HOTREC proposal of amendments on INI Report on Tourism
December 2025

HOTREC welcomes MEP Attard's (S&D/Malta) Own Initiative Report (2025/2120(INI)) on "*Enhancing connectivity, preserving cultural heritage, and driving local excellence in European tourism: destination management and regional tourism growth*".

HOTREC fully supports the main objectives of the report: strengthening connectivity, empowering Europe's destinations to achieve local excellence, and fostering skills development and cultural engagement.

Our key priorities for a Sustainable Tourism Strategy are as follows:

• The development of targeted EU measures to address labour and skills shortages.
• The establishment of fair and transparent digital markets.
• A balanced approach to sustainability that aligns ambition with practical feasibility.
• Direct and easily accessible EU funding to support workforce training, SME digitalisation, infrastructure improvements, and crisis preparedness.

Please find below our proposed amendments, which we recommend be taken into consideration.

MEP Attard – Own Initiative Report	HOTREC – Proposal of Amendments
F whereas the rise of specialised (nautical, medical, wellness, sports, cycling, etc.) tourism creates new opportunities for peripheral regions to showcase their unique landscapes and heritage through place-based development strategies;	**F** whereas the rise of specialised (**food, wine,** nautical, medical, wellness, sports, cycling, etc.) tourism creates new opportunities for peripheral regions to showcase their unique landscapes and heritage through place-based development strategies;
Justification	
- Food tourism in Europe is a growing driver of choice and value: a significant share of travellers chooses destinations based on food experiences, and excellence is now spread across all regions of Europe, not just iconic southern European gastronomic destinations. - While Madrid remains Europe's top culinary destination — with the highest number of restaurants per capita — the gastronomic map of Europe is shifting. - Four Lithuanian restaurants were recently awarded their first Michelin stars, and Copenhagen now boasts 30 stars across 18 restaurants – proof that innovation and excellence are flourishing across all regions. - This dynamic should be encouraged through supportive policy and acknowledge in the European	

tourism strategy.

MEP Attard – Own Initiative Report	HOTREC – Proposal of Amendments
	Q - new
	Highlights the need for sustained public and private investments in tourism infrastructure, upskilling and reskilling and calls for EU funding instruments that are accessible to SMEs for green and digital upgrades.
Justification	
• 99% of the companies in the sector are SME's with low profit margins. • EU Funding is essential to invest in infrastructures to be more sustainable; to train the workforce; digitalise SMEs; prevent and react to climate disasters; develop a tool able to implement the Product Environmental Footprint Category Tools for Accommodation.	

MEP Attard – Own Initiative Report	HOTREC – Proposal of Amendments
2.	**2.**
Draws attention to the disproportionate influence of major carriers and digital platforms in steering market trends and exposing destinations to structural risks; calls on the Commission to conduct a study examining tourism's dependence on dominant players with strong market power in the transport and tourism sectors, assessing threats to connectivity, pricing, service continuity and resilience and proposing actions to limit market concentration and enhance fair competition, including through appropriate legal, regulatory and financial measures, where relevant;	Draws attention to the disproportionate influence of major carriers and digital platforms in steering market trends and exposing destinations **and hospitality businesses** to structural risks; calls on the Commission to conduct a study examining tourism's dependence on dominant players with strong market power in the transport and tourism sectors including hospitality, **hotels, restaurants, bars and cafés,** assessing threats to connectivity, pricing, **fair conditions for business users,** service continuity and resilience and proposing actions to limit market concentration and enhance fair competition, including through appropriate legal, regulatory and financial measures, where relevant;
Justification	
• Adding "fair conditions for business users" ensures the study does not only capture consumer-facing impacts of market concentration, but also reflects the challenges faced by tourism SMEs and operators that depend on dominant carriers and digital platforms. • These players often face unbalanced contractual terms, limited transparency and high dependency, which affect competitiveness and resilience.	

MEP Attard – Own Initiative Report	HOTREC – Proposal of Amendments
17.	
Calls on the Commission to present a legislative proposal to phase out single-use plastics in the EU tourism and hospitality sector, ensuring a realistic timeframe and supported by an impact assessment and stakeholder consultation;	~~Calls on the Commission to present a legislative proposal to phase out single-use plastics in the EU tourism and hospitality sector, ensuring a realistic timeframe and supported by an impact assessment and stakeholder consultation;~~

	Recognise that several EU legislative instruments—such as the Single-Use Plastics Directive (SUPD) and the Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR) yet to be implemented—already introduce strict market-restriction measures targeting the hospitality sector.; Given the significant regulatory pressure already placed on hospitality through measures such as the SUPD and PPWR , acknowledge substantial efforts the hospitality sector is already undertaking to reduce environmental impact. This includes phasing out single-use water bottles, improving energy-efficient lighting and water-saving systems, extending the lifespan of furniture through repair and reuse, and investing in initiatives to reduce food waste.
Justification	

- Laws at national and EU level exist and additional measures are not necessary.
- It is relevant helping businesses implement what's coming and support their initiatives to reduce their waste and carbon emissions.
- For example, miniature formats for wet amenities in hotels will be phased out in establishments that have not yet transition to viable alternatives.
- Imposing additional burdensome or prohibitive requirements on businesses that are already adapting would not help achieve a better circularity rate.
- Their efforts should be supported and incentivised rather than hindered by new restrictive requirements.

MEP Attard – Own Initiative Report	HOTREC – Proposal of Amendments
15. Welcomes the Regulation on short-term accommodation rentals as a positive step toward more effective destination management; acknowledges that short-term rentals can boost local engagement in tourism, enabling more authentic experiences; expresses concern, however, over their impact on housing affordability, neighbourhood cohesion and local governance, potentially altering the traditional character of destinations; notes that what began as a collaborative economy model has increasingly evolved into a commercialised industry, now largely dominated by professional hosts managing multiple properties; supports repositioning short-term rentals as a community-oriented tourism service to curb excessive commercialisation; calls on the Commission to swiftly propose legislation for the	**15.** Welcomes the Regulation on short-term accommodation rentals as a positive step toward more effective destination management; acknowledges that short-term rentals can boost local engagement in tourism, enabling more authentic experiences; expresses concern, however, over their impact on housing affordability, neighbourhood cohesion and local governance, potentially altering the traditional character of destinations; notes that what began as a collaborative economy model has increasingly evolved into a commercialised industry, now largely dominated by professional hosts managing multiple properties**, yet operating without obligations comparable to those imposed on traditional accommodation establishments**; supports repositioning short-term rentals as a community-

sector, defining clear host categories and enabling the Member States to apply proportionate measures – such as caps on visitor numbers, authorisation schemes, offsetting and zoning – in areas affected by housing pressures;	oriented tourism service to curb excessive commercialisation; calls on the Commission to swiftly propose legislation for the sector, defining clear host categories and enabling the Member States to apply proportionate measures – such as caps on visitor numbers, authorisation schemes, offsetting and zoning – in areas affected by housing pressures;

Justification

- The addition underscores a growing regulatory gap as short-term rentals become increasingly commercialized.
- Many operators now resemble professional accommodation providers yet often operate outside the safety, tax, and consumer-protection rules that govern traditional establishments, fuelling STR growth in cities already facing housing stress.

MEP Attard – Own Initiative Report	HOTREC – Proposal of Amendments
19.	**19.**
Supports the creation of comprehensive metrics covering, inter alia, job creation, community well-being, and carbon emissions to promote transparent policymaking and guide responsible investments; welcomes the development of globally recognised sustainable tourism indicators, noting that the methodology is being piloted by the EU Competence Centre to support data management in smart destinations (D3HUB), with input from 40 European DMOs;	~~Supports the creation of comprehensive metrics covering, inter alia, job creation, community well-being, and carbon emissions to promote transparent policymaking and guide responsible investments;~~ Notes **that many Member States and destinations already apply well-established national or regional metrics;** underlines **that any EU-level approach to sustainable tourism indicators must be fully compatible with existing frameworks in order to avoid duplication of reporting obligations and unnecessary administrative burden for tourism businesses, in particular SMEs;** supports **the development of coherent and comparable metrics at EU level, provided they build on existing practices and remain streamlined and user-friendly;** welcomes **ongoing initiatives, including those** ~~the development of globally recognised sustainable tourism indicators, noting that the methodology is being~~ piloted by the EU Competence Centre to support data management in smart destinations (D3HUB), with input from 40 European DMOs; **insofar as they contribute to improved data management and evidence-based policymaking**.”

Justification

- EU countries already have metrics on the mentioned topics.
- It is necessary to avoid duplication, respect existing national systems, ensure SME-friendly approaches.

MEP Attard – Own Initiative Report	HOTREC – Proposal of Amendments
16. Acknowledges the current limitations of the EU Ecolabel; recognises the need for a unified approach to sustainability labelling in the European tourism sector, enabling the creation of a single, transparent standard that fosters consumer confidence and raises the global visibility of European tourism businesses' sustainability efforts; calls strongly for the extension of coverage to additional segments of the tourism value chain, including cruise companies, tour operators, attractions, food and beverage services, and destinations, to support the green transition;	**16.** Acknowledges the current limitations of the EU Ecolabel; **recognises the diversity of existing sustainability certification and labelling schemes across Member States and tourism sub-sectors, and underlines that the EU Ecolabel must remain voluntary, SME-friendly, and sufficiently flexible to accommodate different business models and existing national labels.** ~~recognises the need for a unified approach to sustainability labelling in the European tourism sector, enabling the creation of a single, transparent standard that fosters consumer confidence and raises the global visibility of European tourism businesses' sustainability efforts;~~ calls for **consideration** of **extending voluntary EU-level sustainability certification to additional segments of the tourism value chain** including cruise companies, tour operators, attractions, food and beverage services, and destinations, to support the green transition - — **only after thorough impact assessments, stakeholder consultation, and alignment with ongoing sector-specific initiatives;**

Justification	
• Several countries follow their own legislation at national level. • Several companies invested in their own tools and methodologies to become more sustainable. • Any mandatory requirements, that will bring more administrative burdens, and cost should be avoided. • To note that 99% of the companies in the sector are SME's and 90% are micro-enterprises. • A voluntary approach ensures that tourism businesses can adapt, opt in, and align with their existing practices rather than being forced into something new that may not be suitable for all (especially SMEs). • A standard certification system does not work – criteria need to adapt to the climate characteristics of each country.	

	New 22 bis **Recognises the hospitality sector as a core pillar of Europe's tourism ecosystem, Europe's cultural engagement, deeply interconnected with local SMEs, cultural institutions, and regional labour markets; recognises the central role of restaurants, cafés and bars in Europe, mostly micro businesses and family-run providing jobs, preserving local identity and culture through**

	secular recipes and partnerships with local farmers and suppliers; underscores the sector's role in preserving local heritage, fostering intercultural exchange, and providing diverse employment opportunities across all skill levels; calls for EU and national incentive schemes and investments that support workforce training, apprenticeship programmes, and upskilling in areas such as digitalisation, sustainability, customer service, and cultural mediation. Ultimately calls for policies that enable hospitality businesses to continue delivering high-quality guest experiences, contribute to local cultural vibrancy, and create sustainable, long-term value for European destinations.
Justification	

- The value and multiple effects the hospitality industry brings to Europe deserve to be singled out.
- The hospitality sector provides 10 million jobs, and represents 2 million companies
- The industry accounts for 8.5% of total consumer spending in the EU and generates around 2% of value added to the business economy[1].

MEP Attard – Own Initiative Report	**HOTREC – Proposal of Amendments**
23.	**23.**
(…) is disappointed that structural challenges, such as low pay, informal employment, seasonality and limited training, continue to perpetuate labour and skills shortages in tourism, further exacerbated by persistent gender inequality;	"~~is disappointed that structural challenges, such as low pay, informal employment, seasonality and limited training, continue to perpetuate labour and skills shortages in tourism, further exacerbated by persistent gender inequality~~" **Notes that labour and skills shortages in tourism remain a challenge in several Member States and in a majority of sectors; underlines, however, that the sector has made significant progress in improving working conditions, working hours and remuneration — including through updated collective agreements following the COVID-19 pandemic; highlights that women represent a majority of the tourism workforce; stresses the importance of targeted upskilling and reskilling initiatives to address evolving skills needs and to ensure the sector's long-term attractiveness and competitiveness."**
Justification	

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[1] All economic data can be found at Eurostat.

- The sector needs to improve its image. A negative reputation in EU texts will not support the sector in retaining and attracting the workforce.
- 55% of the workforce in the sector is constituted by women. Nevertheless, encouragement for women to uptake managerial positions should be supported.
- Upskilling and reskilling the workforce is a major objective of the sector.
- It is the sector's aim to retain the workforce, remain attractive and competitive.
- The tourism sector should take its responsibilities and invest in solutions, rather then being defined by problems.

MEP Attard – Own Initiative Report	HOTREC – Proposal of Amendments
	23.A - new **Calls for strengthened cooperation between tourism businesses, education providers, and public authorities to promote high-quality trainings and apprenticeships; emphasises the importance of initiatives to boost the attractiveness of hospitality careers for young people and to reinforce skilled workers in the sector.**

<div align="center">Justification</div>

- Overcoming the skills and labour shortages is a high priority from HOTREC. Upskilling and reskilling is needed.
- Apprenticeships schemes should be supported and become a first career option (not a last resource).
- Curricula should be updated taking into account the companies' needs.
- Career development should be promoted in the sector and the image of the sector further promoted.