

Apostolos Tzitzikostas, Commissioner for Sustainable Transport and Tourism
European Commission,
Rue de la Loi 200,
1049 Brussels, Belgium

RE: Congratulations from the business travel sector and recommendations

Brussels, 6 December 2024

Dear Commissioner Tzitzikostas,

I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations on your election as Commissioner for Sustainable Transport and Tourism for the mandate 2024-2029. As the voice of the business travel industry, the [Global Business Travel Association \(GBTA\)](#) represents the interests of corporate travel professionals on the user and supplier side. I would like to take this opportunity to wish you every success in your new role serving the EU's citizens and interests.

Business travel is effectively travelling for work – for a meeting, to deliver a service, to attend a conference, and even to represent European citizens in Brussels. Our sector has gone through major challenges in the past five years, having faced disruptions due to Covid-19 pandemic and global instability owing to the wars in Ukraine and in the Middle East.

Amid these challenges, and as outlined in our latest [GBTA Global Business Travel Index forecast](#), business travel spending originating from Europe is expected to hit 360 billion euros this year, reflecting strong growth.

We would like to present to you [our priorities for the five years to come](#), hoping that you can take them into consideration in your work as a European Commissioner.

In this new mandate, we believe the EU should continue its path towards more sustainable travel, building on the Green Deal. The announcement of the Clean industrial Deal and the Sustainable Transport Investment Plan are steps in the right direction.

Corporate travel is quite unique due to its concentrated purchasing power and compliance with new emissions reporting mandates. This is why GBTA has been an advocate for the establishment of a common framework for the calculation of CO₂ emissions from transport. **We [welcomed](#) the presentation of the CountEmissionsEU Regulation and are now calling for a timely agreement between the three EU institutions.**

Unlocking rail and multimodal travel is a key opportunity to allow corporate travel to continue growing while reducing emissions. This is why **we applaud your commitment to work on a Commission proposal to solve distribution and ticketing issues related to rail and multimodal content.** The Commission should move forward with its plans for a Multimodal Digital Mobility Services (MDMS) regulation. This would make it more likely for business travellers to consider more sustainable yet efficient choices when booking their trips. In this context, we also welcome your announcement of a Single Digital Booking and Ticketing Regulation for rail, which will make it easier for business travellers to buy cross-border rail tickets and shift to a more sustainable mode of transport. We remain open to contributing our views on this issue to make

sure it serves travellers across Europe.

In parallel, decarbonising aviation must remain a priority, in particular through scaling the market for Sustainable Aviation Fuels (SAF). Our [Sustainability Acceleration Challenge](#), an industry-first global benchmarking on actions taken by organisations to decarbonise travel programmes shows that corporates can play a key role in helping scale the market for SAF. A third of companies are either currently purchasing or considering the purchase of Sustainable Aviation Fuel certificates (SAFc) to compensate their business travel emissions within the value chain, spending on average 400,000 Euros annually. To help amplify this demand signal, and allow the market to scale, **it's critical to guarantee the extension of SAF allowances under the EU Emissions Trading Scheme after 2030.**

Finally, the EU should guarantee a traveler-centric approach. **We are eager to see the adoption of the new EU passenger rights rules presented last year, to [clarify deadlines and responsibilities for reimbursement of cancelled or delayed flights](#).** Fully automated electronic refunds are also a key part of making this work for corporate travel.

GBTA has been a key partner 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 has joined initiatives such as the [Transition Pathway for Tourism](#). We remain open to sharing our views and concerns to support the work of the European Commission during this new institutional cycle.

I express again my 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,



Suzanne Neufang

CEO, Global Business Travel Association (GBTA)