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## **Pan-European Dialogue between cruise operators, ports and coastal tourism stakeholders**

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The European Commission today launches the Pan-European Dialogue between ports, cruise operators and coastal tourism stakeholders with a conference in Brussels.

This Dialogue was announced in the European Strategy for more Growth and Jobs in Coastal and Maritime Tourism, adopted a year ago, and answers a specific request from stakeholders. It promotes a structured dialogue on cruise tourism to enhance synergies in the sector, targeting best practice sharing in innovation, competitiveness and sustainability strategies.

Commissioner Vella opened the Conference by highlighting the importance of sustainable cruise tourism for Europe and reminding all stakeholders present that *"We all have a strong interest in working towards a more sustainable, a more competitive and a more inclusive cruise tourism for Europe"*.

This first conference brings together more than 300 representatives of coastal tourism stakeholders, port authorities and cruise operators, a clear statement on the importance of the Dialogue for the sector. Participants have now the opportunity to discuss and find joint solutions to issues such as congestion in ports, the economics of cruise visits for coastal communities, saturation of the most popular destinations, implementation of existing legislation (e.g. reception facilities for waste management at ports), environmental challenges and the potential for innovation. Regional challenges and opportunities for the sector are also being debated in specific workshops dedicated to each sea-basin.

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