



European tourism industry welcomes Commission action after years of raising concerns over Spain's traveller data collection regime

Brussels, 08/06/2026 – A coalition of European tourism and travel associations, composed of ECTAA, EFCO&HPA, ETOA, HOTREC and RuralTour welcomes the European Commission's decision to open an infringement procedure against Spain concerning Royal Decree 933/2021 and its compatibility with the EU Law Enforcement Directive.

The Commission announced on Thursday 4 June that it had sent a Letter of Formal Notice to Spain, expressing concerns that the country's traveller data collection requirements may breach EU data protection rules. The Commission specifically questions the excessive categories of personal data collected, including payment and location-related information, the broad access granted to law enforcement authorities, and the three-year retention period.

The Commission's action follows several years of sustained engagement by the European tourism sector, which repeatedly raised concerns with both Spanish and European authorities regarding the proportionality, legality and practical implementation of Royal Decree 933/2021.

Since 2024, the coalition organisations have sent multiple joint letters to the Spanish Ministries of Interior and Tourism, the Spanish Data Protection Agency, the European Commission and other relevant authorities. The sector also submitted detailed legal analyses and participated in public consultations, consistently highlighting potential incompatibilities with EU data protection legislation and the significant burdens imposed on tourism businesses.

The coalition welcomes the Commission's decision to examine the compatibility of the Spanish requirements with EU law. The opening of the infringement procedure reflects concerns that have been consistently raised by stakeholders across the tourism ecosystem.

Throughout its exchanges with authorities, the tourism sector repeatedly warned that the Decree required the collection of excessive amounts of personal and transaction data, created legal uncertainty regarding compliance with EU data protection rules, and imposed disproportionate administrative burdens on travel businesses, accommodation providers and other tourism operators across Europe.

The coalition fully recognises the importance of measures aimed at combating terrorism and organised crime. However, it has consistently maintained that such measures must respect the principles of necessity, proportionality and legal certainty that underpin EU legislation and fundamental rights protections.

The organisations hope that the infringement procedure will lead to a framework that effectively supports security objectives while ensuring compliance with EU law and avoiding unnecessary burdens for travellers and tourism businesses.

The coalition remains committed to engaging constructively with the European Commission, the Spanish authorities and other stakeholders to achieve a practical, proportionate and legally sound solution.

ECTAA represents the interests of 80,000 travel agents and tour operators in Europe, which provide consultancy and sell transport, accommodation, leisure and other tourism services as well as combined products to leisure and business customers. For media inquiries, please contact: Benoît Chantoin bchantoin@ectaa.eu

EFCO&HPA is the representative body at European level, working for all businesses with caravans, tents, motorhomes, chalets and all forms of self-catering accommodation in the park setting. Membership is made up of the national trade associations of 23 European countries. For media inquiries, please contact: Helen Charlesworth h.charlesworth@bhppa.org.uk

European Tourism Association - ETOA is the trade association for tour operators and suppliers in European destinations, from global brands to local independent businesses. The membership includes tour and online operators, intermediaries and wholesalers, European tourist boards, hotels, attractions, technology companies and other tourism and business service providers. For media inquiries, please contact: policy@etoa.org

HOTREC is the voice of the European hospitality sector, representing hotels, restaurants, cafés and bars across Europe. Through 47 national member associations in 36 countries, HOTREC supports a sector comprising more than 2 million businesses, the vast majority of which are SMEs, with around 9 in 10 hospitality establishments being micro-enterprises. Hospitality is an integral part of Europe's tourism ecosystem, supporting jobs, local economies and Europe's attractiveness as a global destination. For media inquiries, please contact: Marta Machado, Deputy Director General, marta.machado@hotrec.eu

RuralTour, the European Federation of Rural Tourism, represents an estimated 500.000 rural micro and nano enterprises and about 5-6.5 million bed places through 28 professional and trade organisations from 25 countries of geographic Europe. For media inquiries, please contact: Klaus Ehrlich general.secretary@ruraltour.eu