

NEW EU INITIATIVE: “THE RIGHT TO TRAVEL”



The EU commissioner for enterprise and industry, Antonio Tajani, has suggested that the EU subsidize holidays. Tourism is a basic human right, he says.

The Italian EU commissioner for enterprise and industry, Antonio Tajani, has recently proposed a new subsidiary package for EU citizens. According to his arguments, tourism is something everyone should enjoy. However, not everyone can afford the luxury of traveling and discovering the charms of Europe. For that reason Tajani suggests a new subsidiary scheme, which would support certain groups.

According to the scheme, pensioners and individuals over the age of 65, young people between 18 and 25 and families facing financial or personal difficulties have the right to claim subsidies to satisfy their need to travel. The disabled are also part of the scheme and may take one person to accompany them.

The idea is that Europeans may take the opportunity to discover diverse parts of the old continent. The EU will contribute as much as 30% of the cost of the holiday. Mr. Tajani presented his plan at a recent ministerial conference in Madrid. As the program is now being introduced, it is to be piloted for another three years, until 2013, which is set to be the year the scheme will be put to full operation.

The one possible downside is the massive cost of such a generous expression of EU's good will and support for tourism. The commission is likely to be spending millions on traveling contributions. The first priority is to establish fair and efficient systems to make sure the subsidies are not abused.

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