

Milan, 17 May 2022

**NEW ECCIA CHAIRMAN MATTEO LUNELLI  
PREVIEWS THE STUDY ON HIGH-END TOURISM IN EUROPE**

*Under the new presidency of Matteo Lunelli, ECCIA releases the initial findings of its study on the contribution of high-end tourism to the European economy. The sector is worth between 130 and 170 billion euros, which could rise to 520 bn with investment in **sustainability, nature, infrastructure, visa policy and education***

The *European Cultural and Creative Industries Alliance* (ECCIA) is composed of six European cultural and creative industries organisations: Altagamma (Italy), Circulo Fortuny (Spain), Comité Colbert (France), Gustaf III Kommitté (Sweden), Meisterkreis (Germany) and Walpole (UK), who between them represent more than 600 brands – mostly SMEs – and cultural institutions.

Recognised by the European Commission since 2012 as a cultural and creative sector, luxury is a key driver of growth and jobs in Europe and an ambassador of European Values worldwide. European high-end cultural and creative brands account for over 70% of the world's market, generating the 10% of total European Export, the 4% of European GDP, with a €800 billion turnover<sup>1</sup>.

The ECCIA presidency rotates among the various member countries; in 2022 the association is headed by Altagamma under Chairman Matteo Lunelli. Its key priorities include sustainability, the enhancement of manufacturing expertise and an initial reflection on the value and impact of high-end tourism on the European economy.

This issue has been under examination since 2012, and will shortly be reported in the first ECCIA HIGH-END TOURISM STUDY, conducted by **Bain & Company** in collaboration with **Forwardkeys**, a leading analyst of travel trends based on international flights, **Global Blue**, a major Tax Free Shopping service provider, and **Virtuoso**, the world's top network of tourism operators specialising in luxury travel & experience.

The initial findings of the study published today highlight the direct and indirect contribution of high-end tourism to Europe, identifying strengths and areas for improvement and outlining strategic levers on which to act in order to fully maximise the sector's potential. The full report, which will be published shortly, will give a detailed analysis of the specifics of individual countries, along with comparative analysis of globally relevant cases.

*“Europe is the world's top tourist destination and tourism is a strategic sector of the European economy, but there is a wealth of untapped potential in the high-end category: though it represents only around 2% of hospitality structures, it is worth € 130-170 billion and generates 22% of overall tourist spending, thanks to a strong multiplier effect”, explains **Matteo Lunelli, Chairman of Altagamma and new Chairman of the ECCIA.** “High-end tourists spend eight times more than the average visitor and have a significant impact on local areas. A plan for the development of high-end tourism in Europe could lead to an increase in value for the sector, rising to €520 billion. The ECCIA study provides an initial snapshot of the situation, and identifies a number of possible levers, including creating sustainable, nature-based tourism, improving high-end mobility infrastructure, simplifying the visa process and providing training geared to high-end hospitality”.*

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<sup>1</sup> The Contribution of the high-end cultural and creative sectors to the European Economy, ECCIA-Bain&Company, 2020

*“This report clearly demonstrates that high-end tourism is an asset for the whole of Europe. In some countries, such as Italy, UK, France and Spain, this segment is large in absolute terms, reaching up to 20-35 billion euros. In others, its incidence on the GDP is remarkable, such as in Greece where it weighs 7% of GDP. Furthermore, travelers – who are increasingly curious and attentive to sustainability – are showing interest in new destinations, both in the best-known and emerging countries such as Croatia, Slovenia, Portugal and the Nordics. High-end tourism is a global asset to be protected and developed for the sake of all. After the shock of Covid-19 – a quantifiable loss of over 70 billion euros due to the loss of international travelers alone – the high-end tourism industry is finally showing strong signs of recovery”,* commented **Claudia D’Arpizio**, Global Head of Fashion & Luxury, and **Fabio Colacchio**, partner of **Bain & Company**.

### THE TAKE-HOME FIGURES

According to the ECCIA study, **high-end tourism in Europe is worth between 130 and 170 billion euros (22% of total tourism revenue)** and produces an extraordinary multiplier effect, helping to increase every link in the value chain. **With just 2% of accommodation providers**, for example, high-end tourism:

- **generates almost 22% of overall European tourism revenue;**
- **accounts for some 22% of spending on accommodation;**
- **accounts for up to 33% of spending on culture, entertainment and shopping.**

Moreover, **daily spending by high-end tourists is 8 times higher than that of the average tourist**. The high-end segment also has a multiplier effect on **jobs**, employing **nearly twice the number of staff** (compared to lower-end tourism) for the same sized accommodation.

The 5 major European countries (**France, Germany, Italy, Spain, UK**) **generate approximately 75% of the value of high-end tourism**, and the study points to macro-data relating to the value of the high-end segment relative to the total tourism sector in these countries:

- France: the segment is worth approximately €22-27bn (total tourism €85-100bn)
- Germany: the segment is worth approximately €5-10bn (total tourism €65-85bn)
- Italy: the segment is worth approximately €25bn (total tourism €80-100bn)<sup>2</sup>
- Spain: the segment is worth approximately €20-25bn (total tourism €75-95bn)
- UK: the segment is worth approximately €30-35bn (total tourism €80-100bn)

Alongside these, some smaller countries also show well-developed high-end tourism; these include Switzerland, with some €5-10bn, Greece with €10bn and Portugal with €4-6bn. The rest of Europe accounts for approximately €9bn.

It should be remembered that the positive impact of high-end tourism is not limited to its economic effects. The direct and indirect benefits include job creation, enhancing the perception of the overall tourism offer, attracting investment as well as intangible benefits or **soft spillovers, which are highly important**.

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<sup>2</sup> [see Altagamma 2021 study on Italian high-end tourism](#)

- Thanks to the so-called *halo effect*, high-end tourist destinations also enhance the perception of other destinations in the same country.
- The presence of high-end accommodation benefits other businesses and facilities, thanks to the value generated by high-spending consumers coming to the area.
- The very elements that attract high-end tourists are among a country's most valuable assets, and thanks to this type of tourism these benefit from investment and resources for maintenance and improvement. This is the case for the most prestigious destinations (natural, historical and architectural), for infrastructure and services (private airstrips, marinas, high-speed trains etc), for museums, art galleries and events which distinguish a destination, for the single-brand stores of high-end brands in luxury shopping streets or shopping villages; all the way to visits to excellent facilities (showrooms, corporate museums, ateliers, wineries), indirectly facilitating the protection and development of the professional expertise and manufacturing skills that form the basis of leading national industries.
- Lastly, the experiences of high-end tourists and communication by luxury tourism providers and spin-off activities help to convey the identity and values of European countries, and thus to the spread of their *soft power*.

ECCIA estimates that by strengthening action on several strategic levers, geared to attracting tourists who are currently heading for other destinations, **high-end tourism can double or triple its current value to up to 520 billion euros in direct revenue by 2030 - 2035**. Due to the lack of international travellers, in **2020** even the highest band of European tourism experienced a **loss of value estimated at some €65-75 billion**.

ECCIA identifies 5 basic courses of action required to fulfil the sector's potential:

1. Investment in **SUSTAINABLE TOURISM**, with a tourism offer in line with the green economy and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
2. Development of **NATURE TOURISM**, to fill the gap in relation to the rest of the world and promote destinations currently considered of secondary importance.
3. Investment in **INFRASTRUCTURE FOR MOBILITY** to meet the needs of high-end travellers.
4. Harmonisation and facilitation of **VISA POLICIES**.
5. Creation and promotion of an **EDUCATION & TRAINING SYSTEM FOR HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM**, with a focus on the luxury segment.

### **ECCIA**

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European cultural and creative industries are a key driver of growth and jobs, and an ambassador for European values worldwide. European brands account for 72% of the world's luxury market, constitute 10% of European exports and generate 4% of Europe's GDP. [→Read more about the contribution of high-end culture and creative industries to the European economy](#)  
<http://www.eccia.eu/>

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