarket in Old Town. Once the works end (planned July 2025), access to Johnston Terrace for coaches will be restricted when the Lawnmarket is closed to vehicle traffic. Drop-off/pick-up bays for coaches have been established in Castle Terrace. Regent Road and Inverleith Place be used for long-term parking.

Attractions & Ticketing

Venice – **St Mark's Basilica** has announced a new online booking system: on-site ticket purchases will no longer be available. Operators must apply to join the List of Accredited Operators to buy tickets. Deadline: June 3rd.

Member Spotlight

Replace cash and cheques with secure, multi-currency prepaid cards for your workforce. Streamline expenses, reduce FX and ATM fees, and stay in control wherever business takes you. Send and receive payments in 24 currencies. B4B Payments simplifies global spend and vendor management, helping travel and tourism businesses cut costs and strengthen international partnerships. **Reach out** to our team today.

The countdown is on to this year's TravelTech Show

Europe's leading showcase of travel technology innovation takes place 25-26 June at London's Excel, with an inspiring conference programme and host of networking and learning opportunities to elevate your tech stack and operations. Attendance is free for travel technology specialists responsible for the technology within their travel business and consultants who help travel businesses select technology solutions. Visit **traveltech-show.com/register** to register and start planning your visit.

Tourism Meeting Updates

T4T Together for Tourism

ETOA attended the EU Tourism Stakeholder and T4T Together for Tourism expert group events on 27 May in Brussels, which included discussion of unbalanced tourism and related opportunity and obstacles, including destination management and governance. For more resources, see **EU Tourism Platform**.

Public / Private Stakeholder Meeting

On 21 May, ETOA joined public and private sector stakeholders in Brussels at a workshop arranged and hosted by the **European Travel Commission (ETC)** and facilitated by **NH Stenden's European Tourism Futures Institute**: 'Scenario Future-Proofing European Tourism through Scenario Planning and Strategic Foresight'.

Tourism Manifesto

ETOA hosted the Tourism Manifesto and guests from the European Commission at its Brussels office on May 28th for a Spring Networking Drinks event, and discussion about how the consensus-driven alliance could best contribute to the forthcoming new consultation on **EU Sustainable Tourism Strategy**.

Sustainability

Sustainability is Responsibility

ETOA joined its long-standing partner USTOA for their Sustainability is Responsibility Event in Valencia. The US market's growing interest in developing tourism's net benefit in destination and catering to more impact-conscious consumers represents a valuable opportunity for European inbound. For more information, see **here**.

EU Sustainable Tourism Strategy 2026

The European Commission has launched a consultation on a comprehensive EU Sustainable Tourism Strategy due in early 2026. Its intention is that tourism in Europe should be "competitive, sustainable, and inclusive, meeting the expectations of our citizens, businesses, and regions." Consultation opens until 15 August. For more information, click **here**.

Last Chance to enter!

Applications are still open for **Destination of Sustainable Cultural Tourism 2025** – deadline 30 May.

Sustainable Luxury Travel E Book

The new 'Sustainable Luxury Travel' E book is out now. This new publication showcases innovative best practice, strategies, and initiatives from leading luxury brands. Read ETOA's article about us and the interview we did with Rosella Pfundt, China market expert and Angelika Burgmann, tourism expert and business consultant on conscious luxury. You can find the Ebook **here**.

ETOA Out and About

The **ETOA senior management team** and the **Advisory Council Board** met in Ljubljana for meetings and conversation. A big thanks to Ljubljana Tourism, Slovenia Tourist Office and Bled Tourist Board for the incredible hosting.

Arran Wiltshire, **Lucie Hanchard** and **Elisa Li** travelled to Beijing and Shanghai for CEM 2025 - reporting back on some great meetings, wonderful networking and second-to-none experiences.

Tom Jenkins, ETOA's CEO and **Róisín Donnelly**, Senior Market Manager attended the East of Scotland Showcase hosted by Visit Scotland at Scotland House in London. She said that it was a "fantastic opportunity to connect with industry professionals about exciting developments."

Celebrating our members!

Celebrate long standing members and meet the most recent additions to our community. **Let us know if you'd like to be featured**.

Visit Mikkeli joined this year. They said: "We're thrilled to join the ETOA community as new members. Lake Saimaa, the largest lake district in Finland, is a hidden gem waiting to be discovered. We're especially excited about the opportunity to take part in ETOA's networking events, where we can connect with fellow members and share the unique experiences our region has to offer."

G2 Travel joined ETOA in 2011. They said: "As a long-standing member of ETOA, G2 Travel has greatly benefited from the association's unwavering commitment to supporting and strengthening the European tourism industry. Over the years, ETOA has provided us with invaluable access to high-impact networking opportunities, market intelligence, and a platform to connect with like-minded professionals. Their advocacy and thought leadership have helped us navigate industry shifts with confidence. We're proud to be part of this dynamic community and look forward to continuing our journey with ETOA to shape a more unified, resilient, and innovative future for European tourism."

Insight, Research & Webinars

Our **Insight Hub** provides a library of data reports, opinion pieces, webinar recordings and academic research. Latest pieces include:

PANTOUR: A Guide to Promoting Equality, Diversity & Social Inclusion in Tourism & Hospitality | With this handbook, the Pact for Next Tourism Generation Skills (PANTOUR) consortium provides useful, practical tools for developing EDI skills and practices that can be adopted by businesses in the sector.

Data Appeal Webinar | The Whole is Greater: Building an Inclusive Destination Ecosystem

for All | In this member-exclusive session, we join with our partners at Data Appeal to explore how destinations can create a thriving ecosystem that benefits all stakeholders—residents, visitors, businesses, and the environment. Watch it again - or watch it now.

Statista/Booking.com Report: The Titans of Travel | Did you know that €1 in every €10 of Europe's GDP is attributable to tourism or that 11% of European jobs, some 23.35 million, are in the tourism industry? Explore more about the role played by SMEs in Europe's accommodation sector through seven distinct sections.

Amadeus - Travel Dreams | A comprehensive 48-page report based on 6,000 interviews conducted in the final quarter of 2024 in France, Germany, UK, USA, India and China - packed full of charts and statistics emerging from the study along with a number of micro-blogs from executives from the hotel and car rental sectors.

About ETOA

ETOA is the trade association for better tourism in Europe. We work with policymakers to enable a fair and sustainable business environment, so that Europe remains competitive and appealing for visitors and residents. With 1,100 members serving 65 origin markets, we are a powerful voice at local, national and European levels. Our members include tour and online operators, intermediaries and wholesalers, European tourist boards, hotels, attractions, technology companies and other tourism service providers ranging in size from global brands to local independent businesses. We are connected with over 35,000 industry professionals across our social media channels.

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