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## **Hotel classification in Europe – Vice-President Tajani applauds hotel industry’s achievements towards a European common classification system**

*Brussels, 3 March 2011* – On 1 March, the European hospitality industry association (HOTREC\*) presented in a seminar in the European Parliament to the EU institutions its successful initiative towards a harmonised hotel classification in Europe, the [Hotelstars Union](#)<sup>i</sup>. This system, which was launched in December 2009, is already covering 10 European countries representing a market of 18 000 classified hotels and 150 million inhabitants. Mr. Antonio Preto, Head of Cabinet of Commission Vice-President Antonio Tajani, congratulated HOTREC on behalf of his Commissioner “*for the outstanding achievement in harmonising hotel classification criteria in Europe*”. The MEP Rapporteur on the 2010 Commission Communication on Tourism, Mr. Carlo Fidanza, also complimented this initiative, “*which will certainly bring a real European added value*”.

Mr. Kent Nyström, President of HOTREC, explained to the EU representatives how the hotel industry of various neighbouring countries took the initiative to find common ground for the creation of a common classification system, “*with the aim of opening it up to other countries in Europe, which are also seeking to increase the quality and enhance the marketing of their hotel sector.*”

Mr. Antonio Preto replied saying that Hotelstars Union is a “*remarkable industry-driven initiative and brings clarity and comparability to hotel offers in Europe*”. He further added that such a common classification system is “*an important tool when promoting Europe as a single destination*”, one of the main objectives of Vice-President Tajani in the building of the new framework for a true European tourism policy. Mr. Preto was convinced that the Commission’s objective to ensure competitiveness of the European tourism sector could only become reality if it follows a ‘bottom-up approach’, i.e. initiated and driven by industry. Therefore he urged HOTREC to continue its endeavours and share the results with the Commission.

In the view of Mr. Carlo Fidanza, “*any top-down initiative in hotel classification would be the wrong approach, given the diversity of Europe and of its hotel classification systems*”. Therefore, Mr. Fidanza underlined the importance of taking into account diversity of offer across Europe when setting common criteria.

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HOTREC represents the hotel, restaurant and café industry at European level. The sector counts 1,7 million businesses, with almost 92% of them being micro enterprises employing less than 10 people. The industry provides some 9,5 million jobs in the EU alone. HOTREC brings together 39 National Associations representing the sector in 23 different European countries. For further information: [www.hotrec.eu](http://www.hotrec.eu) and [www.hotelstars.eu](http://www.hotelstars.eu).  
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<sup>i</sup> [www.hotelstars.eu](http://www.hotelstars.eu)