

Agenda item 5(a):

Report of the Working Group for the Agenda for Europe¹

1. Composition and meetings of the Working Group

1. In accordance with Rules 2(2) and 3(1) of the Rules of Procedure of the Working Group for the Agenda for Europe, the Chair of the Commission for Europe serves ex officio as Chair of the Working Group. At its 71st session, the Commission for Europe elected **Montenegro** as Chair for the period 2025–2027.
2. In accordance with Rule 2 of the Rules of Procedure of the Working Group for the Agenda for Europe, one or two European regional representatives serving on the Programme and Budget Committee (PBC) shall be members of the Working Group. In advance of the 71st session of the Commission for Europe, the Secretariat invited the European regional representatives on the PBC to confirm their interest in continuing their membership in the Working Group. Confirmations were received from **Switzerland** (4 April 2025) and **Spain** (25 April 2025).
3. In accordance with Rule 2 of the Rules of Procedure, where both European regional representatives on the PBC confirm their availability, the Commission for Europe shall elect up to four additional members. At its 71st session, the Commission elected **Israel, Lithuania, Portugal and Romania** as members of the Working Group for the Agenda for Europe for the period 2025–2027.
4. During the reporting period, the Working Group convened its 11th, 12th, 13th and 14th meetings, all of which were held in an online format.
5. These meetings provided a platform for members to review progress on the projects from the *Work plan for the Agenda for Europe in 2024*, discuss the necessary adjustments to the framework of the Agenda for Europe, as mandated by the Commission for Europe through conclusions and recommendations CEU/CR/5 (LXXI), point 9, and elaborate the *Work plan for the Agenda for Europe in 2026-2027*.

2. Update on the implementation of projects from the *Work plan for the Agenda for Europe in 2024*

6. During the initial cycle, the Working Group has overseen the steady progress of three projects, which are being implemented using the internal expertise of the UN Tourism Secretariat and collaborative efforts from Member States.
7. **Climate Change and the Future of Snow-Based Mountain Tourism Destinations**: Led by **Switzerland** and supported by a Steering Group comprising **Andorra, Austria, France, Slovenia** and the **FAO Mountain Partnership**, this project has reached an advanced stage of

¹ This report covers the period from 10 May 2025 to 4 May 2026.

implementation.

8. External experts were contracted to carry out the research and prepare the research report.
9. A first meeting of the Steering Group was held in Switzerland in October 2025 to discuss the proposed structure and the initial draft of the report. Members of both the Steering Group and the Research Support Group participated actively, providing targeted and substantive input on the draft of the first two chapters. The meeting also served to discuss and agree on the selection criteria for the case studies to be included in the report.
10. Based on these discussions, the experts subsequently submitted a more advanced draft, which was reviewed and commented on by members of both groups.
11. A further advanced draft, including proposed policy recommendations, was presented to the Steering Group ahead of a follow-up meeting held in Andorra in March 2026, on the sidelines of the 13th World Congress on Snow, Mountain and Wellness Tourism. During this meeting, the Steering Group refined the policy recommendations and provided additional guidance to the experts for finalization.
12. During the Congress, the initial research findings, together with selected case studies, were presented in a dedicated session. A recording of the session is available [online](#).
13. The final report is scheduled for publication by autumn 2026.
14. **Integrating Positive Experiences and Legislations for Regulating Online Short-Term Rentals Platforms:** Proposed by **Bosnia and Herzegovina**, this project has been concluded. The diagnostic review assessing existing legal and regulatory frameworks in selected European countries has been finalized, and the final report has been submitted to Members in the region.
15. The project focused on mapping and assessing best practices and existing regulations related to short-term rentals, including taxation, licensing, safety, sustainability, and impacts on housing markets. Two external legal experts—one international (Italy) and one regional (Serbia)—were engaged to support the work.
16. The external experts delivered the diagnostic assessment, which was subsequently presented to Members through two dedicated webinars: one involving the directly participating countries (**Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, France, Greece, Italy, Montenegro, Serbia**) and one open to the wider European region. Both webinars received positive feedback.
17. The assessment concludes that short-term rental regulation remains at an evolving stage in the countries examined, characterized by fragmented and sometimes reactive legal frameworks, but also by increasing opportunities for alignment, notably through Regulation (EU) 2024/1028. Effective governance of short-term rentals is identified as a cross-cutting policy issue linked to housing, social cohesion, sustainability, competition and digital regulation.
18. The report highlights the need for clear legal definitions; streamlined, digitalized registration and data-sharing systems; enforceable platform obligations; risk-based enforcement mechanisms; and strengthened institutional capacity. It further emphasizes the importance of multilevel governance, fiscal transparency, housing protection measures, consumer protection, and data-driven impact assessments, alongside environmental, economic and social sustainability objectives.
19. Overall, the recommendations call for a coherent, unified and adaptive governance model for short-term rentals that balances market innovation with public-interest objectives, supports sustainable tourism, protects residents and ensures fair competition across both EU and non-EU contexts.
20. **Development of Strategies to Mitigate Negative Effects of Green Investments on Tourism SMEs:** As reported at the 71st meeting of the Commission for Europe, funding for the “Mini-Maxi” project had initially been pending. Partial funding was subsequently secured, allowing the project to move forward.

21. Proposed by **Slovenia**, the project is being implemented in collaboration with a consortium of three Slovenian public universities: the University of Ljubljana – School of Economics and Business, the University of Maribor and the University of Primorska.
22. Due to the reduced level of funding secured, the scope of the project was adjusted, particularly with regard to stakeholder engagement, while preserving its core objectives.
23. The project includes an analysis of national tourism strategies from ten countries across the region, selected to ensure balanced geographical representation and diverse tourism profiles. It also comprises a quantitative survey targeting tourism SMEs across the region and a series of qualitative interviews with selected SMEs from different tourism subsectors. These findings will underpin a report presenting concrete recommendations and an actionable framework to support SMEs in adopting greener practices in a viable and beneficial manner.
24. The Secretariat is working with the consortium to complete the required revisions, with the objective of releasing the final publication by autumn 2026.

3. Work plan for the Agenda for Europe in 2026-2027

25. In December 2025, the Secretariat invited all Members to submit ideas for projects, topics, or activities for consideration under the next implementation cycle of the Agenda for Europe (2026–2027). In accordance with the Rules of Procedure of the Working Group for the Agenda for Europe, Members were requested to submit their proposals by 31 January 2026 for possible inclusion in the forthcoming cycle.
26. By the deadline, the Secretariat received six ideas for projects submitted by five Members of the region, namely Bulgaria and Montenegro (joint submission), Germany, France, and Israel (two proposals). These proposals were presented to the Working Group for initial consideration at its 12th meeting, held in February 2026.
27. During its 12th meeting, the Working Group reviewed all submitted proposals and agreed that the proposals from Bulgaria and Montenegro (joint submission), Germany, and France merited further consideration. The Working Group requested the proposing countries to introduce specific adjustments and to provide additional clarification, in particular regarding financing arrangements and country contributions.
28. The proposals selected for further development covered three thematic areas:
 - women’s empowerment in tourism, through the establishment of a European-level networking initiative building on existing national experiences;
 - innovation in wine tourism, through a challenge aimed at identifying and supporting solutions that promote sustainability, experience diversification, and accessibility; and
 - sub-regional tourism cooperation in Southeast Europe, through the development of a strategic framework for joint promotion, with a view to replication in other regions.
29. The Secretariat expressed its support for the three initiatives, noting their strong alignment with UN Tourism priorities, including sustainability, innovation, public–private cooperation, gender equality, and regional collaboration.
30. In preparation for further consideration at the 13th meeting, the Secretariat worked closely with the proposing countries to refine the proposals, in line with the guidance provided by the Working Group at its previous meeting.
31. At its 13th meeting, held in April 2026, the Working Group considered the revised proposals and agreed to include the three projects in the Work Plan for the Agenda for Europe in 2026–2027. This decision constituted a deviation from the existing Rules of Procedure, which foresee annual work plans, and was consistent with the proposed amendments to the Rules of Procedure under

consideration by proposing a biennial workplan.

32. The final adoption of the Work Plan was deferred to a subsequent silence procedure, which concluded on 1 May 2026 without objections.
33. Taking into consideration the received project proposals, the Working Group for the Agenda for Europe proposes the following areas of work for the 2026-2027 biennium:
34. **Sub-Regional Tourism Routes & Promotion Accelerator (proposed by Bulgaria and Montenegro)**
35. Project objective: To develop a blueprint for regional tourism cooperation by identifying pathways to greater competitiveness and coordination among participating stakeholders through a shared tourism development plan. Focusing initially on the Mediterranean and Southeast Europe, regions with common cultural, historical, and ecological assets, the project aims to establish a scalable model of collaboration that can later be extended to Central Asia. This approach aligns with the UN Tourism existing lines of work and the Programme of Work, 2027, particularly priorities on destination competitiveness, regional cooperation and sustainable tourism development.
36. Contributions: Bulgaria and Montenegro will provide political leadership, coordination and in-kind support, including the hosting of events. Bulgaria is also considering a financial contribution to cover expert fees.
37. Project implementation (subject to availability of funding):
 - Development of a globally transferable sub-regional tourism collaboration framework, including research, expert consultations, drafting and peer review. The outcome will be a lasting, citable UN Tourism publication, using Southeast Europe as the pilot case.
 - Pilot implementation in Southeast Europe, involving live testing of the framework with participating states across Southeast Europe and the Mediterranean. This phase will validate the publication's findings under real conditions, generate stakeholder buy-in and activate joint destination promotion in one selected long-haul source market.
 - Capacity-building and replication in other sub-regions through 6–8 thematic webinars and targeted outreach. This will support the adaptation and replication of the framework in other interested regions.
38. **Wine Tourism Innovation Challenge (proposed by France)**
39. Project objective: To identify and showcase start-ups and entrepreneurs with the potential to transform the wine tourism experience; to promote the dissemination of best practices that are replicable across Europe; and to stimulate innovation in sustainability, creative and experiential travel, and accessibility.
40. Contributions: France is seeking partnerships with private sponsors to cover the travel and accommodation costs for two finalists per category (six finalists in total) to attend the final mentorship and award event. In-kind contribution for hosting the event.
41. Project implementation:
 - Launch of the challenge and opening of applications in the third or fourth week of May 2026. Candidates will apply under three categories: smart solutions for sustainable wine tourism, creative and experiential wine tourism, and accessibility for a wine tourism for all.
 - Following the application deadline of 3 September 2026, shortlisted finalists will receive tailored mentoring from UN Tourism partners.
 - The grand final and award ceremony will take place during the Destination Vignoble 2026 event in Cognac, France, on 6–7 October 2026, featuring finalist pitches, business meetings and networking opportunities.

42. UN Tourism European Network of Women Leaders in Tourism (proposed by Germany)

43. Project objective: To establish an inclusive European network that facilitates exchange among women leaders in tourism; to support Member States in creating comparable national networks; and to foster policy dialogue in support of gender-sensitive tourism governance.
44. Contributions: Germany will host the first in-person networking event.
45. Project implementation:
- Launch an online platform to connect women leaders in tourism and organize virtual events to exchange experiences and lessons learned from the German network and other national initiatives.
 - Provide guidance to Members on possible models for establishing national networks, with regional-level coordination ensured by the Secretariat.
 - Organize the first networking event, hosted by Germany during ITB 2027 in Berlin.

4. Proposed Amendments to the Rules of Procedure of the Working Group for the Agenda for Europe

46. An evaluation of the current Agenda for Europe framework identified that the existing procedures for adopting work plans were overly rigid, which slowed the implementation of critical initiatives and reduced flexibility to respond to emerging regional needs. Furthermore, financial constraints and programmatic misalignment with global initiatives highlighted the need for reform.
47. The proposed amendments aim to streamline approval processes, shift to a more flexible biennial project cycle, ensure full alignment with the overall UN Tourism Programme of Work and simplify the Working Group's composition by automatically including both Programme and Budget Committee members. Additionally, the revisions introduce a structured open call for project proposals requiring explicit clarity on resource needs.
48. As Montenegro, during the 12th meeting, could not provide final approval without the participation of its absent representative, members agreed to defer the final adoption of the amended Rules of Procedure.
49. During the 13th meeting of the Working Group, the formal adoption of the amended Rules of Procedure was further deferred to a subsequent meeting. While general agreement on the direction of the amendments was expressed, Spain required additional time to complete internal consultations and finalize minor technical clarifications.
50. To avoid delaying the ratification of the updated Rules of Procedure by the Commission for Europe by a full year, the Working Group agreed to a short extension of the deadline for the submission of proposed amendments, followed by an additional meeting on 4 May 2026 to consider these proposals prior to the 72nd meeting of the Commission for Europe.
51. The Secretariat subsequently received additional comments and proposals from Montenegro and Spain, including both general remarks and specific proposals with substantive implications, which require further detailed review and internal analysis.
52. Given the short timeframe before the scheduled 14th meeting, the Secretariat proposed postponing the consideration of these proposals to a later date, once the analysis has been completed and shared with members sufficiently in advance to allow them to review the comments and prepare their positions.
53. The Working Group will submit the amended Rules of Procedure of the Working Group for the Agenda for Europe to the Commission for Europe once the process has been concluded.

Conclusions and recommendations CEU/CR/5(a) (LXXII)²

The Commission for Europe,

- Recalling decision CEU/DEC-PS/1(2024).rev on the approval of the Work plan for the Agenda of Europe for 2024,
 - Recalling conclusions and recommendations CEU/CR/5 (LXXI) on the Implementation of the Programme of Work in Europe for the period 2024-2025,
 - Having reviewed the draft Work plan for the Agenda for Europe in 2026–2027, prepared by the Working Group for the Agenda for Europe and submitted to the Commission for Europe by way of decision WG-AfE/DEC-PS/1(2026) on the approval of the Work plan for the Agenda for Europe in 2026-2027,
 - Having heard the intervention(s) of the delegations of XXX;
1. Acknowledges the progress made in the implementation of projects from the Work plan for the Agenda for Europe in 2024;
 2. Requests the Secretariat to continue working on the ongoing project to ensure their successful completion;
 3. Endorses the draft Work plan for the Agenda for Europe in 2026–2027, as proposed by the Working Group for the Agenda for Europe;
 4. Requests the Secretariat to continue working with the proposing countries to finalize the project concepts and to proceed with the implementation of the Work plan for the Agenda for Europe in 2026–2027;
 5. Takes note of the progress made by the Working Group and the Secretariat regarding the necessary adjustments to the framework of the Agenda for Europe, in particular the Rules of Procedure of the Working Group for the Agenda for Europe;
 6. Requests the Working Group to inform the Commission for Europe, through appropriate means, of the amendments to the Rules of Procedure of the Working Group for the Agenda for Europe, as approved by the Working Group.

² This is a draft of the conclusions and recommendations for the corresponding agenda item. For the final text adopted by the Commission, please refer to the Conclusions and recommendations document issued at the end of the session.