



Live from Brussels - Issue 78 - 15 November 2016

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Articles of your interest

GENERAL POLICY ISSUES

- › Interview of MEP Antoni Tajani, Vice-President of the European Parliament
- › How to make tourism SMEs a driver for job creation in the EU? join us on the 30 November in Brussels for a HOTREC UEAPME SME Event!

DIGITAL ISSUES

- › Austrian hoteliers regain their price setting freedom from online platforms

SHADOW HOSPITALITY

- › Signs of right moves for accommodation rentals?
- › European Parliament workshop on the collaborative economy

FOOD

- › The European Parliament calls for EU limits on trans fats in food
- › Regulation on Official controls near official adoption

CONSUMER AFFAIRS

- › 2016 EU Consumer summit gives insight on the review of the EU consumer Acquis

TOURISM

- › European Tourism Forum 2016
- › Tourism Task Force presents report on Sustainability
- › The ETHIAS system
- › EU prolongs Schengen controls for three more months

HEALTH

- › RARHA conference – Reducing Alcohol Related Harm

ACCESSIBILITY

- › Free online training of AppTourYou to start soon

SOCIAL AFFAIRS

- › Platform Undeclared Work adopts Work-Programme

INSTITUTIONS

- › The 2017 Commission work programme is now available

STATISTICS

- › Recent figures on previous winter season, top destinations and expenditure

GENERAL ACTIVITIES

Next Meetings and General Assemblies

GENERAL POLICY ISSUES

Interview of MEP Antoni Tajani, Vice-President of the European Parliament



MEP Antonio Tajani is currently the Vice-President of the European Parliament and a leading member of the European Parliament ITRE (Industry, Research and Energy) Committee. He also was Vice-President of the European Commission responsible for Entrepreneurship and Industry between 2009 and 2014, a period during which he championed the cause of tourism.

1) The creation of a Tourism Intergroup, or the recent De Monte report on new concepts for the promotion for tourism shows that the European Parliament is now very much invested in tourism issues. How do you see the role of the European Parliament in developing further tourism-friendly policies?

The European Parliament has always been very much involved in tourism policy, adopting a series of resolutions even before the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty. Treaty that acknowledged the importance of tourism and outlined that the EU should complement the action of the Member States, in particular by promoting the competitiveness of this sector.

I think that the European Parliament, 'the voice of the people' has a fundamental role to play in developing tourism-friendly policies because tourism is something very concrete that every EU citizen can grasp. A policy that can get Europe closer to its citizens.

2) The strong rise of the collaborative economy in tourism is having a significant impact, as there are strong discussions on how to apply consumer protection and taxation rules to collaborative economy providers. The European Commission made a first contribution on this issue with a Communication on the collaborative economy, and the IMCO Committee is now also working on an own-initiative report on this issue. According to you, how should the EU, and in particular the European Parliament, approach this phenomenon?

The collaborative economy is indeed a growing phenomenon that we will have to deal with. It has had a positive impact on tourism via easy access to a wide range of higher quality and more affordable services, but at the same time a negative one via unfair competition, reduction of job security, less tax revenues and a threat to compliance standards.

I think the EU should embrace the opportunities created by, but also need to assess the impacts of the collaborative economy on the EU tourism industry. I think we must create a level playing field for all actors and make sure that public and consumer interests are properly reflected.

3) As you often pointed-out as Vice-President of the European Commission in charge of Enterprise and industry, tourism is one of the few sectors which constantly creates new jobs. What could be the role of the European Parliament to support job creation (especially for the young) in the tourism sector?

Tourism is crucial for our Economy. It is responsible for 9% of our GDP and 24 million jobs, about 10% of our employment. But it is facing challenges in terms of skills, increased competition from emerging destinations and the emergence of new business models.

I remain convinced however that it is essential to our economic recovery and to our future prosperity. Let's not forget that 20% of the employees in the sector are aged below 25 and that this sector offers great possibilities with low barriers to entry, exposure to different cultures and transferable skills. The European Parliament will therefore always be a strong supporter of tourism policy and will do its best to provide the right conditions for this industry to succeed.

How to make tourism SMEs a driver for job creation in the EU? join us on the 30 November in Brussels for a HOTREC UEAPME SME Event!

**SAVE
the
DATE**
30.11.16

10.30 - 13.15
UEAPME offices
Rue J. de Lalain 4
1040 Bruxelles

JOINT EVENT
Wednesday 30 November 2016

Hotrec **UEAPME**

**How to make SMEs a driver for job creation in the EU:
the example of the tourism sector**

Hosted by MEP Othmar Karas, Chair of the SME intergroup,
and MEP István Ujhelyi, Vice-chair of the TRAN Committee

Speakers will include, amongst others:

- Antonio Tajani, MEP Vice-President of the European Parliament
- Miriam Koren, Acting Director, Centre for Entrepreneurship, OECD
- Flavio Bucciarelli, Vice President Operations Europe, Africa & Middle East, Starwood Hotels & Resorts
- Claudia Montero De Aguiar, MEP
- Claudia Tapardel, MEP
- Nicholas Costello, Deputy head of Unit E1 Job Creation, DG EMPL, European Commission

Followed by a walking lunch

To register, please contact Guillaume Brouillet (guillaume.brouillet@hotrec.eu) - Tel 32 (0)2 513 63 23

In the framework of the first European Vocational Skills Week organised from 5 to 9 December 2016 by Commissioner Marianne THYSSEN, HOTREC will present its solutions to foster job creation in the hospitality sector through 4 pillars: digital, labour law, skills, and taxation, during an event co-hosted by MEP KARAS and MEP UJHELYI, in presence of Vice President of the European Parliament, Mr Antonio TAJANI.

The hospitality industry which alone employs 80% of the total EU tourism workforce, provides more than 10 million jobs to the EU; 20% being held by people under 25 years and 33% by relatively unskilled people, making it the perfect entry door to the job market and a strong contributor to social inclusion. One of Europe's most resilient economic sector in times of crisis, which created 2,5 million jobs between 2000 and 2010, the European hospitality industry still keeps creating tens of thousands of jobs every year. To register, please contact Guillaume Brouillet at 02 513 63 23 or at Guillaume.Brouillet@hotrec.eu

DIGITAL ISSUES

Austrian hoteliers regain their price setting freedom from online platforms

On 9 November 2016, the Austrian National Council adopted amendments to the Austrian Unfair Commercial Practices law (Bundesgesetz gegen den unlauteren Wettbewerb) as well as to the Price Labelling law (Preisauszeichnungsgesetz) banning best price clauses from contracts between booking platforms and accommodation establishments.

This current practice, still applied in many European countries by Online Travel Agents (OTAs), is now listed as an unfair commercial practice, which is thus now banned in Austria. Furthermore, it is also disallowed for online platforms to forbid accommodation establishments to offer otherwise better conditions to their guests on their own distribution channel than on the booking platform. This is now the third member State which banned parity clauses after France and Germany.

With this decision, after France, Austria is the second major touristic country which decided to ban such clauses from contracts between hotels and OTAs by law. In Germany, such clauses are banned as well, however by decisions of the Bundeskartellamt, the German competition authority, which are supported by court decision as well.

In the meantime, as announced in its Communication of 25 May 2016, the European Commission is investigating other unfair business-to-business practices of online platforms.

HOTREC position:

- *HOTREC has been calling for years for the abolishment of parity clauses in contracts between hotels and OTAs and thus for hoteliers to regain their entrepreneurial freedom over setting the prices and the conditions for their own products. HOTREC looks forward to the outcome of the study launched by national competition authorities on that matter during summer 2016 (to come early 2017).*
 - *Besides the issue of parity clauses, several other unfair practices of online platforms make lives of tourism entrepreneurs difficult.*
 - *Thus HOTREC looks very much forward to the evaluation of the European Commission on the B2B practices of Online platforms and calls for a soon improvement of the situation, which results from the heavily imbalanced market positions and thus the dominant role of platforms.*
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SHADOW HOSPITALITY

Signs of right moves for accommodation rentals?

In the last minutes in the process of the adoption of a new bill in New York to impose fine on hosts not complying with local housing rules, AirBnB has put forward proposals to better regulate the short term rental activity in the city.

This step is important as some of these proposed measures are showing into the direction of the European hospitality industry's requests for making the collaborative economy more responsible and sustainable. Among others, the home-sharing platform proposed to establish a registry for hosts, thus allowing for a better control of the activity by the local authorities. Furthermore, it voluntarily proposed to crack down on individuals with multiple apartment listings, in order not to jeopardise affordable housing. Also the platform acknowledged that more needs to be done for the protection of neighbours by proposing to establish a hotline for neighbours' complaints and putting off the site hosts receiving several complaints. The bill was signed a few days after the platform had published its proposals, coming obviously too late to prevent the bill being adopted.

These proposals from the home-sharing website clearly show that platforms can engage much more for a responsible collaborative economy. HOTREC has been calling for actions across Europe inter alia regarding the above points. A simple official registration of any collaborative economy activity with the local authorities would contribute to more reliability and increased transparency. Multiple listings are a clear sign of a professional economic activity, however the regular provision of a tourist accommodation service is also going beyond an occasional activity. It could also help eliminating black and illegal activities and contribute to a better protection of the rights and information to consumers.

Next steps:

The European Parliament is working on adopting a report on the collaborative economy.

HOTREC position:

- *Over the last years, HOTREC has been voicing its call for a responsible and sustainable collaborative economy, also reflected in its [policy paper](#) on the matter.*
- *HOTREC believes, that, similarly to the proposal of AirBnB, a simple official registration of the activity is the key towards a transparent and reliable collaborative economy.*
- *As proposed by the Commission Communication of 2 June, regular and profit seeking activities shall be regarded as professional activities, also in view of the proper protection of consumers.*

European Parliament workshop on the collaborative economy

On 8 November 2016, the IMCO (Internal Market & Consumer Protection) Committee of the European Parliament organised a workshop on the collaborative economy, chaired by MEP Nicola Danti (S&D, Italy) who is the IMCO, rapporteur on the European Parliament own-initiative report on the matter.

Several academics, representatives of national ministries (from France and Spain) and representatives from small collaborative economy platforms participated to the event as panellists and presented their vision of the collaborative economy. From a general point of view, most speakers agreed that the collaborative economy offers important economic opportunities as it has the potential to raise overall productivity and use of under-utilised assets, while leading to a more inclusive growth. However, discussion also stressed the inadequacy of the current legislation, the difficulty to identify traders disguised as prosumers, and the problem it raises for established traders. The issue of the inadequacy of labour law was also shortly debated. During the debate, a Commission representative also mentioned that DG Justice was finalising a study on the collaborative economy for which it interviewed the national authorities in charge of consumer protection, as well as hundreds of persons who offer services through collaborative economy platforms.

Next Steps:

The European Commission's DG Justice will issue soon a report on the collaborative economy.

HOTREC position:

- *Over the last years, HOTREC has been voicing its call for a responsible and sustainable collaborative economy, also reflected in its [policy paper](#) on the matter.*
- *HOTREC believes, that, similarly to the proposal of AirBnB, a simple official registration of the activity is the key towards a transparent and reliable collaborative economy.*
- *As proposed by the Commission Communication of 2 June, regular and profit seeking activities shall be regarded as professional activities, also in view of the proper protection of consumers.*

FOOD

The European Parliament calls for EU limits on transfats in food

On 26 October 2016, the European Parliament adopted an own-initiative report (i.e. non-binding) on the issue of trans-fats (TFAs) present in food.

In this report, the European parliament called upon the Commission to take urgently actions to:

- Establish an EU legal limit on industrial TFAs (as both an ingredient and a final product) in all food;
- Evaluate the industrial reformulation costs that would be incurred by a mandatory limit and the likelihood of such costs being passed on to the consumers;
- Take into account the impact such a policy would have on SMEs;

The report also stresses that restaurant food would be unaffected by a TFA labelling strategy only, therefore justifying the need for a broader strategy.

The European Parliament report is available here: [link](#)

Next Steps:

The European Commission will now have to reply to the European Parliament's position on transfats.

HOTREC position:

- *HOTREC stresses that the hospitality industry is composed in its vast majority of micro-enterprises, which are already struggling to comply with the numerous legislation applicable to the food sector at large. Any new EU policy aimed at tackling the issue of transfats should therefore target industrial food.*
- *Most restaurants in Europe are small family-run businesses which do not prepare standardised meals, but rather change menus and recipes regularly. For this reason, HOTREC considers that legal limits would be inapplicable.*
- *HOTREC calls on the EU institutions to consult the sector in order to define jointly the most adequate measures for the restaurant industry.*

Regulation on Official controls near official adoption



On 10 October 2016, the Agriculture Council officially endorsed the trilogue agreement on the Official Controls Regulation negotiated with the European Parliament as its official 1st reading position.

The agreement provides that:

- Inspection fees are not mandatory for hygiene controls in restaurants and other retail premises. However Member States keep the possibility to charge fees if they wish so;
- Member States have the possibility (but not the obligation) to set-up rating schemes on the hygiene performance of food business operators, provided that some conditions are met;
- There is no obligation to publish the result of individual controls (unless there is a clear risk to human health, as provided for in other existing EU Regulations).

Next Steps:

The European Parliament plenary will approve formally the Council's 1st reading position (and trilogue agreement) within the next weeks, therefore completing the procedure for the final adoption of the Regulation.

HOTREC position:

- *HOTREC welcomes the outcome of the legislative process as it leaves the choice to Member States as whether to charge inspection fees for controls in restaurants or not.*
- *HOTREC also welcomes the freedom left to Member States authorities on whether to publish the result of individual controls or on whether to set-up rating schemes for the performance of food business operators.*

CONSUMER AFFAIRS

2016 EU Consumer summit gives insight on the review of the EU consumer Acquis

On 17 October 2016, the European Commission organised its annual EU Consumer summit, to which participated few hundreds stakeholders as well as representatives of the Member States' ministries in charge of consumer protection.

The main theme of this year' summit was the fitness check of the EU consumer and marketing law acquis, and it gave the European Commission and stakeholders the possibility to discuss which aspects of the existing framework need to be updated.

The most important issues discussed were the following:

- The need to simplify consumer information requirements;
- Increasing fairness of commercial practices and contract terms, and in particular the possibility to extend some of the existing consumer legislation on unfair commercial practices and contract terms to B2B relations/contracts in order to protect SMEs;
- The injunction procedure;
- The need for a possible clarification of consumer protection rules in the context of the collaborative economy.

Among the consensual areas, participants to the summit tended to agree on the need to streamline the various consumer information requirement possibly into a single piece of legislation. Many participants also stressed the need to further clarify how consumer law applies to the collaborative economy, in particular through a clarification of the concept of the "trader" (used in EU law to define who should apply consumer legislation). Participants were however divided on the need to extend some consumer legislation to B2B relations/contracts to protect SMEs.

Next steps:

The European Commission will use the feedback gathered during the EU Consumer Summit in conjunction with the result of the specific consultation it organised on the EU consumer and marketing law to decide how to update the relevant EU consumer legislation. A legislative proposal is expected by the end of 2017.

HOTREC position:

- *HOTREC considers that information requirements could be simplified at the pre-contractual stage, as it would decrease administrative burdens for small hospitality businesses in cases of phone reservations.*
 - *HOTREC also considers that the European Commission should clarify further the scope of application of EU consumer law to services provided through collaborative economy platforms.*
 - *HOTREC welcomes the consideration to extend the scope of the EU legislation on unfair contractual terms to B2B contracts in order to protect SMEs and micro-enterprises who are often imposed questionable terms and conditions by large multi-national companies.*
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TOURISM

European Tourism Forum 2016



The 15th European Tourism Forum took place in Bratislava, Slovak Republic, on 11 October 2016.

The event counted with high level participants, such as Commissioner Bieńkowska, responsible for the portfolio of Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs, at the European Commission; the Slovak Minister of Transport, Construction and Regional Development, Mr Arpád Érsek; the Maltese Minister for Tourism, Mr Edward Zammit Lewis and the Member of the European Parliament responsible for the EP Tourism Task Force, Mr István Ujhelyi. HOTREC was represented by Susanne Kraus Winkler (HOTREC's President) and Christian de Barrin (HOTREC CEO) respectively on the panels dealing with Taxation and Collaborative Economy. The Forum hold another thematic discussion on Digital Transformation.

HOTREC position:

- *HOTREC defends that Member States should charge low VAT rates at national level: high VAT lowers competitiveness of companies to create growth and jobs;*
 - *High taxes should be shifted away from labour – this will help motivate companies to recruit more people;*
 - *HOTREC calls for a level playing field to be applied to all traders and for the hospitality businesses. In this sense, and according to its chart ([link](#)), HOTREC proposes that all businesses comply with the following measures, amongst others:*
 - *Integrate short-term private accommodation rentals in legislation as tourist accommodation;*
 - *Establish processes for registrations;*
 - *Comply with fiscal obligations;*
 - *Verify visitors according to Schengen Convention requirements;*
 - *Protect Employees' rights and benefits*
 - *Enforce requirements and carry out inspections for safety and security*
-

Tourism Task Force presents report on Sustainability



On 9 November 2016, took place the Tourism Task Force, at the European Parliament, which was chaired by MEP Michael Cramer (Greens/Germany) and organised by the Vice-Chair MEP UJHELYI (S&D/Hungary).

The objective was to discuss the results of the report commissioned by the European Parliament's Committee on Transport and Tourism on: "[From responsible best practices to sustainable tourism development](#)".

The report highlights that there is a lack of up-to-date data for both the environmental and social effects of tourism. It also refers that tourism, environmental and transport policies in the EU need to integrate better to create sustainable development. With regard to sustainable tourism in destinations, the report recommends, amongst others, that:

- Certification of destinations (European Charter for Sustainable Tourism) is further encouraged;
- The effects of existing destination labelling and sustainable development schemes are better monitored;
- Carbon management is developed to improve marketing strategies;
- The zoning of school holidays should be encouraged;
- Schemes to motivate young people and people with disabilities to travel also during the low and medium season should be modernised.

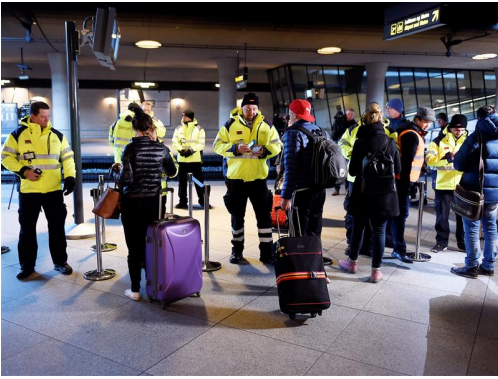
HOTREC is proud to be part of the Steering group of the UN International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development in 2017 and will develop with the European Federation of Food Banks some guidelines to help hospitality businesses manage in food donations.

HOTREC position:

HOTREC encourages the promotion of sustainable, responsible and high quality tourism, namely:

- The preservation of the economic sustainability of the tourism industry;
 - The preservation and protection of the environment, biodiversity and the prudent use of natural resources;
 - The respect of the socio-cultural authenticity of host communities and regions, the conservation of their living cultural heritage and traditional values, and the contribution to inter-cultural understanding and tolerance
-

The ETHIAS system



On 14 September 2016 the European Commission issued a Communication on "Enhancing security in a world of mobility: improved information exchange in the fight against terrorism and stronger external borders" – [COM \(2016\) 602 final](#).

The Communication referred to an up-coming European Travel and Information System (ETIAS). The objective will be to create an automated system used to access the eligibility of visa exempt third country nationals to travel to the Schengen area. Such a system would allow for checks against other databases and ensure that, amongst other points that:

- the applicant has no visa application refused in the Visa Information System;
- the applicant is not subject to an alert in the Schengen Information System or EUROPOL;

Next steps:

The European Commission to officially launch the ETHIAS

system. HOTREC position:

- *HOTREC believes that the Schengen Area is one of the biggest achievements of the EU;*
- *But, Europe needs to maintain security, while keeping Europe open;*
- *Nevertheless, HOTREC is of the opinion that a further tax shall not be charged to third countries nationals, who are exempted of the visa requirement, when passing through ETHIAS. This could demotivate travellers to come to the EU. Ultimately, jobs and growth would be negatively impacted.*
- *In any case, an impact assessment regarding the implementation of the ETHIAS system should be deployed by the European Commission;*
- *Both DG Home Affairs and DG GROWTH should be involved in the implementation of the procedure.*

EU prolongs Schengen controls for three more months



On 25 October 2016, Commissioner Dimitris Avramopoulos announced that the European Commission had decided to allow five countries (Germany, Sweden, Austria, Denmark and Norway) to extend controls along internal Schengen borders for a further three months from 12 November 2016.

These five countries were asked by the Commission to report on the controls carried out on a monthly basis and to analyse the situation at their borders each week as a precondition for being allowed to continue with the controls.

This specific procedure is foreseen under Article 29 of the Schengen Borders Code, which states that for exceptional circumstances, where the overall functioning of the Schengen area is put at risk by serious and persistent deficiencies at an EU external border, border controls might be reintroduced.

The goal is to return to the normal functioning of the Schengen area and the lifting of all internal border controls as soon as possible.

HOTREC position:

- *HOTREC believes that the freedom of movement of people across Schengen is one of the fundamental pillars of the EU;*
- *HOTREC hopes that the reintroduction of border controls is only a temporary measure and that the free circulation will be installed as soon as possible.*

HEALTH

RARHA conference – Reducing Alcohol Related Harm



On 13 and 14 October 2016 the European Joint Action on reducing alcohol related harm (RARHA) organised its final conference in Lisbon.

RARHA was created to continue work on key priorities of the EU alcohol strategy. All Member States joined the action, together with Switzerland, Norway and Iceland. The Action counts with more than 70 partners, including WHO, ECD health Division and Pompidou Group of the Council of Europe.

RARHA's work on monitoring had had as main objective to provide a comparative assessment and monitoring of alcohol consumption, including drinking levels and alcohol related harms across Europe. In this sense, SEAS – a standardized European Alcohol Survey was put forward in 20 European Countries. As a result a common survey methodology was elaborated and data from surveys from 2008-2012 were gathered for comparative assessments. Over 32.000 interviews were completed. Some of the results of the survey show that:

- Over 20% of men and over 10% of women in countries represented drink in a hazardous way, at least once a month;
- In countries with high alcohol taxes and prices and practically no border control (like in the Nordic countries), travelers' alcohol imports are a crucial source of unrecorded supply, while in wine-tradition countries major sources of unrecorded supply are domestic wine as well as domestic spirits;
- Between 40% to 50% of the people interviewed support alcohol measures such as high prices, restrictions on number outlets, time restrictions and advertising bans. 80% support random breath testing in drivers;

Actions:

- *HOTREC members to continue implementing voluntary measures to decrease alcohol related harm at national level, especially focusing on: enforcing age limits when selling and serving alcohol and developing education and information programmes on responsible drinking;*
- *HOTREC and HOTREC members to continue implementing Alcohol Forum commitments;*

HOTREC position:

- *HOTREC welcomes the results of WHO [report](#) stating that adolescent alcohol use has decreased in most European and North American countries and regions since the beginning of the 21st century;*
 - *HOTREC believes on the added value of the Alcohol Forum, as it is a platform to exchange best practices and where the ultimate goal is decreasing alcohol related harm;*
 - *HOTREC looks forward to the Commission announcement on what will be the next steps with regard to the alcohol policy.*
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ACCESSIBILITY

Free online training of AppTourYou to start soon

HOTREC, together with several European partners, inter alia the European Network of Accessible Tourism, ENAT, is in the process of launching a free Massive Online Training Course (MOOC).

This training aims at, inter alia, giving some background to tourism entrepreneurs on the importance of accessibility in tourism and on the needs and responses to people with special needs. More importantly, the specific aim of the training is about increasing awareness of tourism establishments about their own accessibility features, how to measure and assess them and finally how to provide information about these accessibility features. The lack of information about to what extent the different areas and services of a tourism establishment are accessible is often the biggest obstacle for people with special needs to decide for themselves, whether they could be a guest in the establishment or not.

Besides the training tool, a specific App will help the enterprises participating to the training to make their own evaluation of their establishment and thus communicate the relevant information to their potential guests.

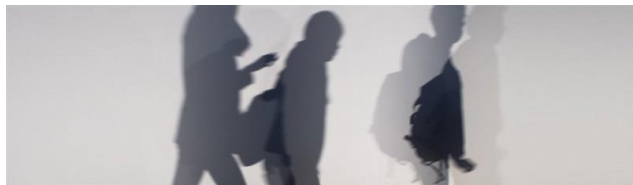
HOTREC and its partners hope that this training and the application will help enterprises to increase their awareness of the importance of providing sufficient information to guests with special needs and will also contribute to providing the relevant information in a more efficient manner.

The training will be available in English from mid-January in 4 different modules and will be freely accessible to any tourism enterprise.

For further information please visit www.apptouryou.eu.

SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Platform Undeclared Work adopts Work-Programme



On 10 October 2016 took place a plenary meeting of the European Platform to tackle Undeclared Work, during which the Work-Programme 2017-2018 was adopted.

The main aim of the Platform is to improve the capacity of Member States to deal with undeclared work and provide a useful input where measures related to undeclared work are considered at a national level.

The two-year Work Programme focuses on the following topics:

- Cooperation and joint action;
- Mutual learning;
- Increasing knowledge

The construction and transport sectors will be the target sectors during 2017. Activities of the programme include staff exchanges across borders, training seminars, workshops, toolkits, thematic reviews, seminars, meetings, cross-border projects with leading experts. Studies, surveys and annual reports will also be tools aiming at providing evidence that will help Member States undeclared work in a more efficient way. Finally, communication campaigns will help raise awareness on the topic.

HOTREC position:

- *HOTREC attends the Platform of Undeclared Work with an Observer Status;*
 - *HOTREC supports any measure that will tackle undeclared work. This will help curbing black economy and will secure legal working conditions for all citizens.*
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INSTITUTIONS

The 2017 Commission work programme is now available

On 25 October 2016, the European Commission published its [work programme for 2017](#). As for the 2015 and 2016 versions the 2017 work programme intends to give priority to less but more relevant legislative changes, so as to focus primarily on the most important things.

For this reason, it contains a short list of 21 new EU initiatives accompanied by a list of 18 issues in which existing EU legislation will be revised, to ensure that European laws are properly enforced and remain fit for purpose.

Besides, the work programme contains a list of pending proposals which will be given a top priority by the EU institutions and stresses that 19 existing legislative proposal will be withdrawn from the EU agenda.

Among the [new EU initiatives \(annex 1\)](#) listed by the work programme, the following will be of interest to the European hospitality industry:

- The mid-term review of the implementation of the Digital Single Market Strategy;
- A proposal to implement the VAT action plan through REFIT proposals for a definitive VAT system and on VAT rates;
- A proposal for a European Pillar of Social Rights (to be issued during the 1st quarter of 2017);
- An initiative to address the challenges of work-life balance faced by working families;
- An initiative on access to social protection;
- A non-legislative initiative on the implementation of the Working Time Directive;
- A revision of the Written Statement Directive establishing the employer's obligation to inform employees of the conditions applicable to the contract or employment relationship;
- A Data Protection package, which includes a revision of the ePrivacy Directive;

As part of the list of [existing EU initiatives which will be revised in 2017 \(annex 2\)](#), the following will be of interest to the European hospitality industry:

- A Revision of Council Directive 92/83/EEC on the structures of excise duty applied to alcohol and alcoholic beverages;
- A revision of 7 Consumer law legislation (to be issued during the last quarter of 2017) among which Council Directive 93/13/EEC on unfair contract terms, Directive 2005/29/EC on unfair commercial practices, Directive 2006/114/EC on misleading and comparative advertising and Directive 2011/83/EU on consumer rights.

As part of the list of pending proposals which will be given a [top priority by the EU institutions \(annex 3\)](#), the following are relevant to the European hospitality industry:

- The circular economy package, and in particular the revision of the Waste Framework Directive;
- The proposal to prevent unjustified geo-blocking.

The European Commission also included in list of [legislative proposals to be withdrawn \(annex 4\)](#), its proposal from 2011 for a Directive on a Common Consolidated Corporate tax Base (CCCTB), as it has been replaced by a new updated proposal released on 25 October 2016.

HOTREC position:

- *HOTREC welcomes the continuation of the Commission's recent policy to focus on less but more relevant policy initiatives;*
 - *HOTREC is monitoring closely all proposals which may have an impact on the activities of hospitality businesses and will pursue its dialogue with EU policy makers to transmit the views of its member associations on relevant issues.*
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STATISTICS

Recent figures on previous winter season, top destinations and expenditure

Eurostat – Winter season occupancy rates: Comparing the monthly figures for the entire 2015-2016 winter season with the same period of the previous year, 24.1 million more nights (+4.3 %) were spent in hotels and similar establishments in the European Union.

Eurostat – Top destinations: In 2014, the most recent reference year for which complete data was available, residents of the European Union (EU-28) made 1 183 million trips (for personal or professional purpose) and spent 6 181 million nights during those trips. Tourist expenditure amounted to EUR 403 124 million.

Eurostat – Tourist expenditure: For each tourism trip, Europeans spent on average EUR 341. Broken down by destination, they spent EUR 205 on average on a domestic trip and EUR 747 on an outbound trip. German and French tourists were the biggest spenders in absolute terms. Their expenditure accounted for nearly half of all of the tourism expenditure of EU residents (47 %).

Eurostat – Intra EU tourism flows: In 2014, tourism trips made by EU residents to another EU Member State as a destination had an average duration of one week (7.2 nights), ranging from just under three nights for trips to Estonia to 10 nights for trips to Greece and Cyprus

GENERAL ACTIVITIES

Next Meetings and General Assemblies

In the coming months, HOTREC will organise and/or participate to the following meetings:

- 25 November 2016 (Brussels, Belgium) – EU Advisory Group on the food chain.
 - 29 November 2016 (Brussels, Belgium) – European Tourism Day. This year's theme is *"Enhancing synergies between tourism and cultural and creative industries. Innovative solutions as the driver for jobs and growth"*.
 - 29 November 2016 (Brussels, Belgium) – 1st meeting of the EU platform on food waste and food losses. HOTREC was officially appointed a member of the platform and will participate to the meeting.
 - 30 November 2016 (Brussels, Belgium) – Joint HOTREC-UEAPME event *"How to make SMEs a driver for job creation in the European Union: the example of the tourism sector"*.
 - 30 November 2016 (Brussels, Belgium) – "Reducing Food Waste – Improving food safety" – event organised by MEP Biljana Borzan, rapporteur on the EP own-initiative report on food waste.
 - 2 December 2016 (Brussels, Belgium) – European Platform Tackling Undeclared Work
 - 2 December 2016 (Barcelona, Spain) - NECSTouR Digital Platforms Working Group Workshop on "Tourism and Collaborative Economy: Opportunities for growth and jobs in Europe"
 - 9 December 2016 (Brussels, Belgium) – Sectoral Social Dialogue plenary meeting
 - 27-28 April 2017 (Tallinn, Estonia) – HOTREC General Assembly
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