

PRESS RELEASE

13<sup>th</sup> March 2013

## **EACT in European Parliament: Action for 12-days-rule and minimum number of passengers**

**Important members of the European Parliament met a delegation of the European Alliance for Coach Tourism EACT on 13 March 2013 in Strasbourg. Topics of the discussion were pressing concerns of coach tourism industry like the extended scope of the 12-days-rule and the retention of the provisions on minimum number of passengers within a possible revision of the package travel directive.**

EACT used the plenary session of European Parliament to explain to policy makers the primary concerns of coach tourism. In several one-on-one interviews EACT representatives sensitised Brian Simpson, chairman of transport and tourism committee (TRAN), Dominique Riquet, vice-chairman of TRAN-committee as well as french MEPs Nathalie Griesbeck and Michel Dantin.

EACT asked MEPs to stick to their positions from July 2012 on the votes on the digital tachograph in which European Parliament argued for an extended scope of the current 12-days-rule. Further negotiations on this issue between European Parliament, Council and Commission are in process. In this context, EACT has asked MEPs to maintain their demand to the Commission to submit specific legislation for driving and resting times for coach drivers, detached from those of truck drivers.

In view of the long announced revision of the current package travel directive, EACT insisted on the importance of the provisions on minimum number of passengers and the possibility to cancel a journey under these conditions. An abolishment of these provisions would not only be detrimental to the whole coach tourism industry but would also restrict the choice of consumers to a large extent since many coach tourism customers wish for journeys away from mass tourism.

Further issues during the discussion were the fiscal discriminations of coach tourism and the necessary harmonisation of legislation as well as the perpetuation of the possibility of price increases by coach operators.

Participants of EACT were: Co-Chairman Richard Eberhardt (President of RDA and IBV), Jean Wyns (President of Belgian FBAA), Paul Royer (Co-Président of FNTV ALSACE Fédération Nationale des Transports de Voyageurs d'Alsace), Kjell Peterson (Swedish National Coach Operators Organisation), Sandra van de Walle (EU-Representative of RDA) and Dieter Gauf (Secretary General of EACT and RDA-CEO).

Richard Eberhardt summed up the meeting as following: „We are glad to take notice that our arguments have been agreed upon. MEPs have assured that they will stick to the decisions of European Parliament and that they will keep an eye on the requests of modern coach tourism. A necessary differentiation between trucks and coaches has been conceived according to the claim: a coach is not a truck!“

*About EACT: Several international and national federations and organisations founded EACT – The European Alliance of Coach Tourism to promote the interests of coach tourism on an European level.*

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