

The European hotel industry disappointed about the decision of French, Italian and Swedish competition authorities

Brussels, 22 April 2015 – In a coordinated action, the competition authorities of France, Italy and Sweden closed the investigations into the use of parity clauses in contracts between Booking.com and hotels by accepting commitments of Booking.com. They accepted the booking giant's (leader in the Online Travel Agent sector in Europe for hotel bookings) commitments to allow hoteliers to offer lower prices on other Online Travel Agencies, however to maintain parity clauses in the relation between Booking.com and the hotels. The European hotel industry is very much dissatisfied about this decision, which is freezing the current unacceptable situation of withdrawing by Booking.com the entrepreneurial freedom of hoteliers to compete on prices and conditions with them.

"HOTREC and its members are disappointed about today's, from our point of view, anticompetitive decision of competition authorities. The hotel industry will have to see now, which steps can be taken in order to restore complete entrepreneurial freedom for hotels in Europe and thus make consumers benefit from real competition on the hotel booking market" – explained Christian de Barrin, CEO of HOTREC.

What is HOTREC?

HOTREC represents the hotel, restaurant and café industry at European level. This industry includes around 1,8 million businesses, of which 99% are small and medium sized enterprises (91% of them micro enterprises, i.e. employing fewer than 10 people). These businesses make up some 59% of industry value added. The hospitality industry provides some 10.2 million jobs in the EU alone. Together with the other tourism industries, the sector is one of the largest industries in Europe. HOTREC brings together 41 national associations representing the sector in 27 different European countries.

For further information: www.hotrec.eu

PRESS CONTACT: Daniel Makay +32(0)2 504 78 42, daniel.makay@hotrec.eu