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Danish coach operator Papuga wins global IRU Coach Tourism Innovation Award 2013

Danish coach company Papuga A/S awarded IRU Coach Tourism Innovation Award 2013, for highly innovative and affordable coach-cycle road tour concept “Let’s Cycle Together”.

Kortrijk – The IRU Coach Tourism Innovation Award 2013 was attributed to the Danish family-owned coach company Papuga A/S, for its “Let’s Cycle Together” concept, which allows cycling enthusiasts – clubs, companies, individuals – to tour Europe by coach with their bicycles, revealing a market potential that can attract completely new customer segments to the tourist coach market.

Carsten Papuga, Manager of Papuga A/S, said, “Over the past 10 years, the cycling sport has evolved tremendously in Denmark and is the fastest growing sport in the country. The concept is intended for recreational cyclists, who want more than just a Sunday stroll in local neighborhoods, while getting a social experience. The whole concept has had a positive impact on our core business and created many new customers who have not previously ordered transport from Papuga A/S. I am very happy and proud that the concept has become a reality and has gained recognition.”

The “Let’s Cycle Together” concept was appreciated by the international jury as a highly innovative product, significantly contributing to targeting and attracting customers from different socio-economic backgrounds and age groups to the more traditional coach tours market. By implementing this innovative and affordable product, Papuga’s offer managed to stand out as a relevant service in the rapidly evolving modern tourism industry.

Indeed, one of the most remarkable achievements of the concept, is its ability to attract a young and active generation to coach travel. It has managed to bring a modern travel form – where adventure and unique experiences are a part of every vacation – to the classic tourist coach travel. By combining road cycling tours with coach travel, Papuga A/S helps customers discover the comfort and social benefits of travelling by coach at a relatively early age, where the coach otherwise seems to be the last choice when going on vacation.

Isabelle Durant, Vice President of the European Parliament (Green), said, “I’m delighted to see this year’s global IRU Coach Tourism Innovation Award go to a “bicycle on coach” product innovation.  Indeed, I’ve always been a keen promoter of this kind of intermodality.  In the European Union, we have a wide range of opportunities for scenic cycling and bicycle tourism and a lot of these opportunities are sadly underused due to a lack of accessibility for tourists wishing to bring along their own bicycles.  Papuga’s concept has the potential to change all that and I hope it will soon be emulated by many more bus and coach operators across Europe.  I’d also like to congratulate Papuga and other nominees in this category for their entrepreneurial spirit and contributions to making environmentally-friendly coach travel an ever more appealing alternative to car and plane travel.”

The international jury also commended [De Bus Krijgt Steeds Meer Fans](https://www.facebook.com/busfans) (Coach gets more and more fans) campaign marketing coach travel to a younger market, as well as the Salaun Holidays (We offer you the world) project for its original approach to innovate what has been a typical service offered by coach tour operators, by developing inter-continental coach tourism between Europe and Asia.

The biennial global IRU Coach Tourism Innovation Award was launched in 2011. It recognises and promotes industry practices leading to a greater use of group tourism by coach, through high quality and cost-effective innovative projects and services.

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Read more about:

* [IRU Coach Tourism Innovation Award 2013 winner and runner-ups](http://www.iru.org/en_coachinnovation2013)
* [Smart Move campaign](http://www.busandcoach.travel/)

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The **Members of the IRU Coach Tourism Innovation Award 2013 international jury** are: Yannik Balcaen (Vice President in charge of Coaches, FBAA, Belgium), Paolo Beria (Engineer, Politecnico di Milano, Italy), Nikolai Borovoy (Chairman, Belorussian Association of International Road Carriers, Ukraine), Allan Edmondson (Head of Transport, ETOA), Michel de Blust (Secretary General, ECTAA), Ruben Prada (Vice President, ASTIC, Spain)