

HOTREC and UEAPME call on the Council to offer flexibility to Member States on official control fees

Brussels, 16 July 2014 – HOTREC, the umbrella Association of Hotels, Restaurants and Cafes in Europe, and UEAPME, the employers' organisation representing the interests of European crafts, trades and SMEs, call on the Council to offer flexibility to Member States when they decide how to finance their control activities in the food sector.

The Commission proposal on official controls in the food chain intends to make mandatory for Member States to charge a fee to all food business operators controlled, even in the absence of any lack of compliance with the law. HOTREC and UEAPME consider that flexible solutions should instead be offered to Member States, especially for SMEs and operators providing solely local services.

"Many small hospitality businesses cannot afford the imposition of an additional fee and would not understand an EU obligation to pay a control fee, while they only provide local services with no cross-border impact. There is a clear need for flexibility for Member States here." said HOTREC President Kent Nyström.

"The imposition of a control fee to small food businesses would clearly be excessive and would represent an unsustainable burden compared to their business and their size. Member States should have the possibility to choose whether to apply or not a control fee to these businesses" – stressed UEAPME Secretary General, Peter Faross.

HOTREC and UEAPME call on the Council to follow a similar approach to the one adopted by the European Parliament in its 1st reading position, by granting Member States the option to decide:

- if a fee is to be requested to food business operators, especially for operators providing local services;
- if and how a micro-enterprise exemption can apply.

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 42 national associations representing the sector in 27 different European countries.

For further information: www.hotrec.eu

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What is UEAPME?

UEAPME is the employers' organisation representing exclusively crafts, trades and SMEs from the EU and accession countries at European level. UEAPME has 80 member organisations covering over 12 million enterprises with 55 million employees. UEAPME is a European Social Partner. For further information please visit <http://www.ueapme.com/> or follow @UEAPME on Twitter.

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