

PRESS RELEASE - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The European Hospitality Foundation (EHF) holds a Seminar on “Access to financial resources by national associations representing the hospitality sector”- Barcelona, 24 March 2011.

Brussels, 28 March 2011 – On 24 March, the European Hospitality Foundation (EHF), in collaboration with the European Association of Hotels, Restaurants and Cafés (HOTREC*) and *Fundació Gaspart Bonet*, held a seminar in Barcelona to discuss how national associations representing the hospitality sector could better access financial resources, particularly in times of economic downturns.

Both, Kent Nyström, President of HOTREC and Mr. Joan Gaspart, Vice-President of EHF, congratulated the organisers and speakers of the seminar for their outstanding work and commented “the experiences presented by the guest speakers and the national associations members of HOTREC represent a unique opportunity to exchange best practices and innovate the ways to obtain extra revenues”.

Indeed, access to financial resources is a major problem for national associations when the business they represent, mostly SMEs, find serious difficulties in surviving the economic crisis. In addition to other sources of revenues, national associations, as all economic actors, need to apply innovative strategies to turn difficulties or uncertainty into opportunities.

Mr. Albert Bosch, guest speaker, a recognised expert in business strategy and risk management showed through his personal experience how to use creativity and innovation to overcome the crisis. Mr. Malco Par, member of the Executive Board of “*Gremi d’Hotelers de Barcelona*” (GHB), presented the successful experience of Barcelona Hotels as a model to follow in other European cities. Lastly, Mr. David Field, Head of Customer and Sales Development of Nestlé Professional, explained how HOTREC national associations could benefit from the collaboration and partnership with companies from other sectors, especially providers to the hospitality sector, as a way to ensure financial stability.

Several national associations presented examples of best practices of services offered to the businesses they represent, such as CEHAT (Spain), KONINKLIJ HORECA (Netherlands), FEDERALBERHI (Italy), HAH (Hungary) and BHA (United Kingdom). The representatives from the associations of Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Portugal and Sweden, explained the structure of the national hospitality associations in their countries.

The European Hospitality Foundation (EHF) and HOTREC collaborate often together in the organisation of events, amongst other objectives, to promote the hospitality sector and to facilitate the exchange of best practices in different areas around Europe.

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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

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