

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Lidija Bajarūnienė receives the European Tourism Governance Award 2026

Bordighera, Italy - 28 September 2026

Lidija Bajarūnienė, Vice-President of the European Travel Commission and Adviser in the Tourism and Resort Development Division of Lithuania's Ministry of the Economy and Innovation, has received the European Tourism Governance Award 2026 at the European Hotel Awards.

The distinction recognises a professional profile positioned at the intersection of national tourism policy, European cooperation and destination governance. Through her work in Lithuania and within the European Travel Commission, Bajarūnienė contributes to a field in which tourism is increasingly shaped by strategic coordination, resilience, sustainability, competitiveness and cooperation between destinations.

European cooperation as a tool for tourism governance

The European Travel Commission brings together national tourism organisations from across Europe and works to support the sustainable development of Europe as a tourism destination. Lidija Bajarūnienė serves on its Board of Directors as one of the organisation's Vice-Presidents, representing Lithuania within this European framework.

Her responsibilities within Lithuania's Ministry of the Economy and Innovation place her directly within the Tourism and Resort Development Division, giving her a national perspective on destination policy and development alongside her European responsibilities.

This dual national and European perspective gives particular meaning to the award. Tourism governance today extends well beyond promotion alone: it involves public policy, destination competitiveness, sustainability, market intelligence, international cooperation and the capacity to respond to structural changes affecting travel and hospitality.

The logic behind the European Tourism Governance Award 2026

The European Hotel Awards are not based on public voting, popularity rankings or automated scoring. Their institutional distinctions follow a qualitative and editorial approach, recognising personalities whose work contributes meaningfully to the wider European hospitality and tourism environment.

In Lidija Bajarūnienė's case, the recognition reflects the importance of governance as a connecting force between national tourism priorities and collective European action. Her position within the European Travel Commission, combined with her work in Lithuania's Tourism and Resort Development Division, illustrates the value of cross-border professional engagement in strengthening cooperation between destinations.

The European Tourism Governance Award 2026 therefore acknowledges a contribution that extends beyond a single organisation or market. It highlights the importance of strategic coordination, continuity and European dialogue in shaping tourism policy and supporting the long-term development of destinations.

LIDIJA BAJARŪNIENĖ European Tourism Governance Award 2026 Vice-President - European Travel Commission Adviser - Tourism and Resort Development Division, Ministry of the Economy and Innovation of Lithuania

EUROPEAN HOTEL AWARDS 2026

28 September 2026

Grand Hotel del Mare Resort & Spa - Bordighera, Italian Riviera, Italy

Private international event - by invitation

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