



HOTREC General Assembly's statement on the decisions taken on 21 April 2015 on the commitments of Booking.com

Luxembourg/Brussels, 24 April 2015. The members of HOTREC, the European umbrella association of hotels, restaurants and cafes, exchanged views at the occasion of HOTREC's 70 General Assembly in Luxembourg and agreed on the following statement on the decisions taken by the French, Italian and Swedish competition authorities on 21 April 2015 regarding the acceptance of Booking.com's commitments to settle those national competition cases on rate parity clauses:

1. HOTREC underlines that parity clauses are anticompetitive.
2. The European hotel industry refuses to be restricted by these commitments in its entrepreneurial freedom to market prices and conditions to offline communication tools (e.g. telephone, telefax).
3. HOTREC regards the decisions as a first but insufficient step.
4. HOTREC is not convinced of the supposed positive effects of the commitments.
5. HOTREC take note that, at the moment, there are now two equally validated approaches at European level to tackle the issue of parity clauses in hotel contracts: The negotiating one as in France, Italy and Sweden and the approach of a total ban of MFN clauses as in Germany.
6. HOTREC members will consider appealing these decisions of the competition authorities.

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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.