

A Level Playing Field in Hospitality and Tourism as a Foundation for Affordable Housing

Joint HOTREC-EFFAT Statement on the Commission's Short-Term Rental Initiative

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HOTREC and EFFAT, the European social partners for the hotel, restaurant, bar and café sector, welcome the European Commission's objective to complement the existing [Regulation](#) and propose a legislative Act to further address short-term accommodation rental services (STR) as part of the European Affordable Housing Plan, **recognising that regulatory imbalances between STRs and traditional accommodation providers have become a key driver of housing market distortions in many cities.**

Since 2014, EFFAT and HOTREC have regularly exchanged views on the impact of the so-called 'sharing' or 'platform' economy on the European hospitality sector within the framework of their sectoral social dialogue. This cooperation has resulted in joint statements, reflecting a consistent and shared set of concerns among the European social partners.

Short-term accommodation rentals have become a fast-growing component of the tourism ecosystem. For areas with already pressurised housing markets, this expansion has contributed to a decrease in the supply of long-term rentals and to further rises in rental and sale prices.

Despite the increasing professionalisation of STRs, they remain largely insufficiently regulated and supervised. This regulatory gap, compared to the more stringent frameworks applicable to traditional accommodation providers, has contributed to the **rapid expansion of STRs and has generated a range of challenges**, including unfair competition, undeclared work, safety and security risks, unreported tax revenues and tax evasion, unbalanced tourism and growing pressure on local housing markets¹. Both HOTREC & EFFAT note that hospitality workers are impacted by short-term rentals and housing shortages, which increase pressure on the sector, raise living costs, and limit access to suitable accommodation near their workplaces. Workers with atypical working hours, as well as seasonal and migrant workers, who make up the majority of the tourism workforce, are particularly vulnerable when it comes to finding affordable accommodation in popular tourism locations.

In this context, HOTREC and EFFAT welcome the European Affordable Housing Plan and the announced Affordable Housing Act, which acknowledge competition distortions and regulatory imbalances between short-term rentals and hotels. Hotels are already subject to extensive national obligations, including working and employment conditions, standards, security and safety, fiscal, liability, registration of guests and consumer protection rules. A coherent, data-

¹ Recent research highlights a strong spatial correlation between short-term rental (STR) intensity and housing costs in Rome. A 2025 [study](#) reports that each additional percentage point in the share of Airbnb listings within a neighborhood corresponds to an increase of roughly €16.4 per square meter in advertised sale prices, alongside notable rises in advertised rents in high-STR areas. Similar patterns emerge in other cities with extreme STR saturation: in Málaga, citywide rents rose by 66% between 2021 and 2025, with STR-dense districts such as Centro and Carretera de Cádiz exceeding +66–70%, while Valencia recorded a 76% citywide increase, with historic quarters like Ciutat Vella and Extramurs surpassing +80–90% over the same period. These trends underscore the link between STR proliferation and escalating housing affordability pressures in tourist-heavy urban cores.

driven and predictable EU framework should empower national, regional and local authorities, in line with the principle of subsidiarity and autonomy, to adopt targeted and proportionate measures to address these challenges.

Closing the existing regulatory gap by establishing comparable obligations for STRs and hotels alike is a necessary precondition to effectively address housing pressure linked to the proliferation of short-term rentals. Against this background, and in addition to the measures announced by the Commission, EFFAT and HOTREC call on EU legislators to ensure that the forthcoming legislative act:

- Guarantees consistent and **effective implementation of the existing STR Regulation** across all Member States, including the possibility to make compliance obligations where implementation remains uneven;
- Monitors the impact of short-term rentals in areas facing strong housing pressure using harmonized indicators;
- Introduces measures aimed at achieving a comparable level of health, safety and security requirements to those already applicable to regulated tourism accommodation services, for **both consumers/guests and workers**, in collaboration with social partners, in line with national practices;
- Promotes fair competition and tackles social dumping also by ensuring equal treatment in terms of wages and of working conditions, employment and social security, including respect for collective rights between hospitality workers employed by traditional accommodation providers and those employed by short-term rentals;
- Ensures that basic regulatory obligations apply to **both professional hosts and peers**, taking into account the scale and economic nature of the activity;
- Strengthens enforcement through adequate resources, effective data access and clear responsibilities, including for online platforms so that:
 - consumers are effectively protected,
 - workers' rights are respected and enforced, and
 - responsible businesses operate within a genuinely level playing field.

HOTREC and EFFAT firmly believe that integrating these elements into the forthcoming legislative proposal would **support the delivery of the European Affordable Housing Plan by addressing housing market distortions linked to STRs**. At the same time, it would strengthen fair competition in the Single Market, protect quality jobs in the hospitality sector – most of which are in micro-enterprises – and enhance consumers trust across Europe.

Above all, the European social partners **call for a level playing field** between short-term rental operators and traditional accommodation providers, ensuring that comparable activities are subject to equivalent rules and responsibilities.