

The 16 priorities of the European hospitality sector for 2014-2019

In general

Subsidiarity must prevail

The EU should refrain from legislating on aspects with no-justified single market dimension

Smarter regulation

Self-regulation should be promoted, and burdensome over-regulation avoided

Cut red tape

The reduction of administrative burden is key to facilitating the competitiveness of enterprises

Easier access to funds for SMEs

The tourism industry should have more access to EU financial instruments.

EU policies

Social Affairs - Do not undermine job creation!

It is necessary to avoid new EU employment legislation which would damage the industry's excellent record in increasing jobs, especially for young people. Flexibility of working time arrangements is crucial for the maintenance of service within the hospitality industry.

Distribution channels - Ensure fair competition in online distribution!

Enforced best price guarantees due to the dominant position of Online Travel Agents (OTAs) make entrepreneurs lose control over their prices and businesses. The dominant position of OTAs needs to be reversed.

Visa Policy - Facilitate the entrance of tourists to Europe!

The use of intelligent technical solutions to facilitate visa procurement, in particular for all BRICS, is crucial. The contribution of tourism to the EU economy needs to be taken into account, as well as security issues.

Official controls in restaurants - No mandatory inspection fee!

An EU proposal intends to make restaurants pay a fee covering the cost of inspections. This fee will be a tax. As there is no single market impact in the case of restaurants, this should be an option for Member States, not an obligation.

Accessibility - Consider the burdens on SMEs!

In order to be efficient, any future legislation should stay as much as possible at national level. Flexibility and reasonable requirements are the key drivers for success.

Data Protection - No extra burdens for SMEs!

The future Regulation should not impose new obligations on the industry, especially the requirement to appoint a Data Protection Officer.

Copyright – Users also need clear regulation of the audio-visual sector!

After the adoption of the new Directive on collective management of copyright, similar EU legislation shall also regulate the audio-visual sector: more transparency and one-stop-shops are needed to protect right-users

Package Travel - Do not impair hotel bookings!

The legal regime applicable to hotel bookings covered by a new package travel Directive should not be less favourable than the existing legal framework. More jobs will be created, without decreasing consumer protection, if the new Directive applies only when there is a travel/transport element.

Payment cards: Interchange Fees (IFs) must come down!

IFs violate competition law, increase prices and are well above the real cost of processing cards. IFs should be banned for debit cards and capped for credit cards.

Food in restaurants: Ensure the use of fresh food is still possible!

The recently adopted Food Information Regulation will make it harder for restaurants to use fresh food. Any future EU legislation should not result in an effective ban on the use of fresh food.

VAT rates - Maintain reduced rates for tourism!

Reduced VAT allows for a competitive Europe as a tourism destination, including the creation of new jobs. Member States should continue to have the option to apply reduced VAT rates to hospitality services.

Private accommodation: Level playing field for all participants in tourism businesses!

The ever increasing number of owners renting private apartments and holiday homes as tourist accommodation, especially through online distribution channels, and without always having to abide by the regulations applying to the hospitality sector, constitutes a threat to consumer protection and to jobs in the hotel industry.