

MCE South Europe 2017, third annual MICE B2B forum to be held in Sicily, Italy is getting closer!



SOUTH EUROPE
October 8 – October 10, 2017
Catania, Sicily, Italy

Only two weeks left before the historical Sicilian city of Catania welcomes the annual MCE South Europe forum. The unique concept of bringing together quality South European destinations and suppliers and event organizers from around the world, has proven

its efficiency throughout the years.

The list of participants, will once again be very promising. The best MICE destinations and its providers from South European countries like Valencia Convention Bureau, Hilton Sorrento Palace, Makedonia Palace Hotel Thessaloniki, Liberty International Italy,

Radisson Blu Plaza Hotel Ljubljana, IFEMA Convention and Congress Centre Madrid and many others will find their way to the cultural capital of Sicily. They will be meeting face to face during pre-scheduled meetings with leading international meeting and incentive planners such FcM Travel Express, Astra Zeneca, Thomas Cook Business Incentives, Merz, Scandorama and endless more that have set their sights art organizing their next business event in South Europe.





With event partners as the Sicilian Convention Bureau, Four Points by Sheraton Catania Hotel & Conference Center, Villa Diodoro, Villa Fago, Italy Incoming DMC and Mondial Tecnica the event is surely going to meet the best that Italy and

Sicily have to offer. The magnificently prepared dinners with authentic Italian dishes from Sicilian traditional cuisine, delicious appetizers, scrumptious culinary delights and mouthwatering desserts at Villa Diodoro and Villa Fago are going to be something to look forward to. The views both offer on the sea and the gracious Mount Etna will create the everlasting memories that will draw a lot of business back to South Europe, Italy and Sicily in specific.



'Each forum we organize in a different destination offers the destination to showcase itself. Sicily in that respect is no exception and has gone all the way to highlight why this gorgeous Island with their amazing beautiful landscape, warm hospitality and widely available MICE services are a destination to consider for any business or incentive event.' Says Alain Pallas, Managing Director of the organizers Europe Congress.

Besides the matchmade B2B meetings, the event program offers various keynotes by event MC and expert in interpersonal

communication Jonathan Bradshaw of the Meetology Lab, network sessions, luncheons and of course the fabulous dinner evenings. It will be a business opportunity and memorable experience to cherish forever.

For more information and participation possibilities, please contact Europe Congress on: Email: info@europecongress.com or Telephone: +420 226 804 080



MCE South Europe 2017 Fact Sheet:

Dates: 8, 9 & 10 October 2017

Place : Four Points by Sheraton Catania Hotel & Conference Center, Catania, Sicily

Key Benefits:

- 2,5 days MICE one-stop-shop B2B forum;
- High quality event venue: Four Points by Sheraton Catania Hotel & Conference Center
- Minimum of 30 to 35 pre-scheduled and match-made one-to-one meetings with Hosted Buyers most likely to be your next business partners;
- 80-100 qualified, reference checked and high volume MICE event producing Hosted Buyers having outgoing MICE business for South Europe will meet exclusively with 60 Solution Providers from the region;
- Total of up to 200 persons remain together for the event days: No visitors;
Numerous educational sessions by MICE industry experts
Promotional sessions emphasizing the

potential of South Europe;
Networking sessions offering full catering such as coffee breaks, luncheons, welcome reception, dinners and an after-dinner party to increase interaction.

Agenda and Program:

- Pre-scheduled and match-made one-to-one meetings
- Day networking, benchmarking and socializing in an inspiring environment
- Keynotes by industry experts addressing trending industry topics
- Social gatherings as coffee breaks, luncheons, dinners, reception and party.

Participants:

60 Convention Bureaus and MICE Providers from South European Countries:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Albania• Bulgaria• Croatia• Cyprus• France• Greece• Italy• Macedonia	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Malta• Monaco• Montenegro• Portugal• Romania• Slovenia• Spain• Turkey
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1. 80 – 100 leading event planners and decision makers in their organization of:

2. Origin:

- Germany, Austria, Switzerland: 20%
- United Kingdom & Ireland: 15%
- France, Benelux & Scandinavia: 20%
- Central & Eastern Europe: 10%
- Russia & CIS: 10%
- Middle East & Asia: 15%

- North America: 10%

Type:

- 65% Agencies
- 25% Corporate
- 10% Associations

Organizer:

Europe Congress, Phone: +420 226 804 080, E-Mail: info@europecongress.com

Taiwan can resist Chinese invasion longer than 2 weeks: defense head



Taipei, Oct. 3 (CNA) Defense Minister Feng Shih-kuan (馮世凱) said Tuesday that Taiwan's military is strong enough to resist a possible Chinese invasion for "more than two weeks" – longer than one of his predecessors, Lee Tien-yu (李天裕), had envisioned nearly a decade ago.

Feng made the remarks in answer to opposition Kuomintang lawmaker Lai Shyh-bao (賴士葆), who asked him how long Taiwan's armed forces would be able to resist a Chinese attack now, as Lee had once said the country could "hold on" for just two weeks in such a scenario. Lee was defense minister from May 2007 to February 2008.

"It's been quite a long time since Lee was minister of national defense, and our military has become much stronger since then. We will be able to resist (such an attack) for longer than that," Feng said.

(By Wang Cheng-chung and S.C. Chang)

Enditem/J

President will not declare independence: premier



Taipei, Oct. 3 (CNA) Premier Lai Ching-te (賴清德) said Tuesday that President Tsai Ing-wen (蔡英文) will not declare Taiwan independence.

The statement was given by Lai in an interpellation session at

the Legislative Yuan.

The “Resolution on Taiwan’s Future,” approved by the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) congress in 1999, made it clear that Taiwan is a sovereign nation, Lai stated.

At the end of Tuesday’s interpellation session, Lai agreed to sing the national anthem and carry the national flag on Double Ten Day this year. He also noted that he had overseen several Double Ten celebrations when he served as Tainan mayor from 2010 to 2017.

In the past, some DPP politicians have refrained from attending National Day ceremonies, singing the anthem and waving the national flag of the ROC, as such acts would be regarded as China-linked.

(By Chen Jun-hua and Isabel Wang)

Enditem/J

Taiwan protests against Qatar Airways designation of Taiwanese staff



Taipei, Oct. 3 (CNA) The Taiwan government has lodged a protest with Qatar Airways over the airline's designation of the nationality of flight attendants from Taiwan, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) said Tuesday.

Chen Chun-shen (陳春聲), chief of MOFA's Department of West Asian and African Affairs, said the 100-plus Taiwanese flight attendants employed by the state-owned flag carrier have recently been designated as "Chinese (TWN)" on their work IDs.

The change was made in September, from "Taiwanese" to "Chinese (TWN)," obviously due to pressure from China, where Qatar Airways has seven destinations, Chen said in a regular press briefing.

MOFA has lodged a protest through viable channels, in view of the fact that Taiwan does not have a representative office in Qatar, and is awaiting a response from the airline, he said.

The Taiwan government, however, does not hold any business bargaining chips that can be used to negotiate with Qatar Airways because the airline does not serve any destinations in Taiwan, Chen said.

A similar situation had occurred in May with Emirates, in which the carrier ordered its Taiwanese cabin crew members to use Chinese lapel but revised the directive after Taiwan protested.

Emirates operates six routes in Taiwan.

(By Ku Chuan and Y.F. Low)

Enditem/pc

Emirates and flydubai partnership announces first codeshare routes



- With the start of the partnership, Emirates will codeshare on 29 routes operated by flydubai
- Passengers can book from 03 October with travel commencing on 29 October
- Reach more destinations easily, frequently and quickly

Following the commencement of their partnership, Emirates and flydubai today announced that Emirates will expand its network to 29 flydubai destinations across three continents.

The new partner network, through its codeshare, will offer greater frequency and easier access to more global destinations with the advantage of connecting baggage to the final destination. Passengers can book from 03 October on Emirates.com, through the Emirates Contact Centres or the

travel agents network with travel commencing from 29 October 2017.

HH Sheikh Ahmed bin Saeed Al Maktoum, Chairman and Chief Executive of Emirates Group and Chairman of flydubai, said, "This is an exciting first step in unlocking the benefits of the partnership for passengers who will have the opportunity to enjoy the unique advantages each airline offers as well as greater choice and flexibility when connecting via Dubai. This is just the start and as we expand the partner network in the coming months we will open up more opportunities for our passengers to explore the world."

Throughout the customer journey Emirates and flydubai will deliver a product experience reflective of their unique brand characteristics. When booked together, as part of the codeshare, Emirates passengers will receive complimentary meals and the Emirates checked baggage allowance on flights operated by flydubai in both Business and Economy Classes.

Connecting in Dubai's aviation hub offers a smooth transfer experience and under the new partnership passengers will benefit from a reduced minimum connection time (MCT) between Emirates' home in Terminal 3 and flydubai's in Terminal 2 of 120 minutes.

Today's announcement is an initial phase of the extensive agreement that will, in future phases, see the creation of additional city pair connections as the codeshare agreement is expanded and both airlines' networks are optimised.

More benefits for frequent flyers

In this first phase of the partnership, Emirates Skywards members can earn Skywards miles and Skywards Tier Miles on codeshare flights as per the existing Skywards mileage programme.

In addition to the Emirates free checked baggage allowance,

Skywards Premium members can also enjoy their extra checked baggage allowances of 20kg (Platinum members), 16kg (Gold members) and 12kg (Silver members) on codeshare flights operated by flydubai.

Skywards Silver, Gold and Platinum members travelling on codeshare flights can access flydubai's Business Check-in counters and receive priority tags.

Further benefits for members of each airlines' frequent flyer and loyalty programmes will be announced in due course.

Emirates and flydubai partnership codeshare destinations

City	Country Name
Baku	Azerbaijan
Sarajevo	Bosnia & Herzegovina
Sofia	Bulgaria
Prague	Czech Republic
Asmara	Eritrea
Tbilisi	Georgia
Lucknow	India
Ahwaz	Iran
Bandar Abbas	Iran
Esfahan	Iran
Lar	Iran
Shiraz	Iran
Najaf	Iraq
Kuwait	Kuwait
Bishkek	Kyrgyzstan
Skopje	Macedonia
Muscat	Oman

Salalah	Oman
Bucharest	Romania
Kazan	Russia
Krasnodar	Russia
Mineralnye Vody	Russia
Rostov-on-Don	Russia
Samara	Russia
Yekaterinburg	Russia
Belgrade	Serbia
Juba	South Sudan
Kiev Zhulyany	Ukraine
Odessa	Ukraine

AccorHotels entre au capital de GEKKO Group



GEKKO GROUP

Valorisé à 100 millions d'euros, GEKKO Group, fondé et dirigé par Olivier Delouis et Stéphane de Laforcade (HCorpo, Teldar

Travel, In nite Hotel et Miles A ack) connaît une croissance soutenue de son chiffre d'affaires depuis sa création en 2010 et franchit un nouveau cap dans son ambitieux plan de déploiement à l'international en rejoignant la famille AccorHotels.

Pour GEKKO Group, l'accord conclu entre les deux sociétés va permettre de développer de fortes synergies avec pour objectif la création du leader mondial de la distribution hôtelière.

Côté AccorHotels, cette opération s'inscrit dans la stratégie du groupe visant à renforcer son leadership sur l'ensemble du parcours client, en enrichissant son offre de services à destination des voyageurs d'affaires, qui représentent le principal segment de clientèle du Groupe.

L'innovation est inscrite dans l'ADN de GEKKO Group : la société est propriétaire de sa technologie qui est interconnectée avec ensemble des acteurs de l'écosystème loisirs et corporate. GEKKO Group est devenu le principal canal de distribution des hôteliers ; via ses différentes entités, le groupe adresse l'ensemble du marché loisirs (Teldar Travel, Miles A ack) et du voyage d'affaires (HCorpo, In nite Hotel) en France, Belgique, Luxembourg, Espagne, Portugal et Suisse.

GEKKO Group compte aujourd'hui plus de 300 grandes entreprises ainsi que 14 000 agences de voyage clientes. Il emploie plus de 180 collaborateurs.

Les fondateurs, Stéphane de Laforcade et Olivier Delouis, restent significativement actionnaires et conservent la direction du groupe afin d'opérer indépendamment et conduire GEKKO Group vers un leadership mondial.

« Nous sommes particulièrement fiers de rejoindre un groupe français leader, réputé pour son offre, la qualité de son portefeuille hôtelier, son implantation mondiale et fortement sensibilisé aux demandes de la clientèle affaires. Cela

s'inscrit en toute cohérence avec nos ambitions de croissance mondiale », explique Olivier Delouis, co-fondateur de GEKKO Group.

“ Aujourd’hui, la vitesse d’exécution et l’agilité sont des éléments-clés dans le succès d’une entreprise. Sur un marché où les canaux de distribution sont devenus incontournables et fixent les règles, le rapprochement avec AccorHotels va nous permettre d’actionner rapidement des leviers de croissance et de créer le leader mondial de la distribution hôtelière en B2B » précise Stéphane de Laforcade, co-fondateur de GEKKO Group.

L’opération, qui valorise GEKKO Group à 100 millions d’euros, est soumise aux autorités de la concurrence et sera relu ve dans les résultats de AccorHotels dès 2018.

airBaltic Recognized Among the Most Beloved Brands in Latvia



Riga. The Latvian airline *airBaltic* has received 3rd place in the Latvian brand perception research “Most beloved brand TOP” category “Top

employer". *airBaltic* is also recognized as the most beloved airline brand in Latvia.

Daiga Ērgle, SVP Human Resources of *airBaltic*: "We are truly excited to be once again recognized among the best employer brands in Latvia. *airBaltic* with its modernized fleet, expanded route map, increased number of performed flights and carried passengers is constantly seeking new talent and investing in the development of current employees. We are happy to see that people recognizes and appreciates that."

airBaltic has been consistently ranked among the best employers in various nationwide studies and surveys since 2007: (1st in TOP Employer in transport and logistics sector from 2013 till 2016, 1st in TOP Employer in 2011, 2nd in TOP Employer and Most Coveted Employer in 2010, 3rd in TOP Employer in 2008 and 2007).

The number of *airBaltic* employees over the year has increased by 15% and currently the airline employs over 1 350 professionals from almost 30 nations.

This year *airBaltic* also has a strong breakthrough in the Baltic most beloved brand TOP 100, receiving the 99 place that is +40 places higher than the year before.

airBaltic operates direct flights from Riga to over 60 destinations. *airBaltic* offers convenient connections via Riga to its network spanning Europe, Scandinavia, the CIS and the Middle East. In addition, *airBaltic* also offers direct flights from Tallinn and Vilnius.

*Most beloved brand TOP is developed by DDB Consulting, Accenture Latvia, Latvijas Zaļais punkts, Amrop Latvija, Httpool, RAIT Custom Research Baltic, Kapitāls, Startin.LV, Delfi and Labs of Latvia – <https://www.zimolutops.lv/> .

Le charme de Noël à l'anglaise



L'offre de P&O Ferries pour les fêtes de fin d'année



Mardi 3 octobre 2017 – *Partez pour un Christmas shopping break original pendant les sombres mois d'hiver et découvrez les marchés de Noël enchanteurs d'Angleterre et ses traditions séculaires. Dès la mi-novembre, la petite ville médiévale d'York offre un cadre idyllique pour célébrer Noël.*

Grâce à la traversée de nuit opérée quotidiennement par P&O Ferries entre Zeebruges et Hull, les Belges peuvent embarquer à tout moment pour un petit trip hivernal. Quant aux véritables fans de Noël, ils pourront partir le 4 ou le 6 décembre pour une mini-croisière de trois jours sous le signe de cette fête magique.

Le cœur historique de York dans l'ambiance de Noël

*Peu de personnes savent que la manière dont nous fêtons Noël aujourd'hui remonte à l'ère victorienne. Dans la ville historique d'York, les jeunes et moins jeunes pourront découvrir la riche histoire des traditions de Noël. Du 26 novembre au 24 décembre, les visiteurs du [York Castle Museum](#) découvriront comment l'époque victorienne a marqué de son empreinte les fêtes de Noël en instaurant le Père Noël, les décorations de Noël et les cadeaux sous le sapin. Lors de soirées spéciales au mois de décembre, ils pourront également frissonner devant le classique de Noël de Charles Dickens, « A Christmas Carol » (Un chant de Noël). Pour ceux qui s'intéressent aux **traditions de Noël médiévales disparues**, une visite s'impose au [Barley Hall](#).*

*Le centre historique de la ville s'anime lui aussi pendant les froides journées d'hiver. Le [York Christmas Festival](#) débute le 16 novembre, l'occasion pour les visiteurs de se rendre au célèbre **marché de Noël St-Nicolas** pour découvrir l'ambiance traditionnelle de Noël. Dans un cadre féérique, ils pourront flâner à la recherche des plus beaux cadeaux artisanaux pour toute la famille, déguster un vin chaud épicé ou savourer un délicieux Christmas pudding scone.*



Lors du [Festival Winkshire's Winter Wonderland](#), un événement de Noël déjà récompensé à quatre reprises, les visiteurs pourront, dès le 18 novembre, enfilez leurs patins et glisser sur l'immense patinoire en plein air ou faire un tour sur l'un des nombreux carrousels vintage. Les animations en direct ne manqueront bien évidemment pas.

Les plus petits vivront des moments magiques à bord du [Santa Express](#), en compagnie du Père Noël et de ses petits assistants. En décembre, ce train traverse notamment les parcs nationaux de Pickering, Grosmant et Whitby en une heure et demie.

Le week-end des 9 et 10 décembre, York va plus loin avec le [York Ice Trail](#), le plus grand parcours de sculptures de glace en plein air du Royaume-Uni ! Plus de quarante créations donneront au centre-ville une ambiance encore plus féérique.

Les fans de shopping y trouveront également leur compte, puisque les ferries P&O n'imposent aucune restriction au niveau des bagages. Les accros au shopping pourront donc s'en donner à cœur joie au [York Designer outlet](#), qui abrite plus de 120 marques britanniques et internationales de qualité telles que Paul Smith, Ted Baker, Hobbs... Les clients pourront bénéficier de réductions allant jusqu'à 60 %.



Mini-croisière de Noël avec les plus célèbres crooners

Ceux qui souhaitent s'immerger complètement dans l'ambiance de Noël pourront participer le 4 ou le 6 décembre à la mini-croisière de Noël, un voyage thématique de trois

joursentièrement placé sous le signe de la période la plus magique de l'année. En hommage à Michael Bubl  et aux crooners du Rat Pack, le chanteur Mitch Corner (Mitchel Bubl ) encha nera les classiques de No l. Ambiance garantie !



Mini-croisi re de No l : d part le 4 ou le 6 d cembre

- F te de No l   bord du ferry
- Soir e de musique live avec Mitchel Bubl  (Mitch Corner)
- Visite des march s de No l enchanteurs de Hull ou d'York
- Tickets disponibles   partir de 65   p.p.

Travers e Zeebruges – Hull : tous les jours

- Service quotidien de transport de passagers de nuit
- Travers e en voiture   partir de   169 pour la voiture + 2 passagers (aller simple)

R servation ?

- Tickets disponibles sur www.poferries.com ou au 02 808 50

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Concurrence : les r gles doivent  tre  quitables pour

tous



Le Skål Club International Brussels a pris connaissance avec satisfaction des propos tenus lors de la Journée mondiale du Tourisme, 27 septembre dernier, par le Président du Parlement Européen, M. Antonio Tajani. Il s'exprimait en ouverture d'une conférence de haut niveau sur le Tourisme, où il a notamment dénoncé avec force les commissions, dépassant parfois les 30 %, prélevées par les plateformes de réservation en ligne qui, par ailleurs, échappent à l'imposition locale.

Le sujet avait récemment fait l'objet d'un riche débat réunissant un panel de spécialistes professionnels, organisé par le Skål Club International Brussels, un think tank rassemblant des professionnels de tous les secteurs du tourisme.

Rappelant que les plateformes « occupent des positions dominantes sur le marché, paient très peu d'impôts et transfèrent des richesses considérables de l'Union vers les États-Unis ou la Chine », le président Tajani a estimé qu'il ne pouvait exister « de règles différentes entre ceux qui exercent leur activité sur internet et les autres ».

Le message du Parlement Européen est sans équivoque : le marché de l'Union doit garantir des règles et des conditions de concurrence équitables pour tous. Pour sa part, le Skål Club adhère pleinement à cette vision et suivra de près l'évolution de ce dossier.

Un nouveau débat, relatif à la concurrence déloyale de

plateformes telles qu'Airbnb tant pour les professionnels de l'hébergement et du tourisme que pour les particuliers qui deviennent des « hôteliers » en un seul clic. Ce deuxième dîner-débat aura lieu le mercredi 22 novembre. Infos : skalbru@skynet.be

Richard ECKHOUT
Président
SKÄL INTERNATIONAL BRUSSELS