EU-CHINA TOURISM YEAR FAMILIARIZATION TRIP BRINGS 70 TOP CHINESE TOUR OPERATORS TO EUROPE

Brussels, 16 March 2018 – The European Travel Commission (ETC), the European association of National Tourism Boards, in partnership with the European Tourism Association (ETOA) and several European destinations, hosted the first pan-European familiarization trip to foster inbound tourism to the European Union from China on the occasion of the EU-China Tourism Year (ECTY). From 8 March to 15 March 2018, 70 qualified tour operators from first and second tier cities across China -including Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Shenyang, Jinan, Chongqing, Chengdu, Tianjin, Hangzhou, Suzhou, Shenzhen, Zhuhai, Wuhan, Nanjing and Xiamen- had the opportunity to experience European destinations through and beyond its famous gateway cities.

The Chinese tour operators organised into seven clusters that followed simultaneously different transnational itineraries based on their singular interests and product portfolio. These destination clusters included fifteen countries in the macro-regions of the Adriatic, the Balkans, the Baltic, Benelux and Central Europe. The itineraries included visits to landmark cities, cultural and natural attractions and meetings with local business as well as experiences at lesser-known destinations that are easily accessed from those traditional gateways. The programme commenced with the Partnerships in European Tourism (PET) conference and B2B workshop between tourism-related European companies and Chinese operators hosted by ETC, ETOA and the European Travel Agents’ and Tour Operators’ Association (ECTAA) in Berlin on 6 and 7 March.

Both initiatives the pan-European FAM trips and the Partnerships in European Tourism are part of the programme of activities prepared by the European Commission during the EU-China Tourism Year. The ECTY aims to promote the European Union as a travel destination in China, provide opportunities to increase bilateral cooperation as well as mutual understanding and create an incentive to make progress on market opening and visa facilitation.

China is the world’s largest travel market in terms of both outbound travel and expenditure. European destinations have strengthened their position in this market, attaining 13.4 million Chinese arrivals in 2017, accounting for a share of 14% of all outbound travel from China.

The full programme of activities and events of the ECTY as well as market reports and practical tips on doing business in China are available on the official website www.ecty2018.org.

ENDS