

Live from Brussels Newsletter

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Members of HOTREC National Associations only

Key EU developments
and positions of the
hospitality sector

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Interview with MEP Anneleen Van Bossuyt, Chair of the Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection (IMCO)



Ms. Anneleen Van Bossuyt is a Member of the European Parliament since 2015 and is the Chair of the Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection (IMCO) since 2017.

HOTREC asked MEP Van Bossuyt to share her views on the new proposal for a regulation to increase fairness and transparency for online platforms and on the Commission's New Deal for Consumers.

1) The European Commission recently published a proposal for a Regulation to make the relationship between online intermediaries and businesses more fair and transparent. Small and micro-enterprises which compose more than 90% of the 1.9 million businesses of the hospitality sector, are very much dependant on platforms which two major players rule nearly 90% of the market. Do you see this proposal as a tool to limit the dominant power of some online platforms, thus allowing more room for manoeuvre for businesses to innovate and grow? How do you see the role of the European Parliament to achieve a Digital Single Market which fosters jobs and growth, and makes the platform economy a true benefit to society?

The new Regulation is a step in the right direction to give smaller players the tools they need to enforce their rights against the bigger players. I believe that a light touch legislation approach is the best way. We should give the sector the opportunity to develop their own rules and procedures. Legislators should only intervene if there is no viable solution.

I am not convinced these new rules will immediately foster new innovation. In such a complex online market, these rules will rather provide highly necessary legal certainty. In case something goes wrong, market players should have a clear manual on what to do and how to contact the bigger players in order to solve the problem.

2) The European Commission's new deal for consumers proposed on 11 April intends to introduce mandatory transparency requirements for online platforms (i.e. information on whether an offer is made by a trader and if consumer law apply, information on criteria used for rankings online to identify paid-for rankings, etc.) and to strengthen penalties and remedies for major breaches of consumer law by traders in several Member States. What is your position on these aspects of the Commission's New Deal for Consumers?

In the first place we should provide clarity for consumers about how the results of their searches are provided on the websites of online platforms. If it considers commercial advertisements, such as paid advertisements that appear at the top of search results, they should be clearly marked but in my view commercial relationships should not be prevented.

Factors that affect the prominence of one result over another should be disclosed.

However, I believe it is sufficient to inform the consumer of what those factors may be. Any attempt to unlock the "secret formula" through mandatory disclosures of algorithms under the guise of better consumer information is misguided. Search results are already the subject of gaming and it would only aid those who wish to circumvent negative consumer reviews or ratings if the other levers of a ranking system were disclosed.

We should also bear in mind that consumers are being equipped more and more with the tools to judge the value of the product they purchase. Consumers are used to reading multiple reviews before a purchase.

Uploads like consumer photos or videos give a truer picture than glossy travel brochures did in the past. It is important therefore to examine the issue more broadly to determine whether there is real consumer harm.

3) How do you see IMCO's priorities for the period until the European elections? Are the above 2 proposals among the priority files, on which the EP will reach an agreement with the Council by spring 2019? And how the next mandate shall pursue the European Parliament's efforts to develop the Digital Single Market?

The Internal Market Committee currently has a very busy agenda, dealing with a lot of important dossiers, such as the contract files, the accessibility act, cybersecurity, the goods package and many more. For me it is most essential to conclude these files as soon as possible in order to provide a clear framework for businesses to operate in and to offer consumers a stronger and clearer set of rights.

Our Committee has been very curious to see what the Commission would come up with in the long-awaited proposal on Platforms and the New Deal for Consumers. I can assure you that both will definitely be priority files because they tackle important issues that need to be discussed in the framework of the Digital Single Market.

The fast pace at which digitalisation is moving and the tremendous speed of technological developments makes it difficult to predict what we will be dealing with in the future. Therefore it is very important to strive for a positive digital agenda, fit for a digital age. One of my main goals is to keep in mind the principles of better regulation: only common European rules where needed, and fact based. Services and better enforcement of single market rules are definitely two areas where I believe a lot of progress can still be made in the next mandate.

Digital Issues

Commission proposes Regulation for more fairness and transparency in platform to business relations



On 26 April 2018, the European Commission proposed a [draft Regulation](#) promoting fairness and transparency in online intermediated services and search engines. With this proposal the Commission ascertains the existing imbalance on the market between online platforms and businesses offering their products and services on such online marketplaces.

The Commission's proposal tackles several aspects of platform to business relations, including:

- Terms and conditions;
- Suspensions and terminations;
- Rankings;
- Access to data;
- Restrictions to offer different conditions;
- Dispute resolution.



In its proposal, the European Commission recognises, that the current EU regulatory framework may not be effective in preventing current unfair practices of platforms, nor providing effective redress. Once adopted, the Regulation will be directly applicable across the EU.

In order to observe the implementation of the Regulation as well as the further market developments, a European Observatory has been set-up. The Observatory will regularly report to the European Commission and its findings will be taken into account upon the regular evaluation of the proposed Regulation.

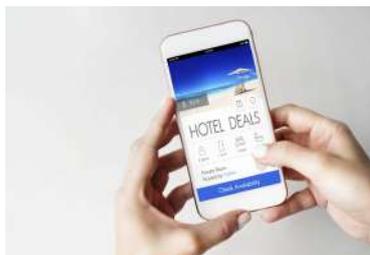
NEXT STEPS:

The European Parliament and the Council will have to discuss and adopt the proposal.

HOTREC POSITION:

- *HOTREC considers that the current Commission proposal is a good step in the right direction, providing for fairer online market conditions for the hundreds of thousands of mainly small hospitality businesses across Europe;*
- *HOTREC has proposed several amendments to the proposal, among which calling for a ban of parity clauses, which are detrimental both for businesses as well as consumers. Access to certain key data, as well as tackling all types of restrictions applied vis-à-vis business users by the platforms are other cornerstones of HOTREC's proposals.*

Hotels' dependency on online platforms increasing



On 18 April 2018, HOTREC unveiled the first results of its biennial [study on the European hotel distribution market](#). The leading Online Travel Agent (OTA) in the hotel booking market increased its dominance and occupies 2/3 of this market segment. The study was conducted together with the University of Applied Sciences of Western Switzerland Valais (HEV-SO Valais-Wallis).

Based on the observations from over 3 400 hotels across Europe, it can be said that the dependency of hotels on online intermediated services has further increased in the past two years. 26,1% of hotel room bookings are done via OTAs, with three platforms controlling 92% of this market segment. The two biggest ones (Booking.com and Expedia) are increasing their dominance, while the third player (HRS) continues losing ground.

The study also asked hoteliers about their relations with OTAs. 50% of hoteliers said feeling pressured by such platforms to accept terms and conditions which the hotels would otherwise voluntarily not offer (e.g. regarding cancellation policy). Furthermore, 6 out of 10 hotels reported having disputes with OTAs. 70% of these hotels consider that there is not a fair and effective solution to the disagreements. In both cases, small and independent hotels have more problems compared to bigger hotels or hotel chains.

HOTREC POSITION:

- *HOTREC considers its views confirmed that the online distribution market is moving more and more towards oligopolistic or even monopolistic structures;*
- *Also in the light of the results of this study, the proposed Regulation of the European Commission has been long awaited, in order to bring more fairness and transparency in such one-sided markets.*

HOTREC contributes to high-level conference 'Connecting Europe through Innovation' organised by MEP Claudia Tapardel



On 17 May 2018 the second edition of the high-level conference '**Connecting Europe through Innovation**' took place, which was organised in Bucharest (Romania) by MEP Claudia Tapardel. The goal of the event was to discuss the contribution of technology to improve tourism services and transport in the digital age in two panels: '*A Competitive and Smart Connected Europe*' and '*Empowering European Tourism SMEs*'.

Speakers included high level representatives from European institutions such as Commissioner Elżbieta Bieńkowska and MEP István Ujhelyi and from Romanian government such as Prime Minister, Ms. Viorica Dăncilă. Many tourism stakeholders were represented as well.

HOTREC CEO, Mr. Christian de Barrin, contributed to the second panel on '*Empowering European Tourism SMEs*'. Mr. de Barrin recognised that SMEs benefit from digitalisation such as access to international markets through online intermediaries but also pointed out that SMEs are highly affected by the drawbacks of digitalisation. For instance, SMEs depend more and more on Online Travel Agencies, as they are often forced to accept terms and conditions which they would not voluntarily accept (e.g.: prohibition to offer different conditions on SMEs own distribution channels). Consumers also benefit from digitalisation in travel, however due to the lack of transparency of platforms and unfair practices, consumers are often misled and rights cannot be enforced.

This is the reason why the European hospitality industry welcomes the efforts the European Commission is making to promote more fairness and transparency in platform to business relations, as well as the revision of the Consumer law and will support the European Parliament and the Council to further enhance the proposed legislations.

All in all, tourism SMEs can only develop and operate properly in the market, if rules are clear and comparable for all business type of activities in the sector. Not needing to fight unfair competition would release further resources for innovation and enhancing the competitiveness of the tourism industry in Europe.

Data Protection

You have the right to control your personal data!

As you might be aware of, on 25 May 2018, the General Data Protection Regulation became directly applicable in all Member States. Because we are an European association, our core business activities include the dissemination of our positions, newsletters, proposal of amendments to the EU institutions and a vast range of stakeholders.

If you would like to stop receiving our news or in case you would like to update your contacts, please send an e-mail to Guillaume Brouillet (Guillaume.Brouillet@hotrec.eu) and we will take care of your request accordingly.

The editorial team

SMEs call for grace period of one year



From 25 May 2018 the General Data Protection Regulation became directly applicable in all EU Member States. The Regulation aims to strengthen privacy rights and boost Europe's digital economy.

Companies will need to comply with the following main principles:

- Fair, lawful and transparent processing; data minimisation (limited to what is necessary); purpose limitation; accuracy; accountability; data security and data retention period;
- Data can be processed under consent; a contract; a legitimate interest; a legal obligation or if national legislation allows;
- Data subjects (clients) have the right to be informed; right to access the data processed; right to be forgotten (data should be erased when no longer necessary); right to object; right of data portability (if data is processed under consent or contract);
- Controllers should comply with the risk based approach, taking into account the nature, scope and context of the data processing;

Non-compliance with the Regulation might be subject to administrative fines up to 20 000 EUR, or in case of an enterprise up to 4% of the total worldwide turnover of the preceding final year.

HOTREC POSITION:

According to HOTREC's interpretation, hotels and restaurants, in general:

- *Do not need a Data Protection Officer - as their core business is not data processing;*
- *Can develop direct market with former clients, if they comply with data minimisation principle and the principle of the right to object, and in case they process data under a legitimate interest. HOTREC is also of the opinion that the definition of "former client" should be a reasonable one;*
- *Do not need to develop impact assessments and prior consultations, unless there is a high risk for the rights and freedoms of the individuals;*
- *HOTREC advises its national associations to continue putting forward HOTREC's guidelines to the respective National Data Protection Authorities;*
- *HOTREC calls for a grace period of one year for SMEs, where fines would not be imposed by implementing authorities and where National Data Protection Authorities to invest in support and advice of SMEs.*

Collaborative Economy

Home restaurants: An increasing concern on the food business market

— SHEDDING LIGHT ON THE 'MEAL-SHARING' PLATFORM ECONOMY

Proposals to level the playing field with the food sector



On 30 May 2018, HOTREC, together with Toposophy, published a [study on the phenomenon of meal-sharing and in particular 'home restaurants'](#).

Home restaurants are another territory of the so-called 'collaborative' economy, where operating conditions are not clear and allow for uncertainty and distortion of competition on the food market.

The current operational system of this increasing segment should give grounds for concerns for policy makers across Europe, especially following the lessons learnt from the recent development of tourist short term rentals.

Several platforms offer the services of home restaurants, where consumers are usually not protected by consumer or food hygiene related rules. Several issues should give concerns and ground for intervention for policy makers, including:

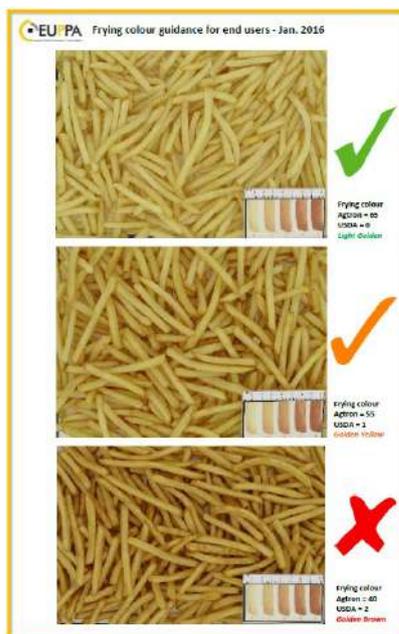
- Food safety;
- Licencing on serving alcohol;
- Liability;
- Taxation;
- Enforcement.

HOTREC POSITION:

- *In this study, HOTREC, besides providing a background to this market, proposes 5 key pillars to fostering a responsible and fair 'collaborative' economy in the home restaurant sector. The implementation of these proposals should ensure fair market conditions among the various providers of food services as well as appropriate protection of public health.*
- *As more and more providers are appearing on the market, policy makers shall consider the impacts and take the necessary measures, in order to be able to implement solutions in a timely manner, before the issues around the phenomenon are getting bigger and thus more difficult to tackle.*

Food

EU guidance on the new Acrylamide Regulation adopted



On 11 June 2018, the Commission and the Member States adopted an EU guidance document on the new Commission Regulation establishing mitigation measures and benchmark levels for the reduction of the presence of acrylamide in food. This guidance document, which was consulted with stakeholders, clarifies the most important aspects of the Regulation which entered into force last 11 April.

The EU guidance clarifies the following aspects:

- It confirms that retailers have to apply the lighter regime of annex II-A of the Regulation, while Annex II-B applies to large chains working with standard operations and producing standardised food;
- It confirms that the use of colour guides referred to in the Regulation are not mandatory as such, but are a strong recommendation to help achieving lower acrylamide levels;

- It explains that the benchmark levels are only a tool to check the effectiveness of mitigations measures, meaning that exceeding the benchmark does not make in itself the food unsafe and does not mean in itself a violation of the Regulation;
- It confirms that the sampling obligations for large chains working with standard operations and producing standardised food can be performed at central level;
- It confirms the absence of documentation obligations for retail and hospitality establishments not part of a large centrally-supplied chain serving standardised food.

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 which is largely based on its own proposal and welcomes the EU guidance document, as it confirms HOTREC's interpretation of the new Regulation and clarifies the main obligations of restaurants;*
- *HOTREC considers that any future introduction of binding maximum levels would be inappropriate and pre-mature, as the new Commission Regulation only enters 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.*

Plenary meeting of the EU Platform for Action on Diet, Physical Activity & Health focuses on food reformulation



On 1 June 2018, the EU Platform for Action on Diet, Physical Activity & Health held a plenary meeting with a specific focus on food reformulation and nutritional labelling. This was also the opportunity for the platform members (business organisations, NGOs and public authorities) to be learn more on the priorities of the upcoming Austrian Presidency diet, obesity and food reformulation.

Discussions were also held on the implementation of the Action Plan on Childhood Obesity in the Member States, and the state of play of the European Commission report on front-of-pack (FOP) nutritional labelling. The European Commission explained that a report on FOP labelling will be published in 2018, as provided by the Food Information to Consumers Regulation. The report will among others analyse the French Nutriscore system, the Nordic Keyhole and the UK FOP labelling scheme, as well as other voluntary initiatives by industry players.

Some platforms members also gave an update on their commitments on food reformulation and reducing marketing to children. This was in particular the case of EuroCommerce which presented an update for the retail sector with the policy implemented by METRO, DELHAIZE and Herbalife nutrition.

The agenda and presentations held during the plenary meeting of the EU platform for action on diet, physical activity and health are available [here](#).

NEXT STEPS:

HOTREC will participate to the next platform's meeting and will implement its commitment.

HOTREC POSITION:

- *HOTREC is committed to the sharing of best-practices between stakeholders in the view to raise stakeholders' knowledge about voluntary actions developed by the sector which contribute to the pursuit of a healthier nutrition and diet;*
- *The European hospitality industry considers that voluntary initiatives and the sharing of best-practices is the most appropriate way forward to improve nutrition and diet balances, while at the same time allowing hospitality businesses to fulfill the legitimate aspirations and expectations of their clients in terms of gastronomic diversity.*

Social Affairs

Work-life Balance: payment must rely on Member States



On April 2018 the European Parliament presented all its amendments to the Commission proposal on a Directive on Work-Life Balance ([COM \(2017\) 253 final](#)).

NEXT STEPS:

The EMPL Committee in the European Parliament will vote the amendments and the Council will reach a general approach. After that trilogue negotiations will start.

HOTREC POSITION:

- **Payment:** *it should be up to Member States to define the payment of paternity, parental and carer's leave. Subsidiarity must prevail.*
It is to note that countries where companies pay for the leaves, would need to pay a double salary: to the person on leave and to the replacement. In payments where the leaves are paid by the governments, indirect taxes would need to be charged to companies. Unproportioned payments will lead to a decrease in competitiveness, job creation and possible closure of business;
- **Paternity leave** *shall not be mandatory - free will of families should prevail;*
- **Age limit:** *both for parental leave and flexible working arrangements HOTREC considers that eight years old seems to be reasonable age until when time off can be taken. This goes in line with the recommendation of the social partners (Council Directive 2010/18/EC);*
- **Carer's leave:** *medical proof is needed. The definition should follow the Commission proposal;*
- **Reversal of the burden of proof:** *HOTREC calls for its suppression. The burden for the employer would be unproportioned, not to mention that the current rules on dismissals (national law, EU law, collective agreements) would need to change accordingly.*

Tourism

Commission wants to upgrade the Visa Information System



On 16 May 2018, the European Commission proposed to upgrade the Visa Information System (VIS) – [COM \(2018\) 302 final](#). The database contains information on persons applying for Schengen visas, in order to better respond to evolving security and migratory challenges and improve the EU's external border management. The main proposals from the Commission are the following:

- **Enhanced security checks across all databases** - all visa applications recorded in the VIS will now be automatically checked against all other EU information systems for security and migration (e.g. Entry/Exit system);
- **Better data and information exchanges** - information will be held on long-stay visas and residence permits;
- **More efficient return procedures** - copies of visas applicant's documents will also be included in the VIS database;
- **Strengthened capacity to prosecute and prevent crime** - Law enforcement authorities and Europol will now have a more structured access to the VIS for prevention, detection and investigation of terrorist offences.

NEXT STEPS:

Council and the European Parliament to decide under the ordinary legislative procedure.

HOTREC POSITION:

- *We support a common visa policy that facilitates travel to the EU for tourism and business purposes and, that at the same time, enhances the overall security of EU citizens;*
- *It is crucial to establish a system that avoids duplications of checks and controls, namely against the Entry - Exit system; the Schengen Information System or the European Criminal Records Information System - this will avoid administrative burdens and will help travellers to enter Schengen.*

European Parliament condemns border controls in Schengen area

On 30 May 2018, the European Parliament condemned the internal border controls in the Schengen area by some Member States, calling on them to strengthen security cooperation and the EU's external borders instead.

The first annual report on the state of the Schengen area addresses the main shortcomings in implementing the Schengen rules. It was approved by 439 votes in favour, with 157 against and 80 abstentions.

The Schengen area is one of the most important achievements of the EU. The economic costs created by these controls are estimated to be between 25 and 50 billion euros for all countries over a two year period. If all countries were to reintroduce border controls permanently, the cost over 10 years would be around 100-230 billion EUR.

MEPs condemned the continued reintroduction of internal border checks “*due to shortcomings in the common European asylum system and due to the lack of political will, solidarity and responsibility-sharing*”.

According to some MEPs, many of the continued checks are “*neither necessary nor proportionate and are therefore unlawful*”. Six countries are currently applying border controls: Austria, Denmark, France, Germany, Norway and Sweden.

MEPs also highlighted in the report that Bulgaria and Romania are ready to join the Schengen area as they perfectly fulfil the criteria and call on the Council to approve their accession.

Health

Sweden best practices to curb alcohol related harm



On 20 March 2018, the Government Offices of Sweden presented at the Committee of National Alcohol Policy and Action (CNAPA) best practices developed at national level to curb alcohol related harm. Amongst the initiatives, it is to highlight:

- Universal measures with focus on limiting access to alcohol - to protect children
- Development of a retail monopoly

- Age limits; strong marketing legislation and legal BAC level 0,1 milligram/l; high taxes

As a result, medical and social harm caused by alcohol has steadily decreased.

HOTREC POSITION:

- *HOTREC strongly supports and encourages Members to implement measures that enforce age limits when serving and selling alcohol and develop information programmes on responsible drinking as part of its commitment to the European Alcohol and Health Forum;*
- *HOTREC believes on the advantages of the Alcohol Forum, as a platform of exchange of good practices. HOTREC hopes that the plenary meetings will restart being called upon by the European Commission in the upcoming months.*

New structures of excise duties on the table!



On 25 May 2018, the European Commission issued a proposal for a Council Directive amending Directive 92/83/EEC on the harmonisation of the structures of excise duties on alcohol beverages ([COM\(2018\) 334 final](#)).

The aim of the Commission is to reshape the rules governing excise duty on alcohol within the EU, to create a better business environment and to reduce costs for small alcohol-producing businesses and better protect consumer health.

The new rules will:

- **Remove barriers to SMEs in general excise duty rules** - SME's will be able to use modern IT systems if they wish to do so. The obligation of employing a tax representative is suppressed;



- **Increase the threshold for lower strength beer** that can benefit from reduced rates from 2.8% volume to 3.5% volume;
- **Put in place a uniform certification system** - recognisable in all EU countries confirming the status of independent small producers;
- **Ensure a consistent classification of cider** across the EU;
- **Clarify the correct manufacturing processes and conditions for denatured alcohol in the EU** - this kind of alcohol is used in products such as cleaning products, perfume, anti-freeze and is exempt from excise duty. This exemption could motivate some producers to sell potential dangerous drinks without paying tax and endanger the health of consumers;
- **Update IT systems** - paper-based procedures to track denatured alcohol will be replaced by the mandatory use of Excise Movement and Control system. Denatured alcohol will be easier to track, using the fraudulent use of the exemption and protecting citizen's help.

NEXT STEPS:

The European Parliament and and European Economic and Social Committee will be consulted on the topic. After that, it will be up to the Council to decide.

HOTREC POSITION:

- *HOTREC believes that the initiative has a direct impact on the alcohol producers;*
- *The extension of the threshold for lower strength beer (from 2.8% volume to 3.5% volume) is positive and will give incentives to the sector to innovate;*
- *The uniform certification system and new IT systems will help reduce red tape and administrative burdens to SMEs.*

Sustainability

Commission asks Member States to encourage free tap-water in restaurants



On 15 May 2018, MEP Michel Dantin (EPP, France) published its draft report for the ENVI (Environment, Public Health and Food Safety) Committee of the European Parliament on the Commission proposal to revise the drinking water Directive. The aim of the revision is to improve the quality and safety of drinking water, improve access to drinking water to all and provide better information to citizens about drinking water.

The draft Dantin report proposes to clarify that the Commission proposal to make it mandatory for Member States to take measures to encourage the free provision of tap water in restaurants should only apply for actual customers.

A first exchange of views was held on the draft report on 7 June 2018 in the ENVI Committee, while amendments to the draft report were possible until 13 June 2018.

The text of the draft report from MEP Dantin is available [here](#).

NEXT STEPS:

The ENVI Committee is expected to adopt its report on the Commission proposal on 10 September. The revised Directive and future agreement with the Council will need to be adopted in plenary in March 2019 latest.

HOTREC POSITION:

- *Many restaurants across Europe already offer tap-water to clients either for free or at a very reasonable costs when requested together with other orders. HOTREC therefore does not see the urgency of the matter at EU level;*
- *Every service has a price, which includes not only the product as such, but also the service itself. In the cases of restaurants, the time of the staff to serve and clean and the use of the premises all have a cost together with the tap-water itself. Unfortunately, this element does not seem to be taken into account by the Commission proposal, especially as mineral water is becoming an important element of a restaurant revenue in the context of overall declining alcohol consumption;*
- *HOTREC considers that the Commission proposal should be amended to clarify that the provision of free-tap water in restaurants should concern only actual customers, while allowing restaurants to charge a small and reasonable service fee. Moreover, the revised Directive should not contain an EU obligation for restaurants to provide such water, as subsidiarity shall prevail.*

Towards an EU ban on single-use plastics?



Building on the EU strategy on plastics published in January 2018, the European Commission proposed on 28 May a Directive which intends to reduce the use of single-use plastics.

In particular the draft text proposes to ban single-use plastics for cutlery, plates and beverage stirrers.

It also proposes to make it mandatory for Member States to reduce the use of plastics food containers and drink cups

through the setting of national reduction targets, ensuring that such products cannot be provided for free or making alternative available at the point of sale.

Besides, the draft Directive proposes to make it mandatory for single-use plastics producers to cover the cost of waste management and clean-up for such products, while making it obligatory for Member States to achieve a 90% target in the collection of single-use plastic bottles. This proposal is meant to tackle the growing problem that these plastics create for the environment, as half of marine litter is made of such plastics.

The text of the Commission proposal is available [here](#) and the annex are available [here](#).

NEXT STEPS:

The Council and the European Parliament will need to agree on the final text of the Directive. An agreement will need to be reached and endorsed by the European Parliament plenary before the next European elections (to be held in May 2019).

HOTREC POSITION:

- *The hospitality sector is often using single-use plastics mostly in the fast-food and take-away segment, but also in the hotel sector and for external catering events. The Commission proposal is therefore likely to impact hospitality businesses, in particular SMEs and micro-enterprises, as the most common alternatives to single-use plastics are more expensive;*
- *Nevertheless, the hospitality industry considers that the issue of single-use plastics must be addressed, given the strong impact there extensive use has on the environment and marine litter. HOTREC considers that additional flexibility should be introduced in the Commission proposal, in order to give enough time for cheaper alternatives to become available for small and micro-businesses.*

HOTREC General Activities

Next Meetings and General Assemblies

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

- 19 June 2018 (Geneva, Switzerland): WHO consultation with economic operators on ways to reduce the harmful use of alcohol
- 21 June 2018 (Brussels, Belgium): EU advisory group on the food chain meeting on transfats in food
- 29 June 2018 (Brussels, Belgium): Online risk Assessment tool (OIRA) meeting
- 27 September 2018 (Brussels, Belgium): European Tourism Day
- 1-2 October 2018 (Vienna, Austria): European Tourism Forum
- 18-19 October 2018 (Krakow, Poland): HOTREC 77th General Assembly



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