



HOTREC applauds the European Parliament's call for effective competition between platforms and the protection of consumers in the "sharing" economy

Brussels – 26 January 2016 – HOTREC, the European umbrella association of hotels, restaurants and cafés, welcomes the recent resolution of the European Parliament "Towards a Digital Single Market Act". The European hospitality industry in its recent communications has been already fully in line with many demands put forward by the MEPs, like achieving effective competition between platforms as well as levelling the playing field with regard to the sharing economy by protecting the rights of consumers.

European hotels and restaurants are faced to important challenges in their daily operation with the rapid concentration of online platforms and the rapid expansion of the so-called "sharing" economy. Oligopolistic structures among Online Travel Agencies restrict competition on the travel market and hinder the proper development of the European tourism industry. The "sharing" economy has brought many new providers to the market, which increases competition to the benefit of consumers, however, most of these players, offering the same services as regulated businesses, often do not have to comply with even basic market requirements thus putting the same consumers' rights at risk and creating unfair competition on the market.

"The European hospitality industry welcomes the European Parliament resolution which is insisting on the safety of consumers also in the so-called "sharing" economy and which is calling on companies to discourage illegal activities" said Ramón Estalella, Chair of the HOTREC "Sharing" Economy Task Force.

"HOTREC also welcomes the support of the MEPs towards the Commission in its analysis on the role of platforms to identify confirmed and well-defined problems and to ensure a consistent approach in solving those issues" added Markus Luthe, Chair of HOTREC's Distribution Task Force.

"HOTREC has been an active contributor to the European discussions around the Digital Single Market and the Sharing economy and will continue to work towards the achievement of a balanced and consumer-friendly market environment also in the times of the digital transformation", concluded Christian de Barrin, CEO of HOTREC.

What is HOTREC?

HOTREC represents the hotel, restaurant and café industry at European level. This industry includes around 1,8 million businesses, of which 99% are small and medium sized enterprises (91% of them micro enterprises, i.e. employing fewer than 10 people). These businesses make up some 59% of industry value added. The hospitality industry provides some 10.2 million jobs in the EU alone. Together with the other tourism industries, the sector is one of the largest industries in Europe. HOTREC brings together 43 national associations representing the sector in 29 different European countries.

For further information: www.hotrec.eu, www.hotrec.eu/bookdirect

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