



Members of HOTREC Associations ONLY

Key EU developments
and positions of the
hospitality sector

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General Policy Issues

Interview with Mrs. Anna Athanasopoulou, Head of Unit Tourism, Emerging and Creative Industries, European Commission DG Grow



In October 2017, Mrs. Anna Athanasopoulou took on her new position as Head of Unit – Tourism, Emerging and Creative. Mrs. Anna Athanasopoulou has been working for the European Union since 2002 in various culture-related and humanitarian services. Previous to her new role, Mrs. Athanasopoulou was Deputy Head of Unit – Creative Europe where she was in charge of coordinating the Creative Europe program that supports cultural and creative sectors. HOTREC asked Mrs. Anna Athanasopoulou the following questions:

1) As the new DG GROW Head of Unit for Tourism, Emerging and Creative Industries, could you please kindly introduce to us your roadmap for the remaining period of the mandate of the Commission?

I joined the Unit Tourism, Emerging and Creative Industries almost half way through the mandate of the current European Commission. My aspiration is to build on what exists and continue pushing the policy agenda for tourism within the framework of the ten political priorities of the Commission and the support instruments available under the current Multi-annual Financial Framework 2014-2020. Our shared priority with my colleagues is to deliver on commitments by streamlining our action, where necessary, and strengthening the dialogue with tourism stakeholders, the industry and Member States.

The challenges the EU tourism is facing are evolving and our obligation is to monitor them and help the European tourism industry turn these challenges into opportunities. Our scope of competence in the EU is limited, and we are active in supporting the cooperation among Member States and strengthening the competitiveness of European tourism.

We will continue working along the set priority areas of action: 1) enhancing the tourism business environment; 2) boosting digitalization and innovation in tourism; 3) helping tourism businesses to find the professionals they need and to retain talents; and 4) complementing the efforts of the Member States and Regions in promoting Europe as a destination.

At the same time, we will continue to work closely with other Commission departments on policy areas relevant to tourism such as visa policy, the digital single market, consumer protection and circular economy.

Last, new social and market trends such as the collaborative economy, artificial intelligence and automation, as well as rising sustainability concerns, are impacting the tourism industry and we will continue to monitor them as they evolve.

2) With regard to the budget of the next Multi-Annual Financial Period, could you please let us know how do you envisage the budget of tourism and what should it cover according to you?

As you may know, the Commission is currently preparing its proposals for the Multi-Annual Financial Framework of 2021-2027. As previous reflections have already indicated, the next financial period will aim to improve the sustainable impact of EU financing. Therefore future EU financial support will feature more opportunities for blending EU funds and financial instruments, using public-private partnerships and investment, as well as introducing a larger weight of own contribution of project partners. This will enhance the viability and sustainability of the financed projects once the EU financing period is over.

In terms of what future EU financial support should cover, we will only know this once the proposals are adopted, as the Commission's initial proposal, which will be presented in the course of May, will undergo many changes proposed by the Parliament and the Council during the interinstitutional decision-making process.

Nevertheless, the current trend of focusing on large horizontal objectives, such as innovation, circular economy, competitiveness, etc., will mostly remain. In addition, the specific objectives of the future EU funds, programmes and financial instruments are still to be defined. We are closely involved in the preparation of these proposals and are doing our best to make sure that the interests of the EU tourism industry are not disregarded.

3) As per Eurostat, the European hospitality industry still represents 80% of the total EU tourism workforce. How could the European Commission help sustain the 1.8 million enterprises of the sector?

European tourism is a labour-intensive sector its global competitiveness is closely linked with the quality of the human capital it employs. This is why tourism is one of the sectors selected for the Blueprint for sectorial cooperation in skills – a new initiative seeking to tackle the skills mismatch and career development in tourism and set out a strategic and structured approach which can be rolled out onto the regional and national level.

When it comes to support to entrepreneurship and businesses, several horizontal initiatives of the Commission benefit also the tourism sector. Just to mention a few examples, the Capital Markets Union is designed to make it easier for businesses to get finance through the markets. The Start-Up-Scale-up Initiative supports market access and growth of new businesses, including those in the tourism sector. The SME window of the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI) provides loans, guarantees and equity payment for risky projects, including in the area of tourism. The recently launched Pan-European Venture Capital Funds-of-Funds programme (VentureEU) seeks to boost investment in innovative start-up and scale-up companies across Europe.

In addition, we develop actions tailor-made to tourism businesses seeking to boost their competitiveness and access to key markets in third countries. The support for B2B matchmaking of tourism businesses with Chinese partners in the context of the 2018 EU-China Tourism Year and the support available under Europe Enterprise Network are two concrete examples.

Allow me also to mention our projects supporting cross-border and cross-sectorial cooperation or promoting the EU as a global destination which, ultimately, benefit the tourism industry and its businesses.

However, it is important to underline that the Commission can only create the right framework for businesses to flourish.

EU sectorial associations and federations, such as HOTREC have a key role to play in this. They have the power to act as a liaison between the industry and the EU, to communicate on the needs of the sector and at the same time to inform them about the opportunities at EU level and mobilise the sector. It is up to them to seize the opportunities offered. It is up to the tourism industry to take the lead and I am confident that they can succeed.



Collaborative Economy

UK Parliament investigating into challenges of the 'collaborative' economy

On 21 March 2018, the UK Tourism All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) issued an interim report entitled 'The Sharing Economy: Making Benefits while Reducing Adverse Outcomes', conducting an inquiry into the impact of the sharing economy on the UK tourism industry. The final report is to be set up by May 2018.

In this interim report the APPG stresses that while it supports diversity in the marketplace, it is important to ensure that new distribution models are held to the same standards as traditional models, including a level playing field for businesses. The report acknowledges the opportunities for tourism growth, however reminds that this growth must not be at the expense of consumer safety.

HOTREC POSITION:

- *HOTREC welcomes the UK Parliament action looking not only at the benefits, but also the challenges Collaborative type of activities are implying.*
- *HOTREC considers that, as investigated by the report as well, the registration of the activity is the first and the key step to better enforce existing legislation and to have the extent of short term rentals under control, e.g. in view of increasing housing problems.*

Consumer Affairs

Commission proposal on the revision of the EU consumer law imposes transparency obligations on platforms



On 11 April 2018, the European Commission released its proposals for a targeted revision of the EU consumer law. The proposal, in the form of amendments made to various existing Directives, directly targets online platforms' current Business-to-Consumer (B2C) practices and proposes to impose several transparency obligations. In particular, the Commission proposes to make mandatory for online platforms acting as an online market place to inform consumers:

If an offer is made by a trader or not;

- If they are protected by EU laws or not when choosing an offer;
- Which trader is responsible for the contact in case something goes wrong;
- About the criteria used for determining the ranking of offers.

The Commission proposal also includes other aspects, such as the creation of a new remedy for consumers victim of unfair commercial practices, the inclusion into the scope of the Consumer Rights Directive (CRD) of free digital services, or new enforcement possibilities for Member States which include the possibility to charge a dissuasive fine (up to 4% of the trader's turnover) on trader for breaches of consumer law on a large scale.



NEXT STEPS:

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The European Parliament and Council will have to adopt the Commission proposal through the ordinary legislative procedure. The European Parliament is expected to start working quickly on this file in order to complete the procedure before the June 2019 European elections.

HOTREC POSITION:

- *HOTREC strongly welcomes the Commission's proposal to introduce transparency requirements for online market places. Very often, consumers do not have any idea about what criteria are behind rankings, who is behind an offer and whether they are protected by consumer laws when choosing an offer. This situation creates an un-healthy situation which benefits to rogue traders only. These proposals from the Commission will help tackling this issue and building trust in online markets.*
- *HOTREC particularly applauds the provisions which makes mandatory for collaborative economy platforms to identify if an offer is made by a trader or not. This will bring fairness and transparency to collaborative economy platforms.*
- *HOTREC calls on the institutions to be cautious about the conditions for the inclusion of free digital services into the scope of the CRD. In the hospitality sector, many digital apps and services are now being developed to facilitate the performance of the main hospitality service. As the hospitality services are exempt from the CRD's right of withdrawal, these complementary digital hospitality services shall therefore also benefit from this exemption.*

Food

Food waste: European Parliament to definitively adopt the revised waste Directive



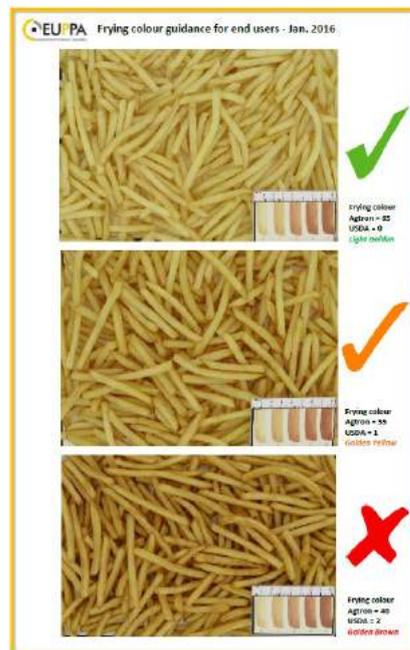
On 18 April 2018, the European Parliament will definitively approve the revision of the Waste Framework Directive. This follows an earlier agreement reached in trilogue in December 2017 between the Council and the European Parliament. The final Directive foresees that a food waste reduction target of 50% by 2030 would not be binding but aspirational. The agreement also contains a review clause for 2024 about the nature of the targets (aspirational vs. binding).

HOTREC POSITION:

- *The hospitality industry is a small waster compared to other segments of the food chain (food services represent 12% of food waste in Europe including hospitality, party catering, contract catering, canteens, etc.), but is nonetheless acting in a responsible manner by promoting best practices to reduce food waste;*
- *HOTREC welcomes the revised Directive, as it opts for aspirational food waste reduction targets, therefore leaving the necessary flexibility to adapt to national/local circumstances;*



Stakeholder consultation on the draft EU guidance on the new Acrylamide Regulation ⁷



As the new Commission Regulation on establishing mitigation measures and benchmark levels for the reduction of the presence of acrylamide in food entered into force on 11 April 2018, the Commission and the Member States have worked in the last months on the drafting of an EU guidance document to help national authorities and food businesses implementing the new Regulation. On 2 April 2018, the European Commission circulated for consultation until 13 April 2018 a draft of the EU guidance document in order to gather feedback from interested stakeholders. The feedback will be used to propose as soon as possible a final version of the guidance document for adoption by the Member States.

Besides, the European Commission also informed that, as prescribed by the new acrylamide Regulation, discussions between the Commission and the Member States will be launched to consider the pros and cons about the introduction of binding maximum levels of acrylamide in the future.

NEXT STEPS:

Soon after the closure of the stakeholder consultation, the European Commission will propose to adopt the guidance document.

HOTREC POSITION:

- *Given the potentially carcinogenic effect of acrylamide, HOTREC took its responsibility by promoting practical mitigation measures for the restaurant sector, so as to diminish acrylamide levels in food served by restaurants, without burdening them un-necessarily.*
- *HOTREC supports the benchmark level approach of the Regulation and participated to the stakeholder consultation in order to improve the draft guidelines by bringing more clarity.*
- *HOTREC considers that any future introduction of binding maximum levels would be inappropriate and pre-mature, as the new Commission Regulation entered into force on 11 April 2018. The impact of this new Regulation on overall acrylamide levels should first be assessed before any other legislative steps is taken.*

Social Affairs

Social Fairness package released!



On 13 March 2018, the European Commission released the Social Fairness Package, comprising:

- A Council Recommendation on access to social protection for workers and the self-employed ([COM\(2018\)132 final](#)) - non-legislative document;
- A proposal of Regulation to establish an European Labour Authority (legislative document) – ([COM \(2018\) 131final](#)).

The proposal of Council Recommendation aims that all workers (temporary, short-term, part-time, on-demand, casual work) and the self-employed are protected in social terms. Moreover, all workers' rights should be preserved and should be transferable. The Recommendation proposes that all workers and the self-employed:

- Can adhere to corresponding social security systems (closing formal coverage gaps);
- Can build up and claim adequate entitlements (adequate effective coverage);
- Can easily transfer social security entitlements;
- Have transparent information about their social security entitlements and obligations.

The social security branches foreseen in the Recommendation include unemployment benefits, sickness and healthcare benefits, maternity and equivalent paternity benefits; invalidity benefits; old-age benefits, including pensions; benefits in respect of accidents at work and occupational diseases.

The European Labour Authority will aim at: facilitating information for individuals and employers about their rights and obligations in the area of mobility and social security coordination; support coordination between national authorities in cross-border enforcement of EU Law; facilitate solutions in cases of disputes between national authorities or in case of cross-border labour market disruptions.

NEXT STEPS:

The Council will decide on the final text of the Council Recommendation.

The Regulation will be decided by the European Parliament and the Council through the ordinary legislative procedure.

HOTREC POSITION:

- *With regard to social protection coverage, HOTREC defends that the subsidiarity principle should prevail. National legislation varies considerable from country to country, reflecting the different specificities, the legal systems and the levels of economic development. In this sense, HOTREC very much welcomes that the Commission proposal is not binding;*
- *With regard to formal coverage, done on a mandatory basis, HOTREC is of the opinion that workers/self-employed will not be able to use his/her free willingness to decide whether or not to have access to social protection;*
- *It is to note that the self-employed are not covered by an employment relationship but by a business relationship;*
- *HOTREC agrees that social protection systems are transparent, so that people are well-informed about their entitlements;*
- *HOTREC would recommend to map existing transferable systems at national level and allow Member States who already foresee their own schemes, to continue developing their systems;*
- *HOTREC welcomes the European Labour Authority Agency but hopes that this body will not undermine the participation of social partners in bodies such as the European Platform of Undeclared Work, which proved to be a very positive framework of exchange of best practices so far.*

European Framework for quality and effective apprenticeships approved! 9



On 15 March 2018, the Employment Council approved a Recommendation on a European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships (6779/2018).

The recommendation foresees different criteria for learning and working conditions, including the following:

- A written agreement should be concluded to define the rights and obligations of the apprentice, the employer and, where appropriate, of the vocational education and training institution within a clear and consistent regulatory framework;
- There should be clear results leading to recognised qualifications;
- Apprentices should be paid or otherwise compensated;
- Apprentices should be entitled to social protection;
- Career guidance, mentoring and learner support should be provided to apprentices both before and during the apprenticeship in order to ensure a successful outcome;
- Pedagogical support should be provided to teachers, trainers and mentors, especially in micro-, small and medium-sized companies.

HOTREC POSITION:

- *HOTREC welcomes the Council Recommendation;*
- *Companies should be able to profit from the investments done on the apprenticeships. Moreover, the apprenticeships should respond to the skills' needs of the employers;*
- *HOTREC welcomes the fact that mobility is not a compulsory criteria per se. Transnational mobility should be progressively promoted.*

Agreement reached Posting of Workers Directive!

On 19 March 2018, the European Parliament and the Council of the EU reached a final agreement on the "posted of workers" Directive. The main outcome is the following:

- **Remuneration:** principle of the same pay for the same work at the same workplace. Posted workers will benefit from the same rules as local workers from day 1;
- **Allowances:** expenses done for travel, board and lodging are to be seen separately from remuneration, paid by the employer, under the rules of the country of origin;
- The mandatory elements that constitute remuneration in a Member State must be available on a single national website;
- **Temporary posting:** for example, when a company in Member State (A) posts a worker from country (B) to a host country (C), it means that the employer is the company of state A and that the country of posting is state C;
- **Subcontracting:** specific legislation will be presented by the Commission within 5 years' time.

NEXT STEPS:

Final text to be published in the Official Journal.

Tourism

Revision of Visa Code is out



On 14 March 2018, the European Commission issued the new proposal with regard to the revision of the Visa Code (COM(2018)252 final).

The content can be resumed in the following points:

- Harmonised rules will apply to multiple-entry visas to reduce visa shopping and reduce costs to Member States and frequent travellers;
- More flexible procedures to apply to the visa: e.g. the decision-making will be reduced from 15 to 10 days;
- Short-term visas will be issued at the border;
- Increase of the visa fee from €60 to €80;
- Stricter mechanism for processing visas when partner country does not cooperate sufficiently on the readmission of irregular migrants, included travellers who overstayed.

NEXT STEPS:

The Council and the European Parliament to decide on the text through the ordinary legislative procedure.

HOTREC POSITION:

- *HOTREC welcomes the facilitation on administrative procedures, the fact that the application form can be signed electronically; the fact that the application form should be available in the official language of the Member States, for which the visa is requested, and for the host state; that Member States can temporarily allow the lodge of a visa application at a specific land or sea-border crossing point;*
- *Nevertheless, HOTREC is against the visa fee increase and the possibility that it is revised every 2 years – Member States costs for processing a visa stand in no relation to the revenue they stand to gain from inbound travel and tourism. Visa application processing capacity should be treated as an investment;*
- *Online visa applications are still only a possibility for the future – for the moment the person still needs to appear in person to get the fingerprints collected;*
- *The concept of multiple entry visas is too restrict – it would only apply to business people and not for tourists;*
- *It should be referred in Annex/A/3/a that more flexibility in supporting documents should be provided: visa applicants should either provide proof of accommodation or sufficient means to cover the accommodation;*
- *The concept of multiple entry visas are too strict – it will be difficult that tourists will benefit from it;*
- *HOTREC regrets that promotion of consular cooperation is not a priority.*



Trilogue negotiations on ETIAS resumed!

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On 12 December 2017, a political agreement has been established between the European Parliament and the Council on the ETIAS – Regulation establishing a European Travel and Authorisation system (2016/0357/COD). The provisional agreement counts with the following points:

- The price for the authorisation has been set at €7;
- Applications can be done online;
- The travel authorisation fee shall be waived for children applicants under eighteen years or above seventy years of age at the time of the application;
- The application file may be stored in the ETIAS Central System for an additional period of no more than three years after the end of the period of validity of the travel authorisation only where, following a request for consent, the applicant freely and explicitly consents by means of an electronically signed declaration.

The trilogue negotiations are still on-going to finalise the entire text.

HOTREC POSITION:

- *HOTREC supports an efficient, simple, inexpensive and proportionate travel authorisation system, which improves tourists experiences when visiting the EU and does not hamper the operations of tourism enterprises;*
- *HOTREC defends a lower fee to pay for the authorisation and welcomes the facilitation provided to children and to the elderly.*

Meeting of the Manifesto at the European Parliament in presence of UNTWO new Secretary General



On 28th February 2018, Mr. István Ujhelyi, Member of the European Parliament, Vice-Chair of the Committee for Transport and Tourism and Chair of Tourism Task Force organised a Tourism Manifesto Meeting during which tourism stakeholders had the opportunity to meet Mr. Zurab Pololikashvili, the new Secretary-General of World Tourism Organization (UNTWO).

During this meeting, Mr. Pololikashvili highlighted the need to enhance "integration, connectivity and technology in order to maximise the role of tourism in creating jobs and stimulating growth in the EU".

Mr. Christian de Barrin, CEO of HOTREC attended this meeting as a speaker and a Member of the Steering Committee of the Manifesto. The CEO highlighted the three priorities to boost European competitiveness in the hospitality sector: the need to secure the application of low VAT rates on tourism services, a better regulation to facilitate entrepreneurship in the hospitality industry and the importance of improving visa facilitation for tourists. These measures shall boost Europe's competitiveness and the competitiveness of its 2 million tourism businesses.

Accessibility

Triologue negotiations on the European Accessibility Act started

On 5 March 2018, the Trialogues on the European Accessibility Act between the European Institutions were launched in order to come to an agreement on the text of this future Directive.

This piece of future legislation aims at improving the life of people with disabilities in different areas of the daily life, which are listed in the scope of the draft text. While the Council and the European Commission did not propose to include tourism and hospitality services in the scope, similarly to several other products and services making part of people's daily life, the European Parliament proposed to do so. E-commerce, the selling of goods and services, is already part of the draft supported by all institutions, obliging all sellers to make contact to their offer accessible.

It will need to be seen, how much the Institutions will consider the inclusion of tourism in the scope, despite Article 195 of the Treaty, which excludes the harmonisation of national legislation in the field of tourism.

NEXT STEPS:

The Trialogues are conducted under the Bulgarian EU Presidency and might be concluded by end of June 2018.

HOTREC POSITION:

- *The hospitality industry values the importance of accessible tourism and the need for people with special needs. The sector is already well in the process across Europe of more and more adapting its offer to persons with specific needs.*
- *HOTREC considers, that for such a highly fragmented industry like the hospitality industry (especially compared to other sectors in the current scope), a one-size-fits-all European approach is too far reaching and does not take into account the specific national circumstances with regard to the numerous small enterprises of the sector.*
- *Thus, HOTREC proposes not to include tourism/hospitality services in the scope of the future Directive and to let subsidiarity prevail, where national actions are already ensuring gradual adaptation of tourism and hospitality facilities for special needs.*

Health

Alcohol producers present self-regulatory measures on alcohol labelling



On 12th March 2018, the alcohol producers presented their self-regulatory proposal (on ingredients and nutrition declaration). This proposal is the follow-up of a report published by the Commission in March 2017.

The Commitment consists essentially on the following points:

- Alcoholic beverages are currently exempted from providing ingredients and nutrition information. The European alcoholic beverages sectors are committing to providing the nutrition and ingredients information of their products in tailored and meaningful ways;
- The nutrition and ingredients information of the products will be provided to consumers off-label and/or on label;
- Information provided off-label will be easily accessible from the label itself, either by a web-link, a QR code, a bar code or through other direct means using smart technologies;
- To fulfil this commitment, the sectors will use traditional and/or innovative tools and may develop comprehensive modern information systems to provide useful information to consumers;
- Food business operators responsible for the food information will decide how to display the information;
- The information, while abiding to the legal framework laid down in EU or national legislation, will be provided in line with the principles set in the joint proposal ([link](#)) and the sectors' annexes;
- Alcohol producers will report on implementation in March 2021. In the meantime, sectors will report on the progress of their commitments, in accordance with the information provided in the governance section and the sector annexes.

NEXT STEPS:

The European Commission will analyse the proposal. If the approach is considered unsatisfactory, then an impact assessment would be launched.

HOTREC POSITION:

- *HOTREC welcomes the self-regulatory approach presented by the alcohol producers. It shows their willingness in keeping consumers informed while taking into account the different sectors characteristics (beer, cider, spirits and wine);*
- *The commitment focuses on pre-packed food, meaning that HOTREC is an observer in the process, as hospitality businesses do not produce themselves pre-packed alcoholic food/drinks. In fact, it is up to the alcohol producers to decide how to transmit the information to the consumer;*
- *What is important is that clear information is provided or referred to through one mean or another on the packs/bottles (e.g. information on label or label reference to website/QR code, bar code etc.).*



Sustainability

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Revised Directive on energy efficiency of buildings to be adopted by the European Parliament



On 17 April 2018, the European Parliament is expected to adopt in plenary session the trilogue agreement on the revision of the Directive on the energy performance of building. This follows a first green light given by the European Parliament's ITRE (Industry, Research and Energy) which endorsed the deal earlier in 2018. The agreement foresees the mandatory installation of at least one recharging point for electric cars in all new non-residential buildings and non-residential buildings

undergoing major renovations (which include either the car park or the building's electric infrastructure) which have more than 10 parking spaces.

Moreover, Member States will have the obligation by 1 January 2025 to set-up requirements for the installation of a minimum number of recharging points in all non-residential buildings with more than 20 parking spaces. Finally, Member States will have the option to exempt from the above requirements buildings owned or occupied by SMEs.

NEXT STEPS:

Following the European Parliament plenary vote, the revised Directive will definitively be adopted by the Council (around May or June 2018). Once approved, Member States will be given 20 months to transpose the amendments to the Directive into national legislation.

Taxation

European Commission proposes rules for fair taxation of the digital economy

On 21 March 2018, the European Commission proposed a package regarding the fair taxation of the activities in the digital economy. The 2 legislative proposals put forward shall ensure that online platforms, including 'collaborative' economy related platforms and online market places pay taxes in Europe, which correspond to the value created in the different European markets they are operating in.

One of the 2 legislative proposals aim at offering a short term solution, to avoid that Member States adopt different legislation on the topic, thus fragmenting legislation regarding taxation regimes on digital activities across Europe. In this short term solution, a 3% tax rate is proposed.

The second proposal targets the a durable solution, enabling Member States to tax profits generated on their territories even in the case when digital companies have no physical presence in the given country. The tax would apply to activities related to user data, online marketplaces, collaborative economy platforms, and also other digital services like streaming services.

NEXT STEPS:

The proposals will be discussed and have to be adopted by unanimity in the Council, the European Parliament will give an opinion on the proposals.

HOTREC POSITION:

- *HOTREC welcomes the proposals from the European Commission, as the current unrealistic taxation regime regarding especially online platforms contribute to the oligopolisation of such online markets.*
- *Fair and activity based taxation rules should allow for a more balanced competition on online markets, motivating start-up companies to bring innovation and diversity to the digital markets.*

Internal Market

Commission proposes to decrease intra-EU payment costs and to make consumers aware of currency conversions costs



On 28 March 2018, the European Commission proposed to amend the existing EU Directive “on cross-border payments in the Union and currency conversion charges” in order to decrease the costs of cross-border payments in euro across the EU and to raise transparency about the costs of currency conversions for consumers.

According to the Commission proposal, all intra-EU cross-border payments in euro outside the euro area will now be priced the same as domestic payments in the local official currency, therefore extending the benefit of the existing Directive for intra-Eurozone payments to all intra-EU payments in Euro.

Moreover, the Commission proposes to make mandatory for businesses to inform consumers about the costs of currency-conversions before making a payment (e.g. ATM withdrawal, payments online, credit card payments, etc.)

The Commission proposal is available here: [link](#)

NEXT STEPS:

The European Parliament and Council will have to adopt the Commission proposal through the ordinary legislative procedure. The European Parliament is expected to start working quickly on this file in order to complete the procedure before the June 2019 European elections. A brief stakeholder consultation is open until 30 May 2018, in order to gather initial feedback on the Commission proposal.

Statistics

Recent statistics from Eurostat

Eurostat published an e-brochure entitled ‘[Digital economy and society in the EU](#)’. This publication includes inter alia a section on e-commerce but also gives an insight into what the internet is used for by people and businesses.

Next Meetings and General Assemblies

In the coming months, HOTREC will organise and/or participate to the following meetings:

- 23 April 2018 (Brussels, Belgium): Joint meeting of the Member States and stakeholders on front-of-pack nutrition labelling
- 25 April 2018 (Brussels, Belgium): High Level Conference on Shaping Our Digital Future (European Parliament)
- 26-27 April 2018 (Vienna, Austria): HOTREC 76th General Assembly
- 30 April 2018 (Lausanne, Switzerland): Window to the Future Conference (Ecole Hôtelière de Lausanne)
- 8-11 May 2018 (Buenos Aires, Argentina): ISO TC 228 meetings on tourism and related activities
- 17 May 2018 (Bucharest, Romania): High Level Conference “Connecting Europe through Innovation”
- 24 May 2018 (Vilnius, Lithuania): EU Platform on food losses and food waste
- 1 June 2018 (Luxembourg city, Luxembourg): Plenary meeting of the EU platform for action on diet, physical activity and health
- 18-19 October 2018 (Krakow, Poland): HOTREC 77th General Assembly



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