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Articles of your interest

GENERAL POLICY ISSUES

Interview of MEP Istvan UJHELYI, Vice- Chair of the Committee on Transport and Tourism in the European Parliament



MEP István Ujhelyi is Vice-Chair of the Transport and Tourism Committee and responsible for the Tourism Task Force. He is also a key member of the Parliamentary Intergroup on the Development of European Tourism Cultural Heritage, Ways of Saint James and other European cultural routes.

HOTREC asked Mr. Ujhelyi (S&D, Hungary) to share his views on the role of the Task Force on Tourism as well as on other relevant topics impacting tourism.

1. How do you intend to foster tourism within the context of the Task Force on Tourism?

The real importance of the Tourism Task Force (TTF) is that those Members of the Transport and Tourism Committee (TRAN) who think that tourism is an independent policy in political and economic terms, have applied to participate in the activities of TTF. MEPs have the possibility to draft proposals in line with the topics impacting the Tourism sector, which will be submitted to and discussed with the coordinators of the political groups in the TRAN Committee. The real consultation, - as channelling the needs of the tourism industry -, was always important for me, for these reasons we announced the development of the Tourism On The S.P.O.T (Special Partnership On Tourism) program that aims at fostering a closer cooperation between the European institutions and the tourism sector. I take into account all the players. As for the Tourism Task Force, it acts as an integral part of the TRAN Committee as its official programmes are included in the official Agenda of the Committee. The main task of the TTF is the screening of all the EU legislation on the political agenda and selection of the topics that impact tourism in order to make a link to the fields where the TRAN Committee can draft an official position. This happened, for example, with the VISA package where finally only the TRAN Committee would give an opinion to the two reports that had been drafted by the LIBE Committee. These two reports are, the re-cast of VISA Code regulation and the newly introduced touring VISA. I have to say, therefore, that the Tourism Task Force is an important and significant influential professional body of the TRAN Committee.

2. What is your opinion on the visa package proposed by the European Commission especially with regard to the economic impact that the proposal will bring to the tourism sector when approved?

It is clear that the visa-facilitation helps to increase the number of tourists arriving from third countries. In fact, the European Commission's study analysed the economic benefits that could result of the visa-facilitation. Personally, I share these views. For the time being the main difference among the positions of the political Groups of the Parliament is the enforcement of safety aspects - further applying stricter rules, and at the same time highlighting the economic advantages (more tourist arrivals) – as it means facilitation. The question is how to preserve the security in parallel to taking advantage of the economic benefits? Of course, there are also specific areas and issues for the maritime and aviation industries, which should be included in the opinions.

3. What is your opinion about the impact of the sharing/shadow hospitality economy on the traditional tourism sector?

The so-called "sharing economy", namely the share-based economy, is actually the child of a new generation of industrial revolution, which now appears to significantly transform the lives of the sectors concerned. The progression, the development of better and cheaper services as more widely spread and emergence is definitely positive, and we have to support it and it should be encouraged. However, such influential initiatives that have huge impact on economy and social life, can not be left unregulated in the interest of both the market participants and the consumers who are using these services. The same regulations do not apply for the new, progressive and uncontrolled "players" compared to the older, traditional operators. It is not fair at all, why new operators can evade certain obligations opposed to the traditional participants? I stand by the hotel industry players on this topic. The economy based on sharing undoubtedly creates competition, which could reduce prices and improve the quality of services, which is forward-looking; but if the conditions of the competition are not identical, it is unfair and creates market distortion. In my view, an integrated EU guideline is needed to settle the situation of both traditional and new actors.

CONSUMER AFFAIRS

Package Travel Directive: agreement reached in trilogue



On 5 May 2015, the representatives of the Latvian Presidency of the EU, of the European Parliament and of the European Commission reached an agreement in trilogue on the Package Travel Directive. The agreement covers the main contention issues such as: the definition of a package travel, the definition of click-through packages and of Assisted Travel Arrangement, the extent of the insolvency protection for Assisted Travel Arrangements, etc.

According to the deal, sauna, gym and swimming pool services provided inside hotels will be considered as part of the accommodation service, while transfers from accommodation to an airport or train station will be considered as other tourist services. This novelties should limit the impact of the new Directive on hotels.

Next Steps:

In the Council, the COREPER will endorse the trilogue agreement in the second half of May 2015. In the European Parliament, the IMCO (Internal Market & Consumer Protection) committee will endorse the agreement in June 2015, while the European Parliament is expected to adopt the trilogue agreement in plenary session in September.

Actions:

HOTREC will inform its member associations when the COREPER and IMCO will endorse officially the agreement.

HOTREC position:

- HOTREC considers positively many amendments brought forward to the Commission proposal during the trilogue negotiations, as they take into account the specific nature of some of the services provided by hotels, therefore limiting the impact of the Directive on the industry, while providing adequate protection to consumers.

Tourism accommodation safety: results of the EU consultation published



The Commission published in March 2015 the results of the Green Paper consultation on the safety of Tourism Accommodation Services (see report [here](#)). The Commission tackles all aspects of the consultation (existing legislation, enforcement, SME aspects, accessibility, self-regulation, skills, etc.).

Overall, public authorities largely agree with the hospitality sector concerning existing legislation and enforcement mechanisms, considering that they are adequate. However, tour operators and consumer organisations questioned the consistency of these national approaches. The report highlights that no evidences was provided that consumers experience any recurrent safety issues in the hospitality sector.

The reports also stresses that a large number of stakeholders consider that the Commission should:

- Coordinate a project to gather data on safety incidents in tourism accommodation; and
- Create a web portal which would map applicable safety legislation in the Member States and which would allow best-practices sharing.

Furthermore, one important aspect of the Commission report is the focus on the "shadow hospitality" phenomenon (i.e. private accommodation offered as touristic residence on peer-to-peer websites), which is mentioned several times all along the report. It seems that a large majority of stakeholders considers that the exponential growth of this phenomena raise concerns in terms of consumer safety and unfair competition, as these kind of accommodation largely escape existing regulations and surveillance mechanisms.

Next Steps:

Based on the results of the consultation, the Commission will now reflect on the necessity to issue a White Paper with possible actions.

HOTREC position:

- HOTREC considers that a one-size-fits-all approach to tourism accommodation safety is inappropriate, given the diversity of tourism accommodation businesses;
- Existing tourism accommodation safety legislation and surveillance systems at national and local levels are appropriate and ensure a high level of safety in the hotel market.
- Public authorities (European/national/local) should focus their activities on the exponential development of private accommodation offered as tourist accommodation on peer-to-peer websites, as this new segment of the market is largely unregulated and escape existing enforcement mechanisms;
- The European Commission should create a web portal where would be indicated all existing safety legislation applicable to tourism accommodation across the EU. This portal could also serve as a hub to exchange best-practices.

ONLINE DISTRIBUTION

Latest developments on parity clause investigations

Following the judgement of the Higher Regional Court of Dusseldorf taken on 9 January 2015, confirming the Cartell Office's decision to ban parity clauses from contracts with the Online Travel Agent HRS, on 2 April 2015 the German Cartell Office issued a warning to Booking.com to apply similar practice deriving from the above decisions.

On 21 April 2015, the French, Italian and [Swedish competition authorities announced the acceptance of the commitments offered by Booking.com](#) to close the investigations on the application of parity clauses in their contracts with hotels. According to the commitments, Booking.com will:

- Allow hotels to offer different prices and conditions on other OTAs than on Booking.com,
- Allow hotels to offer different prices and conditions than on Booking.com on the offline channels of the hotel,
- Not punish 'directly' hotels not having parity agreement with Booking.com

Besides the acceptance of these commitments, Booking.com was sentenced to a fine, conditionally to non-compliance with the commitments. The commitments should be valid for 5 years.

With this decision, there are currently two accepted ways in Europe concerning the treatment of parity clauses:

- The complete ban of parity clauses, as decided on 9 January 2015 by the German court,
- The negotiated one, as decided by the 3 national authorities mentioned above.

On 7 May 2015, the Tribunal de Commerce of Paris issued a decision considering best price and best condition clauses as applied by Expedia in contracts with hoteliers as void. This decision adds to the complexity of how the issue of the application of parity clauses is handled by the different authorities in Europe.

Next Steps:

According to the decision of the 3 competition authorities in France, Italy and Sweden, the commitments of Booking.com should be applicable in France, Italy and Sweden from 1 July 2015 and should be valid for 5 years. However, it needs to be further analysed, what consequences the judgement of the Paris court has on the decision of the competition authority of France at least.

Actions:

HOTREC members have discussed this new situation and agreed in a first instance that parity clauses still remain anticompetitive.

HOTREC position:

- Parity clauses remain anticompetitive;
 - Hoteliers should not be restricted to offline tools set prices and conditions freely;
 - HOTREC members consider further steps to restore complete entrepreneurial freedom of hoteliers.
-

European Commission about to finalise work on key principles for Comparison Tools

During March and April 2015, the European Commission (DG JUST) made further progress on the elaboration of key principles to be applied by comparison tools, including travel websites and OTAs.

The European Commission's proposal for key principles for Comparison Tools include aspects like:

- Accuracy of information on price and availability;
- Identification of advertising (including when a premium fee is paid for better placement in search results);
- Criteria for ranking;
- Authenticity of reviews;
- Etc.

At the last meeting with several stakeholders (including major OTAs) on the matter there was no opposition to the content of the principles presented. The Commission is currently evaluating stakeholders' comments to the draft principles, which should also feed into the soon to be updated Guidance document of the Unfair Commercial Practices Directive.

Next Steps:

The key principles need now to be finalised and the way of their implementation and enforcement should be decided in the coming months within the Commission and together with stakeholders.

Actions:

HOTREC has actively contributed to the elaboration of the key principles, which already include most aspects of HOTREC's Benchmarks of Fair Practices in Online Distribution. During a recent consultation further comments have been sent to DG JUST by HOTREC. HOTREC will continue participating in the elaboration of the principles.

HOTREC position:

- HOTREC welcomes and supports the European Commission's efforts for the setting up and implementation of key principles for Comparison Tools.
 - HOTREC hopes that Comparison Tools operators will continue being positive to the principles so that they can be implemented to the benefit of consumers and also business.
- nsider further steps to restore complete entrepreneurial freedom of hoteliers.
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DIGITAL ISSUES

European Commission released its strategy on a Digital Single Market

On 6 May 2015, the European [Commission released its Communication on a Digital Single Market Strategy for Europe](#). In this Communication the Commission paves the way to the removal of barriers in the online markets by announcing some targeted actions to be delivered in the next 2 years.

One of them is the creation of right conditions and a level playing field for digital networks, which includes a thorough assessment of the role of online platforms. This will include issues such as transparency e.g. in search results, platforms' usage of information they collect, relations between platforms and suppliers.

Other issues covered by the Communication include the question of the ownership of data, their usability and access in situations such as business-to-business as well as business-to-consumer. The document also mentions an action plan on a renewed approach for corporate taxation in the Single Market, with the main target to tax profits where the value is generated.

Next Steps:

The European Commission will implement its Action plan of 16 measures, among which in 2015 the assessment of the role of online platforms.

Actions:

HOTREC will seek the contact with the European Commission to contribute to the implementation of its actions.

HOTREC position:

- HOTREC welcomes the Communication on a Digital Single Market strategy and will support the work of the Commission to rebalance powers in the online market, which are, in the travel sector, dominated by few players, being able to dictate conditions, which are often perceived as unfair.

TOURISM

Tourism Task Force - visa package



On 26 March 2015, took place another Tourism Task Force during the TRAN Committee meeting of the European Parliament. The focus was put on the Visa Package (Visa Code and Touring Visa) and on the possibility of the committee to provide an opinion on both proposals for Regulations.

Overall, members of the committee agreed that it would be important to provide an opinion on the topic. In fact, to facilitate the procedures for travellers to enter Schengen has always been one of the objectives of the committee.

Next Steps:

MEP UJHELYI (S&D/Hungary), Vice-Chair of the Tourism Task Force, will provide an opinion on the visa package. The opinion shadow rapporteurs appointed so far are: Claudia Monteiro de Aguiar (Portugal/EPP); Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (Spain/ALDE); Jill Evans (UK/ALDE).

Actions:

HOTREC will hold a meeting with the rapporteur and relevant opinion rapporteurs and transmit them HOTREC's position.

HOTREC position:

- HOTREC fully welcomes the Commission proposals;
- Both the proof of accommodation or proof of sufficient means to cover the accommodation should be mentioned in Annex II of the Visa Code;
- Enforced consular cooperation should be implemented even amongst consulates located in the same third country to avoid traveling and time costs for the visa applicant;
- The definition of VIS registered traveller should include those regular travellers who have already been issued a visa with a longer validity.

European Parliament hearing on: "How to keep Europe at number one?"

On 14 April 2015, took place a hearing on: "How to keep Europe at number one?" at the TRAN Committee of the European Parliament, under the initiative of MEP Isabella de Monte (S&D/Italy). The MEP is the rapporteur of an own-initiative report that aims at shaping the tourism strategy for the years ahead.

The main topics discussed were the following:

- Digitalisation of SMEs and Sharing economy – MEPs were of the opinion that the tourism sector needs to adapt, but that a level playing field should be created;
- Branding Europe as high quality destination: MEPs were favourable about the idea of branding Europe. The speakers were pushing forward a joint promotion of Europe, with a focus on pan European thematic products;
- Sustainable and Responsible Tourism – MEPs call on public authorities and tourism stakeholders to develop sustainable and responsible tourism;
- Coastal and Maritime Tourism – MEPs and speakers agreed that this segment of the tourism sector is crucial in producing growth and jobs.

Actions:

HOTREC met with rapporteur, shadows and other relevant MEPs in order to transmit its position.

HOTREC position:

- HOTREC welcomes MEP de Monte own initiative report;
- HOTREC expects that the European Parliament will take the hospitality sector's interest into account when adopting the report.

European Charter for a Sustainable and Responsible tourism



On 7 May 2015, the European Commission organised a meeting with key tourism stakeholders in order to discuss about the Draft Charter on Sustainable and Responsible Tourism. The finalisation and publication of this Charter is one of Commissioner Bieńkowska tourism policy priorities who is willing to boost sustainable and responsible tourism.

Participants to the meeting discussed the content of the draft Charter as well as the possible ways to better encourage tourism stakeholders/organisations in Europe to pledge support to the Charter and contribute, in this way, to boost sustainable and responsible tourism.

The draft text was already submitted to consultation of the tourism stakeholders in 2012. HOTREC replied to the 2012 consultation.

Next Steps:

The Commission has opened another consultation period to put forward comments to the Draft Charter. Tourism stakeholders can send their feedback before the end of June 2015.

The publication of the Charter could be possibly foreseen beginning of 2016 and presented at the 3rd International Congress on Ethics and Tourism to be organized jointly with the UNWTO.

Actions:

During the 7 May meeting, HOTREC gave its feedback on the proposed draft text as well as on the different implementation measures. HOTREC said that it welcomes the initiative but pointed out that some of the actions mentioned on the draft charter, such as absolute accessibility, long term involvement of stakeholders etc. could be burdensome for small companies.

HOTREC also said that it was difficult to request from tourism SMEs to draft a bi-annual report explaining the actions put in place by them to promote the principles on responsible and sustainable tourism.

HOTREC position:

- HOTREC welcomes this initiative and is fully supportive of sustainable and responsible tourism.
 - However, HOTREC will like to re-call the Commission that the vast majority of tourism businesses in Europe are SMEs, being 91% micro enterprises. This fact should be taken into account when considering the adoption of the Charter and the measures to implement it.
 - HOTREC will give its comments to the draft charter as well as to the suggested measures to implement it.
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Information and discussion meeting on priority actions for EU tourism

On 7 May 2015 in the afternoon the European Commission organised an information and discussion meeting on « priority actions for EU tourism ». European and national tourism stakeholders and national tourism authorities attended the meeting.

The European Commission presented the tourism policy priorities of the new Commissioner responsible for tourism, Ms. Elżbieta Bińkowska :

- Streamlining the regulatory and administrative framework impacting tourism at European, national, regional and local level ;
- Promoting the digitalisation of the tourism SMEs ;
- Upgrading the skills and competences in the tourism sector ;
- Promoting sustainable and responsible tourism and finalising the European Charter for Sustainable and Responsible Tourism ;
- Fostering low and medium season tourism exchanges ;
- Improving intermodality and transport connectivity ;
- Joint promotion of Europe as a tourism destination, mainly in third country markets.

Actions:

HOTREC actively participated to the meeting and expressed its support for the Commission tourism policy priorities, in particular: simplification of regulatory and administrative impacting tourism; digitalisation of the tourism SMEs and upgrading skills and competences of the tourism SMEs.

HOTREC also asked the Commission to include VISA policy as a tourism policy priority.

With regards to improving the governance of tourism, HOTREC mentioned that a mapping of all legislative proposals / policy orientations with an impact on tourism will be very much welcome by the tourism sector.

Next Steps:

The tourism policy priorities will officially be presented at the European Tourism Forum in Luxembourg to be held on 17 and 18 September 2015.

HOTREC position:

- HOTREC will send to the European Commission its written comments on the tourism policy priorities.

TOURISMLink: HOTREC continues promotion actions

As a follow-up to the MOU signed on 24 June 2014 by TOURISMLink consortium partners and the Commission, HOTREC has committed itself to continue promoting TOURISMLink with Ernst & Young through a series of meetings organised all over Europe.

Next Steps:

HOTREC, its consortium partners and Ernst & Young will continue promotion actions of TOURISMLink in Croatia, Spain, Portugal, and possible Italy (dates to be confirmed).

Actions:

HOTREC will keep promoting TOURISMLink to its members and other interested stakeholders. HOTREC is also liaising with DOME (technical partner) to facilitate the access to the platform of companies willing to join TOURISMLink.

HOTREC updated its members on the latest developments of TOURISMLink at its General Assembly in Luxembourg, held on 23 and 24 April 2015.

HOTREC position:

- HOTREC supports all measures aimed at facilitating the access of SMEs in the tourism sector to the digital market;
 - HOTREC fully supports initiatives such as TOURISMLink that are intended to make SMEs more competitive.
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VISA POLICY

EU signs bilateral visa waiver agreement with the United Arab Emirates (UAE)

On 6 May 2015, a reciprocal bilateral short-stay visa waiver agreement was signed between UAE, and EU representatives in Brussels. The agreement will be provisionally applied until its final ratification. From the signature onwards, citizens of the United Arab Emirates will be able to travel without a visa to the EU for stays of up to 90 days (within any 180-day period).

The remaining visa requirements for some EU citizens travelling to the UAE have also been lifted. The visa waiver does not apply to the United Kingdom and Ireland which are not part of the Schengen area.

HOTREC position:

- HOTREC very much encourages the establishment of visa waiver agreements with third countries. This is the way forward in order to bring more travellers to Europe and stimulate the creation of growth and jobs.

SOCIAL AFFAIRS

European platform on undeclared work

The Commission issued in April 2014 a proposal to establish a platform at European level to combat undeclared work. The proposal envisages the mandatory participation of all Member States. Cross-industry social partners as well as social partners representing those sectors more severely affected by undeclared work should also be appointed as observers to the platform.

Next Steps:

The Committee on Employment and Social Affairs (EMPL Committee) voted on the parliamentary draft report on 8 May 2015. The resulting text will serve as basis to the European Parliament to start negotiations with the Council.

Actions:

HOTREC, its trade union counterpart-EFFAT- and the social partners of the agriculture, cleaning, construction, and security services sectors agreed on a joint letter requesting that these sectors should be actively involved in the activities of the future platform. The letter was sent, on 22-24 April 2015, to the MEPS of the different Parliamentary Committees dealing with the dossier, including the EMPL Committee (lead Committee).

HOTREC position:

- HOTREC sees the creation of a platform at EU level as a positive initiative as long as it deals with the issue of undeclared work at cross-border level;
- As expressed in its response to the consultations of the social partners, HOTREC would like to insist on the fact that preventive measures (such as alleviation of fiscal and administrative burden, incentives for regular work, simplification, etc.) should also be put in place as a way to reduce undeclared work.

HOTREC would welcome to participate to the platform if it is appointed as an observer.

HEALTH

Motion for a Resolution on Alcohol Strategy approved



On 29 April 2015, the European Parliament voted during its plenary session on a [Motion for a Resolution on the EU Alcohol Strategy](#) (no consolidated version available yet) which was presented by all the parliamentary political groups.

The overall objective of the non-legislative text is to encourage the Commission to present a new EU Alcohol Strategy (2016-2022). By and large, the European Parliament urges Member States or the Commission to:

- Protect young people from alcohol-related harm, in particular by strictly enforcing national legislation on the age limit (finally, and against what had been previously voted at the ENVI committee, Member States will not be encouraged to raise their age limit to at least 18 for young people to be allowed to drink alcohol);
- Develop measurable policy goals to monitor progress of the implementation of national strategies to decrease alcohol-related harm;
- Consider introducing policies aimed at preventing the sale of very cheap alcohol and pay due regard to the opinion of the court of Justice of the European Union on the compatibility of the Scottish Government's minimum pricing policy with EU law;
- Monitor alcohol advertising and its effects on young people;
- Include the calorie content of alcoholic beverages on labels as soon as possible (2016).

Next Steps:

The Commission will probably announce soon whether it will propose a new Alcohol Strategy or if the current one will continue to be applicable.

Actions:

HOTREC has developed a targeted lobbying campaign in order for alcohol to continue being sold nearby schools. It is ultimately the responsibility of the server not to serve alcohol to minors. HOTREC also gave its full support to the amendment put forward by MEP Willmott (S&D/UK) stating that Member States should strictly enforce national legislation with regard to age limits.

HOTREC position:

- HOTREC welcomes a new Alcohol Strategy, as long as the main objective is curbing alcohol-related harm;
- HOTREC welcomes the fact that establishments will continue being able to sell alcohol, even if located nearby school. If this would not be the case a lot of establishments would probably need to close down;
- HOTREC fully supports the enforcement of national legislation on the age limits;
- HOTREC also encourages its members to develop information and education programmes on responsible drinking.

SUSTAINABILITY

Energy Union Package

On 25 February 2015, the European Commission put forward a [Communication](#) on "A Framework Strategy for a Resilient Energy Union with Forward-Looking Climate Change policy- also called the Energy Union Package.

Through its Energy Union Package, the Commission intends to transform and strengthen Europe's energy system, in order to give EU consumers – households and businesses – secure, sustainable, competitive and affordable energy.

The Energy Union is based on 3 long-established objectives of EU energy policy: security of supply, sustainability and competitiveness.

To reach these objectives, the Energy Union package focuses on five mutually-supportive dimensions:

1. Energy security, solidarity and trust: the key drivers of energy security are the completion of the internal market and a more efficient energy consumption;
2. A fully integrated internal energy market – the Commission intends to give a new political impulse to completing the internal energy market;
3. Energy efficiency as a contributor to the moderation of energy demand – The Commission will pay special attention to those sectors with a huge energy efficiency potential, in particular the transport and building sectors;
4. Decarbonising the economy – The cornerstone of Europe's climate policy is a well-functioning EU Emissions Trading Scheme (EU ETS) currently being analysed by the EU institutions;
5. Research, Innovation and competitiveness – Energy research and innovation is a key building of the emerging European Union.

Next Steps:

The Commission Communication will be discussed by the European Parliament.

HOTREC position:

- HOTREC welcomes the Energy Union Package as a way to achieve a sustainable, low-carbon and climate-friendly economy and is fully aligned with the Commission intention to provide EU consumers: -households and businesses – with secure, competitive and affordable energy.
 - However, HOTREC would like to ask public authorities that measures, issued in the context of the Energy Union Package, do not to impose further burden on SMEs.
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FOOD

Official controls: towards an agreement on inspection fees?



Following the rejection by the Council of the compromise put forward by the Italian Presidency on the fee chapter of the Official Controls Regulation, the Latvian presidency of the EU made new compromise proposals.

According to these proposals, Member States would have the possibility to charge control fees for inspections carried-out in restaurants, but there would be no obligations. Other sectors with a clear cross-border component would however be imposed a fee. The Latvian Presidency of the EU is confident that this proposal will obtain a majority.

Next Steps:

In the second half of May or beginning of June, the Latvian Presidency of the EU will ask either to the COREPER if the Council is ready to support its compromise proposals and therefore reach a partial general approach on the fee chapter of the Regulation.

Actions:

HOTREC will continue to monitor the issue. HOTREC members should continue to lobby their governments against an EU obligation to charge control fees in restaurants.

HOTREC position:

- HOTREC welcomes the proposal of the Latvian Presidency not to impose an obligation on Member States to charge control/inspection fees, but rather to let Member States freely consider if such fees are needed.
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COPYRIGHT

European copyright law to be revised as part of the Commission's digital strategy



On 6 May 2015, the European Commission released its [Communication on a Digital Single Market Strategy for Europe](#), with the aim to remove barriers to the single market in the online environment through targeted actions to be delivered in the next 2 years.

As part of the priority areas identified, the Commission intends to issue legislative proposals to modernise European copyright law. With this modernisation, the Commission intends to:

- Reduce the differences between national copyright regimes and therefore removing the barriers to cross-border access to copyright-protected content services; and
- Allow for the portability of legally acquired copyright-protected content services.

The Commission will also review the satellite and cable directive (93/83/EEC) to assess the need to enlarge its scope to broadcasters' online transmissions and the need to tackle further measures to ensure enhanced cross-border access to broadcasters' services in Europe.

Next Steps:

- The Commission will make legislative proposals on Copyright by the end of 2015;
- The Commission will assess the satellite and cable directive (93/83/EEC) in late 2015 or beginning of 2016;

Actions:

When the Commission proposals will be released, HOTREC will assess their impact on the industry and will inform its members accordingly.

PAYMENT SERVICES

Trilogue agreement on the revision of the Payment Services Directive

On 5 May 2015, the representatives of the Latvian Presidency of the EU, of the European Parliament and of the European Commission reached an agreement in trilogue on the revision of the Payment Services Directive.

The agreement covers various issues (e.g. regulation of new entrants on the payment market, supervision, security standards for online payments, surcharging, etc.). However, if an oral agreement was reached, a formal text still needs to be finalised.

Next Steps:

- Once the text of the agreement would have been formalised, the COREPER in the Council and the ECON Committee in the European Parliament will be invited to endorse the compromise in the weeks to come.

STATISTICS

Recent statistical publications

The UNWTO World Tourism Barometer has recently published the following articles related to tourism.

- ["Exports from international tourism rise to US\\$ 1.5 trillion in 2014"](#) – (Barometer publication April 2015) - Receipts from international visitors spending on accommodation, food and drink, entertainment, shopping and other services and goods reached an estimated US\$ 1,245 billion (euro 937 billion) in 2014, an increase of 3.7% in real terms (taking into account exchange rate fluctuations and inflation). International tourist arrivals increased by 4.4% in 2014, reaching a total 1,135 million, up from 1,087 million in 2013. Aside from international tourism receipts (the travel item of the Balance of Payment), tourism also generates export earnings through international passenger transport services (rendered to non-residents). The latter amounted to an estimated US\$ 221 billion in 2014, bringing total exports from international tourism up to US\$ 1.5 trillion, or US\$ 4 billion a day on average.

GENERAL ACTIVITIES

Next meetings

In the next weeks HOTREC will participate and/or organise the following meetings:

- 20-21 May 2015 (Montenegro) : ECTAA Annual Congress – HOTREC CEO, Christian de Barrin, will participate to the meeting to present the vision of HOTREC on shadow hospitality economy;
- 21-22 May 2015 (Pretoria, South Africa): ISO TC 228 Plenary meeting – HOTREC will share its views on the standardisation projects of direct concern to it;
- 26 May 2015 (Brussels)- Meeting with representatives of the Cabinet of Commissioner Marianne Thyssen, HOTREC will put forward the views of the hospitality sector in the area of employment and skills;
- 27 May 2015 (Brussels) -Meeting MEP Lauristin, Shadow rapporteur Data Protection Regulation- HOTREC will present its position to the MEP;
- 28-29 May 2015 (Budapest) – Leaders in Hospitality Summit – HOTREC CEO will deliver a keynote presentation to the Summit;
- 3 June 2015 (Brussels) - Fostering SMEs' growth through digital transformation – HOTREC will participate to the meeting and put forwards its views on the importance of digitalisation of tourism SMEs;
- 3 June 2015 (Brussels) – Meeting with representatives of the Cabinet of Commissioner Oettinger - HOTREC will share its views concerning the Digital Single Market Strategy;
- 4 June 2015 (Brussels) – HOTREC Secretariat will meet its national association in Malta –MHRA- to exchange views about EU funded projects on sustainability issues;
- 17-18 June (Brussels) – Low/Medium tourism for seniors and young people workshop – HOTREC will exchange best practices on how to extend the season;
- 24 June (Nice) - Nearly Zero Energy Hotels international conference on "Sustainable and Competitive Hotel through Energy Innovation – HOTREC CEO to deliver a keynote speech about challenges and opportunities for hotels in relation to nearly zero energy status/energy efficiency;
- 30 June (Brussels) – HOTREC Secretariat will organise Task Force on Shadow hospitality Economy and a Task Force online distribution to discuss with its member associations the latest developments in this area in presence of Patrick Robinson, Head of Public Policy EMEA & Canada of Airbnb and Chip Conley of Airbnb.

Next General Assemblies

HOTREC next General Assembly will be held in The Hague on 5 and 6 November 2015.
