

## EUROPE LARGEST EXHIBITOR AT ITB CHINA 2018

**BRUSSELS, 18 MAY 2018.** Europe was again a central attraction at the 2018 edition of ITB China. On the occasion of the 2018 EU-China Tourism Year (ECTY) a dedicated ECTY Pavilion showcased a multitude of European tourism products and destinations, underlining the importance of Europe as a tourism destination for Chinese tourists. Now in its 2nd year, the three-day business to business travel trade fair brings together top Chinese hosted buyers with international destinations and suppliers. ITB China took place from 16 to 18 May in Shanghai.

After Europe's debut as ITB China's first ever partner destination last year, ITB China 2018 was designated as an official partner and flagship event of the ECTY earlier this year. Having the largest exhibition space on the floor, the ECTY Pavilion hosted more than 40 exhibitors with presences from Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain and the United Kingdom. In addition to the ECTY Pavilion, there were other distinct individual presences of other major European destinations such as Greece, Turkey, Malta, Portugal and Finland – this year's partner destination.

On day one of the ITB China Conference Mr. Eduardo Santander, Executive Director of the European Travel Commission, presented a keynote address titled "EU-China Tourism Year: A Year of Opportunities". Ideas were further exchanged with the wider travel and tourism industry during a high-level Panel Discussion on the challenges and opportunities of the EU-China Tourism Year and beyond. Panellists from major European destinations such as Finland, Belgium (Wallonia) and Latvia, as well as the EU delegation to China, explored how to upgrade the attractiveness of Europe as a whole to Chinese tourists. The Panel Discussion was preceded by the [announcement of the Official Partners of the ECTY](#), including Union Pay International, Tencent, Ctrip, Tuniu, Fliggy and Qyer.

The ECTY Pavilion at ITB China, which has the support of the European Union, is part of an ambitious programme of activities in the framework of the [2018 EU-China Tourism Year \(ECTY\)](#), including business to business matchmaking events and communication marketing campaigns. The ECTY aims to promote the EU 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. The European Commission is responsible for the organisation of the ECTY in cooperation with the European Travel Commission and the Ministry of Tourism and Culture of China.

**ITB China took place from 16 to 18 May 2018 at the Shanghai World Expo Exhibition & Convention Center in Shanghai. For more information, please visit [itb-china.com](http://itb-china.com).**

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