



The new visa rules will boost growth and jobs in the hospitality sector

Rome, 10 April 2014 – HOTREC welcomed the new visa package during a joint press conference organised together with Vice-President of the European Commission, Antonio Tajani, at the margins of HOTREC's 68th General Assembly. The measures facilitate visa processing activities and encourage consular cooperation. Consequently, the number of tourist arrivals in the Schengen area is expected to increase substantially, while the creation of growth and jobs will be enhanced.

HOTREC applauded the new package on visa, presented by the European Commission on 1st April 2014, and stressed that measures that help to keep Europe as the world number one tourist destination and that help cutting red tape have the full support of the tourism industry.

"Instruments that help the sector to create more jobs and to be more competitive, while maintaining safety and security patterns inside the Schengen area are essential in order to keep Europe an attractive tourist destination for travellers coming from third countries, especially from the BRICS", commented Mr. Kent Nyström, President of HOTREC.

HOTREC especially welcomes the following measures:

- The one year touring visa;
- Online visas;
- Possibility of issuing a temporary visa at the external borders;
- Multiple entry visas;
- Enhanced consular cooperation.
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For these reasons, HOTREC calls now the European Parliament and the Council for the swiftly adoption of the two legislative proposals, so that a smarter visa policy for economic growth can be put in place in all Schengen countries, as soon as possible.

European Commission Vice-President Antonio Tajani, Commissioner for Industry and Entrepreneurship, said: *"The tourism industry has been one of the strongholds of European economy during the economic crisis. It continues to be a sound economic driver for the EU recovery. At a time when international competition is becoming increasingly fierce with a growing number of countries relying on tourism as a factor for growth we have just proposed to simplify visa rules to increase the number of tourists visiting Europe. Thus we will give our tourism industry with its many SMEs a further boost."*

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 27 different European countries.

For further information: www.hotrec.eu

PRESS CONTACT: Marta Machado, Public Affairs Manager, +32(0)2 513 63 23, hotrec@hotrec.eu