



European Commissioner Vella promotes the importance of coastal tourism for growth and jobs during HOTREC's General Assembly

Malta, 20 October 2016 – Today, on the occasion of the 73rd HOTREC General Assembly, Commissioner Vella, responsible for Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, and the European hospitality industry agreed on the importance of tourism to the EU economy and discussed the Commissioner's strategy to step-up European coastal regions' touristic potential in order to boost growth and jobs and help Europe remain the N°1 touristic destination in the world.

Representatives of the hospitality industry from all over Europe stressed to Commissioner Vella the industry's many contributions to the EU economy, e.g. the 10 million direct jobs it provides and recalled that it is one of the few industries which keeps creating thousands of jobs every year. To help SMEs and micro-enterprises providing sustainable and competitive services in the global tourism market, financial incentives are needed, as well as a favourable regulatory framework.

While the Members of HOTREC praised the Commissioner's efforts to promote coastal and maritime tourism, they also called on him to fully integrate their economic and regulatory needs into the EU's environment and maritime affairs policies, in order to keep innovating and even maintaining a high quality of installations despite the seasonality dimension of this type of tourism.

Commissioner Vella presented his actions, e.g. calls for proposals, which will help local tourism businesses implement more competitive and sustainable offers. In addition, he stressed the Commission's support for training and the development of skills, as the objective is to help improve the service and quality that tourists experience in a sector which is still seasonal.

"In order for the blue economy to grow and help boost growth and jobs in the hospitality sector, it is critical to provide business with certainty but also to equip people with the necessary skills, boost innovation and increase our knowledge base. All while preserving our marine environment for generations to come" concluded Commissioner Vella.

What is HOTREC?

HOTREC represents the hotel, restaurant and café industry at European level. The sector counts in total around 1.8 million businesses, being 99,5% small and medium sized enterprises (91% are micro enterprises, i.e. employing less than 10 people). These businesses make up some 60% of value added. The industry provides some 10 million jobs in the EU alone. Together with the other tourism industries, the sector is the 3rd largest industry in Europe. HOTREC brings together 43 national associations representing the interest of this industry in 30 different European countries.

For further information: www.hotrec.eu

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