

PRESS RELEASE

EUROPEAN HIGH LEVEL MEETING ON TOURISM

Athens, 13 December 2017

*The tourism industry constitutes one of the most dynamic sectors of the European economy, accounting for about 10% of GDP. Europe is the world's first tourist destination while the international tourism economy is **estimated to grow by around 4% in 2018, skyrocketing all indicators and sectors of the tourism industry.***

That was the key message emerging from the works of the European Meetup on Tourism, held on 28 November 2017 in Athens, Greece. The meeting was organised by [Militos Consulting S.A.](#), with the support of the [G. & A. Mamidakis Foundation](#) and [GTP headlines](#) as media sponsor, in the frame of European project [Rooms to VET](#), aiming at upskilling and professionalising private tourism accommodations services, implemented by 9 expert partners from 5 EU countries, specialising in tourism and vocational training. The project has produced an [e-learning platform](#) (available free of charge) to support the upskilling and professionalisation of private tourism accommodation services.

During the works of the European Meetup, synergies were established with the European project [IDEATE](#).

HERE BELOW THE MAIN CONCLUSIONS, as extracted by **Mr. Dimitris Zafiriadis**, Vice-President of the Social Enterprise knowl for Education and Lifelong Learning:

- * The international tourism sector produces new formats and service structures and is becoming a pole of attraction for new investments and the creation of new jobs that require new skills. An important part of European funding will be directed, over the next decade, to investments in tourism across Europe.
- * Education and training of tourism professionals and actors and the upgrading of their skills are a central issue. The development of the tourism economy and the incorporation of many new possibilities, such as digital service platforms, the prospects of digital marketing services and services that adopt models of a [sharing economy](#), require new skills and knowledge.
- * The response to the sharing economy remains fragmented in the EU. Some activities are regulated locally. Both the European Commission and the European Parliament have not taken a formal position so far, although a recent report by the Committee on Transport and Tourism raises the issue. The European Commission has announced that it intends to assess the [role of the sharing economy platforms](#) in deciding whether changes to legislation are needed. In a free and open market, the pursuit of economic and business activity is desired and not subject to prohibitions. However, rules should exist and be applied in view of avoiding losses of public revenue, tax evasion and the hindrance of legal tourism accommodations.

- * Due to its features and characteristics, tourism is directly linked to the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT). The aim of today's digital applications is to provide direct quality information on tourist destinations and to network and communicate with the visitors of an area through interactive tools that are constantly evolving and becoming more personalized and tailor-made, in line with the maximisation of telecommunication and digital infrastructures. Through technology, tourism services and the opportunities for visibility and communication multiply and create unprecedented opportunities.
- * The development of modern tourism services is based on an integrated marketing and branding strategy, founded on the creation of unique, diversified "experiences", combinations of different tourist resources (activities, spectacles, sights, etc.) in a single, experiential logic. Experience works as ambassador in the frame of a tourism strategy. Each of the experiential experiences communicates and promotes the potential of each destination.
- * In recent years, in the context of the financial and production crisis of the Greek economy, the tourism industry creates new settings, produces know-how and opens up paths for upgraded quality tourist product, new models and services, becoming the national "Champion".
- * Tourism becomes a driving force for Greece for an outward-looking economy, given that 90% of the revenue is coming from abroad.

All photos from the event are available [HERE](#)

For more information on the project, the outputs and the events (speakers, press releases, etc.), visit the official project website at <http://www.roomstovet.eu>

