



## **The European Commission's Digital Single Market Strategy should target fair online presence of SMEs and micro enterprises, says the European hospitality industry**

**Brussels, 6 May 2015** – HOTREC, the trade association of hotel, restaurants, cafes and similar establishments in Europe, welcomes the European Commission's announcement on the Digital Single Market Strategy. One of the most important measures highlighted in today's communication of the Commission is the balancing of powers on the online market, where often a few, extremely powerful actors dictate conditions for the entire market, not necessarily to the full benefit of business and consumers alike. Fair conditions have to be created in order to allow the millions of small and micro enterprises in Europe to be visible online, without having to compromise on their basic entrepreneurial freedoms.

Therefore, HOTREC welcomes the Commission's plan to make a comprehensive assessment of the role of platforms, including the sharing economy. HOTREC sees as a main objective the development of a better online market environment, where businesses have fair chances of being visible at fair conditions, thus making also the consumers benefiting of better choices based on all offers properly accessible online. Transparency of search results, platforms usage of the information and data they acquire and sharing it with their clients/suppliers, the relations between platforms and suppliers are some of the points which need to be addressed urgently, as pointed out by the European Commission as well.

*"HOTREC is looking forward to contribute to this ambitious work of the European Commission. A fair online market environment is crucial for the hospitality industry (mainly composed of small and micro enterprises) to be able to even better develop and offer its core services, thus contributing to the competitiveness of the EU tourism market and allow even more jobs to be created in this sector"* – stressed 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 42 national associations representing the sector in 28 different European countries.

For further information: [www.hotrec.eu](http://www.hotrec.eu)

PRESS CONTACT: Daniel Makay +32(0)2 504 78 42, [daniel.makay@hotrec.eu](mailto:daniel.makay@hotrec.eu)